Shaun Illingworth: This begins our second interview with Thomas A. Kindre on October 3, 2007, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth …

Jessica Ondusko: … Jessica Ondusko …

Matthew Lawrence: … Matt Lawrence …

Elaine Blatt: … Elaine Blatt.

SI: Thank you very much for coming in today and doing this second interview. It has been, as we just determined, more than thirteen years since your first interview. We want to cover some things that were not covered in the first interview and things that have happened between then and now.

TK: Very good.

SI: To begin, could you state for the record where and when you were born?

TK: I was born in Rahway, New Jersey, May 19, 1921.

SI: We want to ask a couple of questions about your parents. What were their names?

TK: My father was Thomas A. Kindre, so, I was a junior, and my mother was Margaret. Her maiden name was Drexler, a German family.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about their family backgrounds? Beginning with your father, where was his family from?

TK: My father's family, the background was Scotch-Irish. His father was born in Pennsylvania to a farming family and his mother was Irish. She emigrated from Ireland in 1863. She was sixteen. She was alone, penniless and illiterate, and her parents put her on a ship for New York and she arrived in New York [in] 1863. I learned this later. It was the year of the draft riots in New York, so, it must have been a terrible time for her to arrive in New York. [Editor's Note: From July 13 to July 16, 1863, mass violence broke out in New York City, particularly in working-class areas, in reaction to the Federal Government's draft policy in the Civil War, which disproportionately affected the poor.] She knew no one, the streets were full of people rioting and Federal troops [were] firing on the crowds. … The predominant feeling in New York at that time was against the Irish. They didn't want any Irish and employment ads said, "Irish need not apply," because poor Irish were coming by the thousands into New York. She somehow got down to New Jersey and she got a job as a housemaid with a well-to-do family in Rahway. My grandfather was the gardener for that family. That's how they got together--the housemaid married the gardener. [laughter]

SI: Do you remember the name of the family that they worked for?
TK: I don't remember the name of the family, no. On my mother's side, it was straight German, all the way back. Her father had emigrated from Germany alone. He was an engineer. He was a graduate engineer in Germany, been through gymnasium. [Editor's Note: A German gymnasium is similar to an American secondary school.] He came into Philadelphia about 1888, somewhere around there, and got up to New Jersey and married a local German girl, and in Rahway, same town. So, that's how they came together.

EB: Do you know why they sent her from Ireland to New York?

TK: I wish I did, Elaine, [but] I don't.

EB: Was it the Famine?

TK: It was after the Potato [Famine]. The Potato Famine was at its worst in the late '40s; two million Irish, a million died and a million fled, in the wake of the Potato Famine. This was 1863. Things were still pretty rough, I guess, and there was not much future for her. I imagine she was a country girl. She never went to school. She was illiterate, but I don't know. It's one of those great questions.

SI: Did any of your grandparents live long enough for you to get to know them?

TK: My paternal grandparents were both gone before I was born. My maternal grandparents were alive. My grandmother died when I was six and my grandfather [died] when I was about 15 or 16. So, I got to know him pretty well.

SI: Did he share any stories with you about life in Germany or anything like that?

TK: Well, he was a tough, old bird and not given much to emotional display, very Germanic in that sense, but I liked him and I knew him pretty well. … His dream was to go back to the "old country" and renew his acquaintance with the people he'd left behind, relatives and friends. So, in 1934, he did that. We all went to New York and saw him off on the Bremen, a North German Lloyd Liner, which was very popular at that time, and he went to Germany. [Editor's Note: The SS Bremen began its maiden voyage on July 16, 1929. It left New York City for the last time in August 30, 1939, as it was ordered back to Germany and used as a barracks ship.] He was there for, I'd say, maybe eight or nine months. He came back and he was a different man, because he saw what was happening in Germany. Hitler was beginning to come into power and he found a different Germany than he expected. [Editor's Note: Adolf Hitler took office as Chancellor of Germany in January 1933 and achieved absolute power as Fuhrer in August 1934.] … From that point on, he was very dejected. I think it hastened his death. He died about a year later. He never felt the same after that.

SI: Before he went over, had he ever talked about what he thought of the Nazis and their takeover?

TK: I don't remember his talking about that at all, no.
SI: Can you tell us a little bit about what your father did for a living?

TK: My father was a railroad worker. His father, who, as I told you, was originally a gardener at that home in Rahway, later took a job with the Pennsylvania Railroad and got my father a job there. I have a picture at home of the gang sitting in front of a locomotive with my grandfather and my father, who was then a kid. I don't know, he must have been about seventeen when he started working for the railroad, and he ended up as a warehouseman in Rahway. He was in charge of the Rahway freight station. That was his job until he died; until he retired. … Now, my father had only—I don't think he had a complete high school education. My mother had a high school education. My mother was very bright. She became a proofreader for a local publishing company. Now, she had no education beyond high school, but she was an avid reader and … Quinn and Boden was the name of the publishing company. I think they're long defunct, but, before she married, that's what she did.

SI: However, she did not continue that after you were born.

TK: No, no.

SI: You are an only child.

TK: I'm an only child.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about your earliest memories of growing up in Rahway? What was your neighborhood like? Did you have a lot of family nearby?

TK: Family was nearby. My grandparents had a fairly large, old house. It was an interesting house. It was a house that dated to about 1880, perhaps, had marble fireplaces, a fireplace in every room, every bedroom, and so on. … My mother, when she married, brought her husband home to live there for a while, until they could get themselves established. People did that in those days. … This story will come out later, but my wife was in the same position. My wife and I are first cousins. We were born in this house. Her mother, who was a sister of my mother, also brought her husband home to live there. So, we grew up together. We played together as infants there. Along the way, each little family moved out when they were able to and set up their own household. Marie's mother and father moved out and later my mother and father moved out. … There were two other of their siblings who lived right nearby. So, there were six of them, but they all lived within a mile or so of one another in Rahway. Nobody had a telephone. We walked to one another's houses. You'd say, "Hello," and, "We'll see you at two o'clock this afternoon," or, "See you tomorrow," and we'd get together. … The women, especially my mother and her sisters, were very close and they were constantly going around to one another's houses. … What we did in those days was live outdoors. There was no television, there were no computers. We had books, of course, but, as kids, we lived outdoors when we weren't in school. We hiked. We built clubhouses up in the woods. We formed little clubs. We had something called "the Red Pirates Club," which was inspired by Robert Louis Stevenson. You well remember, Treasure Island, the book, and then, the movie, which was [released in] 1933 or '34, got us all going. We had formed the Red Pirates Club. We found an island, below the Rahway Reservoir in the Rahway River. We made it our island [and] named it "Treasure
Island." We got a treasure--junk jewelry and other stuff. We buried it under an oak tree and drew a map. [laughter] We were very much influenced by movies, that one, *Treasure Island*, *Captain Blood*, [starring] Errol Flynn [in] 1935. … There was an abandoned lakebed there and we played "Africa" in that lakebed. I remember, there were these huge reeds and we'd take one of these reeds; with a clump of dirt on the end of it, you could throw it, like a spear. So, we'd stalk each other through the tall grass and throw these spears. …

EB: You just knew what you thought Africa was from the movies.

TK: Yes, from the movie, we saw Africa. I'm trying to remember what African film that would have been. I can't recall, but, anyway, yes, we were acting out these parts and that's mostly what we did. It was outdoors. I don't remember doing much of anything indoors. Well, I mean, we read, but that's it.

SI: Were you mostly friends with people in your neighborhood or kids from school?

TK: School, kids from school, and relatives. My best friend lived across the street, George Skidmore. You met him not long ago. [Editor's Note: Mr. Skidmore was interviewed by the Rutgers Oral History Archives on April 27, 2007.] My cousin, who lived nearby, was also a very close friend, my cousin Bill Kiesecker.

SI: How was Rahway structured and organized in those days? Was it broken up into ethnic neighborhoods or was it economically laid out? What do you remember about the character of the neighborhood, basically?

TK: The neighborhood was mixed. The only ethnic breakout was the black people and there was a black neighborhood, but it was small. There weren't many. In my high school class, for example, we had four black students, whom we all knew very well. In fact, two of them came back just last week for our sixty-ninth reunion, but that's the only breakout. Now, I do remember dissonance between Protestants and Catholics, believe it or not. Ours was a Catholic family and I remember Protestants, on the other side of the street, making slurs when I was a kid, about the Pope. So, there was that kind of feeling going on there.

SH: What would they say?

TK: Well, "If the Pope gave orders, would you jump?" and that kind of thing. I don't know how much of that there was, but there was some of it. … There was an undercurrent of that, because I guess the town was mostly Protestant, but my family was Catholic. … In their neighborhood, they probably were the only Catholic family in their immediate neighborhood, so, they caught some of that flak.

SI: Was the Church important to your family growing up? Was it the center of activity?

TK: It was a center of activity. My mother was the organist and the choir director for our church. So, she was there every morning. She got up every morning and went to seven o'clock Mass and, when my mother and father married, it was a union of two different ethnic groups. …
There were two Catholic churches in Rahway, the Irish Catholic and the German Catholic, and I grew up in the German Catholic. That was my mother's church. The Irish Catholic church was where my father grew up. So, when they married, he moved over to the German church, to the disgust of his friends, [laughter] but he became a member of the German church and it was the center of our social activities. We had a young men's club. There was a young women's club. There were the routine holidays and being Germans, of course, they had a sauerkraut supper. They celebrated May Day. They had a May walk, an ancient custom, when the whole congregation walked several miles out into the countryside for a picnic on May Day. Now, that's an ancient custom. That's a custom that goes back before Christianity.

SI: The celebration of spring.

TK: May Day was the beginning of the Celtic calendar, I think. May 1st was the beginning of summer and June 15th was midsummer, and so on, but the church was pretty much the center.

ML: Did you go to Catholic school as well?

TK: No, I did not, no, and I must congratulate my mother for that. The Catholic schools were getting some criticism at that point, because they weren't meeting the standards, the educational standards. … My mother was very much aware of that and despite that fact, that she was a pillar of her church, she said, "No." She said, "You're going to go to public school, because you'll get a better education," and I've always thought that was a great thing for her.

EB: Did your mother make a lot of decisions in your house?

TK: She made most of them. [laughter]

SI: Was your father away often for work?

TK: … Well, he worked in Rahway. He rode his bicycle to the freight station every day and came back five o'clock, but my father was a very humorous man, a very laidback character. … When it came to making important decisions, it was usually my mother who did it.

SI: Were they involved in other aspects of the community besides the church, like community groups?

TK: Nothing that I can recall, no, pretty much the church.

ML: Were you involved in Boys Scouts at all?

TK: No, I wasn't, and I do remember why I wasn't. I wanted to be in the Boy Scouts, but the Catholic Church had something against the Boy Scouts. … I don't remember exactly what it was, but Catholic boys were not encouraged to join the Boy Scouts. … My mother said she would be very unhappy if I did that, and so, I didn't do it. Now, my gang was an outdoor gang and we used to harass the Boy Scouts. We'd go out where they camped and throw rocks at them and things like that. [laughter]
SI: You mentioned that, at least in terms of the churches, there was this division between the Irish and the Germans. Were there other manifestations of these ethnic divisions in the town, in the way people treated each other or interacted, or did not interact?

TK: I don't remember anything specifically like that. I think they were pretty well integrated. The street where my mother and father were both born, they were born on the same street and it was a mixture of Irish and German. People next-door might be Irish and you're German, or vice versa. It was pretty much of a mixture. The rest of the town, I don't recall any specific divisions, except for what I told you about the small black community.

SI: There was nothing like, "Do not go out with people from this community."

TK: No, no.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about your early education in Rahway? In general, what did you think about it? More specifically, what were your interests? What really excited you?

TK: My early education was in Franklin School. That was the elementary school, which was not too far. I walked to school. I was fascinated when I first began to read for pleasure. I remember that, and I don't remember exactly when that was, but, once I got hold of the Tom Swift books and the Don Sturdy books--these were boy's series, boy's adventure series--I couldn't be stopped, and my mother and father were busy keeping up with that. School was a great experience. I loved it. Among other things, I loved ... that we had music every day. We had a book called The Twice 55 Plus [Community Songs] songbook and we ... sang songs from that in the auditorium every day, and a lot of those songs are still in my head. You can't get rid of them. [laughter] They come up from time to time. ... I wasn't very athletic, so, I was not involved in any athletics at school. I was a very small kid. ... The two smallest kids, they used to line us up ... according to height. At one end of the line was my friend, George Skidmore, and I was right next to him, and then, they went on up that way. We were the two smallest kids in the class, but we had a very good education, had an excellent education, I felt, in elementary school. ... Our school was divided then. We had seven grades in that school, and then, we went to junior high. I guess you'd call it intermediate now. We had eighth, and ninth grades there, and then, tenth, eleventh and twelfth in the high school, very, very excellent education. The Rahway school system was very good. Two of its most famous graduates are Carl Sagan and ... Friedman, the economist, who died just recently, Milton Friedman. They were both products of the Rahway High School system.

SI: Did most of your classmates graduate from elementary school and go on to the junior high? Were there people who did not go on with their education for any reason, economic or otherwise?

TK: I think most of them went on. ... There were a few who dropped out, but most of them went on, on through high school, and we had a very high go-to-college rate in Rahway.

SI: Did you work at all, in the summers or part-time jobs after school?
TK: Yes. I needed to, because my father lost his job in the mid '30s. Of course, that was the heart of the Depression, and we were really reduced to not very much. I remember going out with my father into the woods, and, now, this was interesting, because I never felt closer to my father than I did during that year he was out of work, because I was an outdoor kid. I knew the woods. So, I could lead my father to places in the woods where we could gather wood. We were cutting trees and gathering dead wood to burn in the furnace. We had a coal-burning furnace, but we couldn't afford to buy coal, literally could not afford to buy coal. So, we went out and got wood and brought it in. … I remember that that gave me a very good feeling, because I could do something for my father. I could show him where the best woods were, where we were more likely to get wood than somewhere else. It was tough. When the soles of your shoes wore through, they wore through--that was it. You saved pieces of cardboard and stuck them in your shoe. You couldn't afford to have your shoes repaired. You really couldn't afford much of anything. We were lucky that we had food, because my uncle was from a farm family. He was an uncle by marriage. He married one of my mother's sisters and his family had a farm in Clark, which is near Rahway. So, he would occasionally drop by and drop off some fresh vegetables for us and things like that. I don't think we had much meat during the Depression.

SI: Did you raise a garden or anything like that?

TK: Oh, yes, yes, we had a garden. We raised as many vegetables as we could, and you asked me, too, about working. I worked whenever I could. During summers, I was a salesman for a coal company. I would go around to all the houses in town and try to get people to sign up contracts for coal delivery for the coming winter. I did that for, I think, three summers.

SI: In high school?

TK: Yes.

SI: Did you work during the school year at all?

TK: During the school year, no.

SI: Your family was still living in your grandparents' home.

TK: They moved out of [my] grandparents' home in 1933 and they bought the lot next-door. There was a lot next to the house. They'd bought that from my grandfather, had their own house built there. My grandfather moved in with them and the old house then … went through a succession of rentals. [The] family rented it out, but my grandfather was living with us in the new house. I don't know how my parents were able to hang on to that house through the Depression. My mother somehow scraped and found enough money for the mortgage payments. I don't know how she did it.

SI: Did she work outside of the home at that point or was she still at home?
TK: No, no, she was at home.

SI: Could you see the impact of the Depression on your neighborhood, your street? Could you see other people going through the same kind of hardships?

TK: Pretty much. Everybody was facing hardship. Everybody was growing vegetables, if they could, if they had any space at all. You couldn't afford to buy much. My mother had been buying groceries at the then National Grocery Company, which was a chain. … She bought very little there, because she mostly depended on what my uncle might drop off in the way of vegetables, and she bought a little meat from time to time. We had a relative who ran a meat market. He was a cousin, but my mother said she couldn't afford to buy his meat, it was too expensive. She had to go where she could find it cheap.

SI: Was there an area where you could do some hunting to supplement your diet?

TK: I don't remember any hunting in the Rahway area. There probably wasn't much to hunt. There were rabbits, I suppose. I was never into hunting, so, I never did any of that.

ML: Did a lot of people in your neighborhood move out? Did you notice people moving away?

TK: During the Depression? no, no. They kind of hunkered down and stayed there, if they could. … There were people who lost their houses, of course, and they moved out, but, mostly, people just tried to hang in.

SI: During the year that your father was out of work, did he try to find work? Did he stand on line every day for work, or did he have some arrangement with the railroad where they were going to call him back when they could?

TK: My father was out of work because he was "bumped." I don't know if you've heard that word in this context, but it was a common procedure. In times of stress, people with seniority could bump other people out of a job. So, someone who had my father's job specs and had more seniority and maybe was bumped out of a job in Hoboken could come to Rahway and bump my father out of his job, which he did. So, my father, for a time, got a job in New York, from the railroad, but it was a terrible commute. It was downtown New York and he didn't like it and he worked there for a few months and he was waiting for a job opening to come along in Rahway and, finally, [one] did, after about a year out.

SI: Had he been in the warehouse before then or is that how he got in the warehouse?

TK: … That was how he got to be a warehouseman, yes, yes. Earlier than that, he had worked on a train crew, and then, when he got the job reinstated in Rahway, he got into the freight house. Now, he probably wouldn't have done that except for the help of a member of our church. … This is interesting, about the early comradeship in the church. My parents belonged to a dramatic club. They put on plays in the church and one of the members of that dramatic club, who was a friend--they were all friends, they knew each other--one of the members of that dramatic club was a man who moved up in the railroad and became corporate secretary of the
Pennsylvania Railroad, a big job in those days. … He was instrumental in getting my father back into Rahway and getting him the job in the freight house. So, it was helpful.

SI: Was there a union or was it a company policy that allowed them to bring in employees?

TK: Yes, there was no union for the railroad workers, no.

EB: I have a few questions about high school. You ran track. What did you run in track?

TK: Yes, I loved track, yes. Track was great fun. I went out for that briefly and I enjoyed running. I did that regularly during our gym classes. We had our gym classes in the local "Y" [YMCA] and they had an indoor track upstairs. …

EB: Which event did you run in track?

TK: Oh, I was a sprinter, yes. I was a fast runner. I never really followed through with it. I should have, but I did it for a little bit. It was fun.

EB: Did you do any other clubs in high school?

TK: Oh, a lot of clubs, yes. I'm trying to remember them all, should have brought my yearbook, German club, honor society, banking club, biology club, chemistry club. I was in all those.

EB: You said German club. Did you speak any German?

TK: I took three years of German in high school.

EB: Did either of your parents speak another language?

TK: Not at home, no, no, not at all. In fact, my mother barely knew some German words. My grandfather, of course, spoke German, but there was no foreign language spoken at home. The reason I studied German is that I wanted a scientific career and, in those days, German was the language of science. I mean, that was well-known in the schools. French was the language of diplomacy and German was the language of science. If you wanted a diplomatic career, you studied French; if you wanted a scientific career, you studied German. So, I had three years of German.

SI: How did your interest in science come about?

TK: Very simple. [laughter] My uncles, who were my mother's siblings--there were one, two, three of them--were all engineers. They had followed in their father's footsteps, my grandfather, who was the German engineer, and he had really taught them. They weren't college graduates, but he had taught them the principles of stationary engineering, which is how you run a plant, you know, how you turn on the valves and keep the pressure up and do all those things, which is essentially what my grandfather did. My grandfather was the chief engineer of [J. T.] Castles Ice Cream Plant in Perth Amboy, which is a big local ice cream facility, and my uncles were all
engineers as well. So, I grew up with them, really, as role models. I mean, I didn't want to be a clerk in a warehouse like my father was. So, I looked to these uncles, they're all engineers, and decided I was going to be an engineer. So, I took the college technical curriculum through high school. We had college classical and college technical and I took college technical. So, I went through algebra, trig, trigonometry, solid geometry, everything short of calculus. We didn't get into calculus.

ML: Did you enjoy those classes?

TK: Oh, yes, yes, I did, yes. [laughter] It wasn't until my senior year in high school that I decided what I really wanted to do with my life, and I think I know how it came about. I was beginning to write and I enjoyed writing greatly, and I was on the yearbook committee, and our chemistry club had a field trip in our senior year. They went to Carteret, New Jersey, went through the Calco Chemical Plant. Well, this plant was noisy, dirty, filthy, a wretched-looking place. It looked like hell to me and I thought, "Am I going to be an engineer and end up in a place like this? No way am I going to do that." … I went home and thought about it and I eventually decided, no, I was going to go to journalism school and become a writer. … I shall never forget, my solid geometry/trigonometry teacher, who was also the vice principal of the school, he was a tough old bird. He was an in-your-face kind of guy. He'd go up to you like this and pound you, stab you with his finger, and put his nose right up against you. When he heard that I was going to go to journalism school, he came up to me and put his face in front of my face, stabbed his finger at me and he said, "Journalism. 'Mary had a little lamb.' Ugh." [laughter]

EB: Was your family surprised as well that you chose journalism as a major?

TK: I guess some of them were, although I think my mother and father knew that I was more interested in things of that sort than I was in pursuing a scientific career. Actually, another factor was that, among engineering professions, the one that appealed to me most was civil engineering. I was enthralled with the idea of building bridges and things like that, but the school counselors led me away from that. They said, "Well, … that doesn't pay any money. That's the worst of engineering. You're not going to go anywhere there. So, you should get into chemical engineering or electrical engineering." So, that was another reason why I failed to be an engineer.

SI: We just have a few more questions before we move out of your pre-Rutgers life. I think we all want to know the story, from your perspective, about Big Stosh, which was when you were in elementary school, correct?

TK: Yes, yes, Big Stosh. My friend, George Skidmore, with whom I grew up, he's the man who lived right across the street from me. … Oh, yes, you've got the story from George Skidmore.

SI: We want to hear it from your perspective.

TK: All right. There was an accident on the railroad running through Rahway and somebody was killed and body parts were strewn out along the track. So, Skid and I thought it would be
great fun to go up there and find some of the body parts that hadn't yet been discovered. So, we went up and we searched along the track and we didn't find any, but we came up with an idea, I think it was Skid's idea--got a matchbox and cut a hole in the bottom and we'd put our thumb up through the hole. … Then, in school, we'd walk around the halls and find one of the girls and say, "Did you ever see a thumb, a human thumb?" We'd pull the cover back and there's this thumb in the box and they'd shriek and run. [laughter] … The teacher knew what we were up to and she made us stay after school. Now, [while] staying after school, there was something useful to do. There was this student named Big Stosh, who was a Russian. He was an orphan. He was brought up by a Russian family in Rahway. … He didn't have good command of English, so, he wasn't getting ahead in school, but they kept pushing him ahead anyway, from one grade to another, just to get rid of him. So, the teacher said, "I want you to help Stosh by reading to him." So, Skid and I took turns reading to him. … The book we were reading was [Mark Twain's] *Huckleberry Finn* and, of course, *Huckleberry Finn* was about a trip down the Mississippi River. … All three of us got enthralled by the idea of *Huckleberry Finn*. So, at one point, Big Stosh, I don't remember whether we had graduated, or we hadn't yet graduated; … I don't think the school year was over yet, but Big Stosh decided to run away. … He was going to go down the Mississippi, and he talked Skid and me into going with him. All three of us were going to hitchhike to Pittsburgh, build a raft and go down the Mississippi. … Just about that time, I got sick, and I remember exactly how it happened, because, in fifth grade, the girl sitting in front of me vomited one day. … The next day, I had scarletina, which was a minor version of scarlet fever, and I was confined to the house for six weeks. They put a sign on the front door. Nobody [was] allowed in or out of the house. That's what they did in those days. That girl, incidentally, was back at our sixty-ninth reunion last week, the one who vomited in front of me. [laughter] She comes back to our reunions. So, I was not able to meet this deadline of going to Pittsburgh and Skid was waiting for me to get better, day by day. He thought maybe I [would recover]. He didn't want to go alone. … Meanwhile, Stosh took off. He was gone. … For a few days, the police searched for him. His foster parents reported him missing. They didn't know where he was. He'd told them nothing, but he was gone. The police looked for a few days, and then, they just quit looking and, [in the] meantime, I recovered. … By that time, I guess, Skid and I both thought better of the whole adventure, but the upshot of the story was that, several years later, I guess it was about six years later, Stosh took off and neither of us ever saw him again after that. [laughter]

EB: Tell me, what was the password to the Red Pirates Club?

TK: The Red Pirates password was, "Alsabimitybalaboogigity Bangamafoo Singosityboo Guratsablimity Pinketybumpsy Skrukamafoo Blood." [laughter]

SI: You will have to spell it out for us in the transcript. [laughter]
TK: I'll spell it out. [laughter] Those things become engraved on the mind. It's amazing how those things become engraved on the mind. … Maybe you'll get to this later, but two melodies that are engraved on my mind from the war, they're both nursery rhymes. The Free French Radio and BBC broadcast news constantly on the Continent and we picked it up in Italy. … When they weren't broadcasting, to keep the line open, they would broadcast this set sound signal. … In each case, it was a nursery rhyme. The British was, [Mr. Kindre hums the melody], and I didn't realize, until years later, what it was. It was, "There was an old woman, went up on a broom, … seventy times as high as the moon." [Editor's Note: The nursery rhyme is "There Was an Old Woman Went Up In a Basket," with the opening line, "There was an old woman went up in a basket/Seventeen times as high as the Moon."] That was the nursery rhyme. … That was the BBC's. The Free French was, [Mr. Kindre hums the melody], "Sur le Pont d'Avignon." That was the French nursery rhyme, about the bridge at Avignon. Those things are still in my head. They come back every so often, like the password. [laughter]

EB: What was the meaning of the password or how did it originate?

TK: … The first part of the password was the name of my friend Skid's mother's cat, "Alsabimitybalaboogigity." [laughter]

SI: We talked a little bit about how the outside world encroached upon your world when we talked about your grandfather going off to Germany and coming back a changed man. Later in the 1930s, before you went to Rutgers, did you find out any more about what was happening overseas, with the Nazis or in Asia?

TK: Oh, we were very much aware of what was going on, yes. I followed the news regularly, from Hitler's invasion of Poland on, and Britain's hope for, what'd they call it? a "just peace" or "peace in our time."

SI: Chamberlain.

TK: Chamberlain, yes. No, we were very much aware of that and we followed it very carefully. [Editor's Note: Following the Munich Conference of September 1938, in which the United Kingdom and France acceded to Hitler's territorial ambitions in Czechoslovakia, British Prime Minster Neville Chamberlain returned to Great Britain claiming to have secured, "Peace for our time."]

SI: Were you aware of the German-American Bund and its activities in Northern New Jersey?

TK: Yes, I was aware of it. I didn't know any people involved in it, although my mother told me, after the war, that some people in our German church had been under suspicion. A couple of them were members of the Bund. The local retailers, … members of our church--one of them had a bicycle shop, another had a butcher shop, and so on--they were very careful once the war broke out, put a big American flag up in the window and do everything they could to show that they were patriots, but at least two or three people, she said there were strong suspicions that they were spies, two or three people in the congregation. I don't know any more than that.
[Editor's Note: The German American Bund was an organization of Nazi sympathizers. One of the largest followings developed in New Jersey, centered at Camp Nordland in Sussex County.]

SI: Do you know if that was just a rumor within the congregation or if they had actually seen something, like FBI investigators visiting them?

TK: I think it was rumor. I don't have any evidence, really, that anything happened or anybody was officially investigated.

SI: Something that has been overlooked in light of the enormity of the Japanese-American interment at the beginning of the war is the steps that were taken against German-American and Italian-American citizens and recent immigrants from those countries. Do you remember any of that in your area?

TK: No, I don't, no. We didn't have any recent immigrants in our area. It was a pretty well established town, no.

EB: What did your parents or grandfather think of World War I?

TK: Of World War I? My grandfather thought it was a mess. He thought it was something unnecessary. He didn't even want to talk about it. ... I don't know whether he thought that Germany had been on the right side or not. He simply didn't want to talk. He was disgusted by the whole idea of war. He wouldn't talk about World War I. My father was too old for World War I. I think he was thirty-five when we entered the war in 1918, so, he was not part of it. So, we didn't have any direct World War I influence in our family.

SI: In the first interview with Dr. Piehler, you talked about how you were a pacifist and you changed your mind at Rutgers when you were in the ROTC. What course did your affinity for pacifism take in the years before coming to Rutgers? Did you study the pacifist movements or was it just the general idea?

TK: I knew about the pacifist movements. I was never comfortable with going out and marching with any group, so, I never really joined any pacifist group. It simply derived from a fundamental idea that war is stupid and it kills people and it never accomplishes anything. If you look back through history, wars have not really accomplished an awful lot. ... It was that kind of a general orientation that I had. I never joined an organization and I had that orientation right up until the eve of my junior year at Rutgers, I guess, because, as you know, ROTC, the first two years in a land-grant college are required and the next two are not. You can join up or not, and I did not sign up for Advanced ROTC. I certainly didn't want it, but, then, and I can't remember specifically what the historic incidents were, but this would have been in the Fall of 1940, '40, I guess.

SI: After France fell and the Battle of Britain was going on.

TK: Yes, I guess that was it, yes. ... Belatedly, I realized that the US was going to be in the war, had to be in the war. ... The next thought was, "Well, you're going to be in it. Why not be
in it as an officer, rather than an enlisted man or being drafted? You have some choice." So, I applied for late enrollment in Advanced ROTC and they took me late and I went into Advanced ROTC. … That was the end of my pacifism, I guess.

SI: Had you had any sympathy for any isolationist organizations?

TK: No, no. I didn't go along with any of them. I thought that was blind faith, that you were going be able to escape something, you know. No, my pacifism never went in that direction.

SI: Do you remember reading any works along those lines, being involved in that way?

TK: Yes, well, I remember reading a good deal about it. I don't recall when Charles Lindbergh, he started his America First movement at some point there, but I remember knowing about that and thinking that was a misguided effort. [Editor's Note: Famed aviator Charles A. Lindbergh, an outspoken isolationist, served as the spokesperson for the American First Committee, which was founded by R. Douglas Stuart, Jr., then a Yale Law student, in September 1940.]

SI: Did you read any books that were more in line with your pacifist beliefs, like All Quiet on the Western Front, or books that revealed the front-line perspective of war?

TK: Well, yes, I did read All Quiet on the Western Front. That had some impact on me. Mostly, it was from reading and analyzing the news and observing what was happening. [Editor's Note: Written by Erich Maria Remarque, a German World War I veteran, this 1929 novel details in a realistic fashion the life of a German soldier in the trenches.]

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Do you remember where you were when you found out about Pearl Harbor and how you found out about the attack?

TK: I was home for the weekend. I was a commuting student, so, I went home every weekend to Rahway. My father, being a railroad man, had gotten me a pass for the railroad, so, rail fare was free. So, I was home that weekend and, of course, it hit the radio. I guess it must have been about one or two o'clock in the afternoon. I think the bombing was nine in the morning … Hawaii Time [7:48 AM Hawaiian Time], so, it was about one or two o'clock in the afternoon, and, of course, my family and I sat around for a long time and talked about it. … Then, I went back to campus earlier than I intended to. I went back I guess mid-afternoon and my roommates were back by then. In our senior year, we were living in an apartment on Paterson Street and I had three roommates and they all came back. … We huddled about it for quite a while and realized that our lives were going to be altered in different ways. One of my roommates wanted to be a doctor, and he did become a doctor, and he was talking about [how] the Army would pay for his medical education if he then signed up for seven years of military service following that. … He did that. So, he escaped the war by joining immediately and going into med school. My other roommate, Bob Moss, and I were both ROTC and we're both headed for second lieutenant infantry commissions upon graduation. So, we had a lot to talk about, wondering what it was going to mean for us, and the fourth roommate was a sophomore and he didn't have any
particular ideas. He ended up being drafted, but we talked late into the night, I remember, … just wondering what was going to happen.

SI: You realized, obviously, that it was going to impact your life. Was there any fear or panic about what this meant for the nation or your area particularly?

TK: No. I think we were pretty confident in our own nation at that point. I don't think there was ever any concern that, "Are we going to get through the war?" … We didn't feel that at all.

EB: You knew that the US would be involved.

TK: Yes, we knew that the US was going to be involved and we were quite sure that we were going to come out very well. I mean, we were very confident.

SI: As we discussed off the record, we decided we were going to skip ahead to when you got into North Africa. In the original interview, you talked about how the ship ahead of you was torpedoed as you entered the harbor at Oran.

TK: … At Casablanca.

SI: Okay, yes, I am sorry. How did that impact you? How did you feel at that point, when you saw this happen? Did you actually see it happen or did you just see the aftermath?

TK: I saw the aftermath. Do you want me to talk about the voyage over or have I already done that?

SI: Go ahead, yes.

TK: … Something, an interesting observation about what happened on the voyage over and the events leading up to that, I was at the 100th Division in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I had been assigned to the cadre. … They were just starting the division. It was a new division. I was on the cadre and we were getting our troops in. They were mostly raw troops. They were Kentucky mountaineers. Most of them were illiterate and it was pretty difficult to train them, but, anyway, I was there on the cadre. I was assigned there in August [or the] beginning of September of 1942. By Spring of 1943, there was a need for a lot of replacements in Europe, in the European Theater. They were using up a lot of people. So, they began to pull people out of the existing divisions as replacements and they pulled 600 enlisted men and 93 second lieutenants out of the 100th Division, and I was one of those second lieutenants. … We were shipped to Shenango, Pennsylvania, which was an infantry replacement training center, from there, to Camp Kilmer, from Camp Kilmer to Hampton Roads, and then, from there, on a troopship to Casablanca. … The interesting thing to me, in retrospect, is the way we were grinding out second lieutenants between the time I'd graduated from Rutgers, and the year following that, because, when we were detached from the 100th Division and we're put on a train, … with six hundred enlisted men, as I said, ninety-three second lieutenants, a major came up to me and he said, "Lieutenant, you are train commander." Well, it turned out that I was the senior second lieutenant of these ninety-three, and I had only been a second lieutenant for one year. So, they were grinding out a
lot of them. … We went to Shenango and, from there, to Camp Kilmer, and it was my responsibility to keep these men together. Well, some of them went AWOL. Some of them would go into New York. The MPs [Military Police] would pick them up, bring them back and I'd give them company punishment, which was usually digging a deep hole, and then, covering it up. I'd say, "Put something in the hole." The guy put a fork or a knife or something in the hole. Then, they'd cover it up and I'd say, "Which way is the knife pointing?" or the fork. They wouldn't know, so, they'd have to dig it out again. It kept them busy. So, we went by truck convoy from Camp Kilmer to Hampton Roads, Virginia, through all the back roads, because, you know, spies were everywhere and they were trying to hide these troop movements as best they could. A train troop movement would be readily visible. So, we were on a truck convoy and it took about two days to go down there. All these back roads, I can't even tell you where they were. We got on the ship, which was the Andes, a British troopship, had been built for the South American cruise trade and finished just in time for the war. [Editor's Note: The second Royal Mail Lines steamship to bear the name Andes was completed in 1939.] So, they immediately converted it into a troopship and we had 15,000 American soldiers on that ship. Now, as a cruise ship, I think it would have accommodated perhaps a thousand people. We had fifteen thousand. The bunks were ten high down below in the hold and the men had to eat, had to sleep, in shifts, only five thousand bunks. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Please, continue. You were describing the voyage over to North Africa.

TK: Right. I mentioned the fact that they had been producing a lot of second lieutenants from the time I graduated from college into the following year, and I didn't realize how senior I was, because I was a one-year-old second lieutenant. I got on the ship and they told me that I was the senior second lieutenant on the ship. So, I was put in charge of the guard unit. Now, the guard unit had the job of maintaining strict blackout conditions. Because the Andes was a big ship, she traveled alone. She had no escort to protect her. So, it was urgent that we maintain blackout, because, at night, even the flick of a cigarette lighter on deck could be seen by an alert U-boat [German submarine] commander miles away. … I struck up an acquaintance with a young ship's officer. … Once I realized how urgent this was, I began to sleep during the day and stay up all night. I prowled the ship at night with my crew. I had six men on my crew … and we prowled the ship. I struck up an acquaintance with a young ship's officer who told me that the Andes was a much sought-after prize by the U-boat wolf packs, because it was a big ship. … The Germans knew that the U-boat commander that bagged the Andes would be sure to get an Iron Cross directly from Hitler. So, that was very reassuring. [laughter] … However, it made me redouble the efforts at maintaining security. I noticed, looking up at the stars--I did a lot of that, out at night--that we were constantly changing our course. … Next time I saw the young ship's officer, I asked about that and he said, "Yes, the Admiralty has determined that it takes a U-boat eight-and-a-half minutes to access a target, fix on the target, loose a torpedo and score a hit;" eight-and-a-half minutes. "So, we are changing course every seven-and-a-half minutes." So, we were zigzagging across the Atlantic. We went through two great Atlantic storms, two really big storms, and, down below, it was a mess. The decks were all slippery with vomit. These men, I'd never been on a ship, most of these men had never been on a ship. They were city kids from Brooklyn and farmers from Pennsylvania. We'd never been on a ship. So, they had to bring
5000 at a time up on deck while they cleaned up down below, and then, they'd bring up the next five thousand, then, the third five thousand. Remember, these men slept in shifts, twenty-four hours a day, eight, eight and eight. There were only five thousand bunks, so, they had to sleep in shifts. We got to Casablanca on a foggy morning. Something particular about that year that I remembered is that Easter Sunday was on April 25th and that's, I think, the day we arrived in Casablanca. … If you look at the calendar, as I have since, that was the latest that Easter has been in a hundred years, for whatever interest that is. At any rate, we're moving into Casablanca Harbor on this foggy morning and we're crawling along, because it's foggy, and we're crawling past the harbor buoys. … I'm on deck and I looked down and I see bodies floating by and all kinds of debris. … The ship's officer, the man I had been talking to, I sought him out and said, "What's going on here?" and he said, "The best we can determine is that German intelligence had picked up the Andes' sailing schedule and they knew we were coming today. … They had U-boats lying in wait, but they mistakenly torpedoned the ship just ahead of ours." They didn't get the Andes, but that was the ship just ahead of us and the debris and the bodies were still in the water. … That was my entry into North Africa. [laughter]

ML: Did that change your eagerness for the war?

TK: … No. I don't say I was eager, but I knew I had a job to do. No, it didn't change anything, just made it a little more real.

SI: Can you tell us about your first couple of weeks in the theater? Were you assigned to a unit at that point? How quickly did that happen?

TK: The first thing I tried to do was to make some kind of a permanent arrangement. Our little security crew had done such a good job. The ship's company said we did a great job. I tried to work out a deal whereby we would be assigned permanently to that ship and keep crossing the Atlantic, but that didn't work. So, we went into a replacement training center and, from there, we were put on French "forty-and-eight" cars. These are railroad freight cars, which were the kind that were used during World War I. They were called forty-and-eight cars because they held forty men or eight horses. They were smaller than our standard American freight cars. We were put on to those, crowded into them, and, for eight days, we crossed North Africa, with our boots on and our clothes on, no toothpaste, no nothing. [laughter]

EB: Did you know where you would be going?

TK: We knew we were going toward Tunisia, yes, going straight across Morocco, Algeria and into Tunisia. That's where the action was, and the action was close to being finished, because, by the time, eight days; let's see, the 25th, it must have been about May 5th or so by the time we got to Tunisia and I think … May 9th to the 12th was when the Tunisian war, the war there, was winding down, but that was our introduction to North Africa. They stopped the train for meals and they had these big GI cans of boiling water. … They'd drop cans of … C rations into the water and we'd have some hot food and you'd get back on the train, but you didn't have your boots off or your clothes changed or anything for eight days. [Editor's Note: On May 9, 1943, most of the Axis forces in Tunisia surrendered to II Corps, which included the 34th Infantry Division. By May 13th, all remaining Axis forces had surrendered.]
SI: What happened when you arrived in Tunisia?

TK: I went to two replacement centers. The first replacement center was in Algeria, and [laughter] I remember that one quite well, because I guess it has to do with the immortality of youth. Young people have a view of themselves as being immortal. … I was called into the headquarters and a major had my record, my personnel record, and he said, "It says on your personnel record that you have a private pilot's license to fly light planes." I said, "Yes, that's true." I had taken a Civil Pilot Training [Program] course here at Rutgers in my junior and senior year, and he said, "We have an opening for an assistant to the headquarters commandant of a corps commander. Part of your job would be flying ahead to pick out new locations when the corps headquarters wanted to move." … It sounded to me like a very cushy job, and I still remember what I said to him. I said, "Thank you, sir, that sounds interesting, but I've come a long way and I'd like to go on up to the front and see what's happening." In later years, I have mulled over that statement and thought, "What the hell were you up to, Tom? Didn't you know what war was all about, what you were getting into?" Apparently, I didn't, I didn't, but I had a second chance. I got to another replacement depot in Tunisia and, this time, they called me in and said, "It says on your record that you had the motor maintenance school, back in the States," which I had. Accidentally, I had gotten the motor maintenance course, a three-month course at Fort Benning. The 34th Division, which was in North Africa, they were pretty badly chewed up by that time, had an opening for an ordnance officer in their division ordnance company. … There were no ordnance officers available, but, with my motor maintenance course, I was the next best thing. So, they assigned me to the 34th Division. I didn't have anything to say about it, and I went through the rest of the war with the 34th Division. [Editor's Note: The 34th Infantry Division entered the North African Campaign by assaulting Algiers on November 8, 1942. The division remained in North Africa until they redeployed to Salerno, Italy, on September 25, 1943. The division's 151st Field Artillery Battalion fought in the initial Salerno landings on September 9, 1943.]

SI: I know you were in a salvage crew in North Africa. Were you assigned to that position right away or did something precede that job?

TK: That came along shortly after my assignment to the 34th, I'd say within a month or so. We were to go down to Gafsa, which is in the southern part of Tunisia. It's an oasis, a beautiful oasis, in the desert, and I was the troop commander. I had about a dozen trucks and we were to go down and pick up salvage from the desert, planes that had beendowned and things of that sort. … That was an interesting experience, riding down through the desert, passing ruins, out in the middle of nowhere, a Roman temple out in the middle of the desert. I'll never forget that. … The oasis was fascinating, but we didn't get an awful lot of salvage. We got some, but the thing that happened, that I remember most, is that when we came back from that mission, our division was gone. [The] 34th Division had moved. [laughter] They'd left. We went back to where they had been and they were gone. They had moved out, and it took awhile to catch up with them and we finally did. [Editor's Note: Conquered by the Romans in 106 BC, Gafsa remained a place of particular importance for subsequent rulers.]

SI: Where did they move to?
TK: Well, they had moved to Oran, moved from Tunisia back to Oran, Algeria, which was to be the staging area for the invasion of Italy. The Italian invasion started on September 9th and I missed the actual invasion because I was in the hospital. I had hepatitis, which was brought on by a faulty batch of yellow fever vaccine. Now, we never knew why they wanted us to have yellow fever vaccine. We were not in any tropical area, but I guess somebody back in the States said, "Africa, well, they'd better have yellow fever vaccine." [laughter] We were in North Africa, which was temperate. Anyway, the yellow fever vaccine turned out to be faulty and a lot of people got hepatitis. So, I was in the hospital and I didn't get out until a week after … my division had landed, and I had to go over on my own.

SI: Before we leave North Africa, was there any air activity or raids when you were there?

TK: Yes, there were air raids in Africa. At one point, we had a dogfight right over our area between German and American fighters and some shrapnel came down and … injured two of our men. … They were the first two casualties, battle casualties, we had. They weren't badly injured, but there was air activity.

SI: Your job put you between the rear and the frontline troops. Was that the first time you really realized that the war could affect you?

TK: In Africa? yes. The African experience was not a routine experience. We weren't yet settled into a routine, because the division was moving, getting ready for the invasion, and so on, but, once we got into our routine--[GI cartoonist] Bill Mauldin came up with a word for troops like us. He called us "garatroopers," too far forward to wear a necktie, but too far back to be shot at. … We were normally, through the Italian Campaign, about five miles behind the front line.

EB: Were there radios, newspapers or other sources that discussed the events on the front lines? Did it trickle back through officers? How did you know how we were doing on the frontlines?

TK: We listened to BBC every day. So, we knew pretty well what was happening. My parents had given me a subscription to Time Magazine, which arrived regularly, or irregularly, but it arrived. So, I had an idea of what the press and the people back home were thinking. … Once we got established, in the ordnance company, … I had a whole wall in the truck that was our headquarters with maps of the French Front and the Italian Front and I kept [them up-to-date]. We got 34th Division intelligence reports every morning. So, we knew exactly what was happening with our own 34th Division troops, and I had all this plotted and people would come in and look. …

EB: Were you writing home to your family?

TK: Yes.

EB: Was it censored?
TK: I was the censor for our company. [laughter] So, what I censored out, mostly, were numbers. I tried to get rid of numbers. Colorful reports, and so on, were all right, but we were always very wary of numbers, any discussion of how many people were involved in a particular venture or a particular location. So, we tried to avoid specifics.

ML: Were you given strict guidelines as to what you should censor, or was it mostly at your own discretion?

TK: We were given some guidelines. We had a session at division headquarters that told us what to do and we pretty well followed those, but, mostly, it was up to us. People were able to get around that censorship by codes of their own devising, of course, which we didn't know about, couldn't do anything about. [laughter]

SI: In your initial interview, you described your crossing from North Africa to Italy. What happened once you got over to Italy? What do you remember about your first few days or so, getting back to your unit?

TK: If I might back up and just say something about that crossing, that has come back to me only recently upon reading Rick Atkinson's book, An Army at Dawn, Rick Atkinson mentions, early in the book, the American group consisting of Ambassador Robert Murphy, General Mark Clark and some others who came ashore from a submarine in Morocco and had a clandestine meeting with local leaders. They were trying to involve the French and not have to face the French as enemies when they landed. They were trying to work out that landing, and he describes that they met at the villa of a French patriot named Henri Teissier. … Henri Teissier got a phone call saying that, "The police hear there's a lot of noise at the villa and they're afraid smugglers are in there and they're going to come around and see what's going on." So, Henri Teissier lifted a trapdoor and shoved them all down into a space underneath the patio. … Then, he and Ambassador Murphy made up a story. They said, "When the police come, we'll act drunken and tell them that we had girls and wine and had a big party here and were making a lot of noise." That was Henri Teissier. He was described as the owner of the villa and a French patriot. When I got on the Liberty ship to make the crossing, after I got out of the hospital, I was … traveling on my own. I was the only officer on this ship, so, I was up in the officers' quarters, and there were two eminent civilians who were there with me. … The three of us spent three days together on the crossing, talking about the war and getting to know one another. One of them was a Lebanese newspaperman named Edward Chidiac, who was a larger-than-life character. He was married to Napoleon's granddaughter and led an amazing life. He owned about a half dozen newspapers and had stories of all sorts. The other man was Jacques Teissier, who, in the course of the three days, I got to know not at all. He was very quiet and secretive. He billed himself as a special representative and observer of the Fifth Army. Now, he and Chidiac were both in French uniforms, with the baggy trousers, but no insignia, so that I'm sure he must have been the son of the Teissier that Atkinson describes. Now, to get back to what you were asking. [Editor's Note: The 2003 Pulitzer Prize Winner for History, An Army at Dawn, by Rick Atkinson cited Tom Kindre's 1994 interview and several other interviews conducted by the Rutgers Oral History Archives. Atkinson (and a number of other authors) names Henri Teissier as the owner of the home while other sources name Jacques Teissier as the owner.]
SI: I just have one quick question about the trip, since you brought it up. In reading your diary account of the trip, it seems like the journalist; I cannot pronounce his name.

TK: Chidiac.

SI: Chidiac, was giving you tips on writing, which is interesting, since you became a writer.

TK: Well, he knew I was about to embark, after the war, on a journalism career. So, he was giving me a lot of tips on how to pursue that, very interesting.

SI: Tell us about your first few days in Italy and getting back up to your unit.

TK: I guess the most interesting thing was arriving in Naples. Now, the division, when they landed, had gone ashore at Salerno. This was a beach landing, but I, coming on the Liberty ship, came into Naples and the Naples harbor was just an amazing sight. The Germans had scuttled every ship and we had bombed other ships and the harbor was just a mess of sunken ships and semi-sunken ships. … They had built a ramp over these sunken ships, out to the farthest sunken ship, and that's where incoming ships tied up and trucks went out over that ramp. [Editor's Note: American paratroopers and Rangers spearheaded the liberation of Naples on October 1, 1943. The Germans' "scorched earth" policy left the city and its critical harbor in ruins, but the Allies were able to reopen the harbor to shipping approximately one week after the city fell and achieved near pre-war levels of traffic by the end of October.]

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Okay, you were talking about your entry into Naples Harbor.

TK: Okay. Well, I think I described that pretty well and got to the unit, the 34th Division, and they were somewhere near Benevento at that point. … We got ourselves organized and, from there on, it was just slow movement following the infantry units up "the Boot."

SI: When you say that you got yourselves organized, what did that mean for you?

TK: Well, we had an automotive section and a supply section and a headquarters section. I was in the supply section. In the supply section, we had several six-by-six trucks. These were parts trucks. We had a Ford truck, a GM truck, Chrysler truck--each truck named for the parts that it supplied. All the Ford parts were in one truck, all the GM parts on another truck, and so on, so that when the motor sergeants from the infantry companies came in, they knew what they wanted, they had requisitions and they'd go to the parts truck and take the parts out. … My job was to keep track of all the supplies, make sure that we had enough supplies, and, in some cases, that required other than ordinary activities. We stole wherever we could. We'd go back to the docks in Naples and try to steal things from the docks. The division, along the way, ran terribly short of brake drums. They were grinding up their brake drums. Brake shoes were unavailable. It's amazing, when I think of it--a country with the industrial might of the US, they couldn't supply us with enough brake shoes. We ended up stealing a lathe, so that our own men in the
company could grind the drums down from trucks that were coming in, because they were getting scored. So, that was getting organized. That's what I meant, I guess.

SI: The different makes created a supply problem for you. It would be basically the same type of vehicle, but, because it was GM instead of Ford, they were not interchangeable.

TK: Yes, right, yes.

SI: They would not standardize because that was against the American business philosophy.

TK: No, no, they wouldn't, no.

SI: One thing that struck me when I was reading about the Italian Campaign in your journal was how often air raids and artillery strikes occurred throughout the night. Did that start right away or was that later on?

TK: It started pretty much right away, because, early on in the Italian Campaign, the Germans still had a fair amount of airpower. That airpower lessened as we went on, because … our own airpower was increasing and we were beginning to knock out some of the German airbases, but there was a lot of air activity all the time. … I mentioned the dogfight. We had dogfights overhead in Italy as well. We had German planes flying over. We had fifty-caliber machine guns in the company and we had men who were trained to use those and man them, and the signal would be a plain, little, old police whistle. When we'd hear a police whistle from the unit that was a mile away, you'd hear that police whistle, that meant, "There's a plane overhead. Get ready." … Then, we'd start blowing our whistles and we'd get the fifty-caliber unlimbered and the German planes would come over at treetop level. I don't think we ever hit one of them, but we fired at them. There were a lot of German planes at that point. Later, there were fewer. The artillery was something else again. Artillery--I have some entries in my diary, perhaps you've got it there--sometimes, all night, the artillery would come in. Nobody would have any sleep and I described it as saying you'd lie in your bed and listen to the sound of the incoming shell, and it was always a shriek, and you'd wait for the end of the shriek, and then, there would be a, "KA-BOOF," was the closest I could come to describing it, "KA-BOOF," when it exploded, and then, you'd relax and … wait for the next one. It was too cold and too wet. If you got out of your bunk and got into a foxhole, you'd be in water and it was cold and wet. … That might have been safer, but I never wanted to do that. I just stayed in my bunk. I figured, "If it's going to hit directly on the tent, that's it. My getting out into a foxhole next to the tent isn't going to make that much difference," but it would go on all night like that. … The German artillery and our artillery frequently dueled and we had a scope set up--this is when we were up near Cassino. We were in an area between San Pietro and San Vittore, which is near Venafro, which is about five miles from Cassino, I guess, and we were up on a high elevation and we could see the whole valley. We could see the monastery, we could see the town of Cassino, we could see the main highway, and, with this scope, we would watch the artillery duels. The Germans had not only standard artillery pieces, they had Nebelwerfers. The Nebelwerfer was a rocket launcher. It was mounted on a vehicle and it was like a frame and it had six tubes. … It would shoot off six rockets at a time and you could see them in the distance. We looked through the scope, you'd see, [Mr. Kindre imitates explosions], the flashes, and then, you'd listen and you'd hear them
come in. … You'd see where they landed, near one of our artillery positions. They were aiming for our artillery positions. The next thing we'd see is our artillery firing back, and then, trying to knock out this Nebelwerfer position. [Editor's Note: The German Nebelwerfer ("smoke mortar") was a six-barreled rocket projector that fired 150-millimeter rockets commonly known as "Screaming Meemies" by American troops due to the inflight sound they produced.] The artillery was the worst experience, I guess. The reason I brought this ruler along was just to show you.

SI: It is a standard ruler.

TK: Yes, well, it's got centimeters on it here. Our division artillery units--we had three artillery battalions in the division, initially--they had 105-millimeter howitzers. 105 is--for the purpose of the tape, I'm demonstrating here--105 millimeters, that's the diameter of the shell. Later, they got 155-millimeter shells, which are that diameter, and, later in the war, we began to get independent battalions of 240-millimeters, and that would be a shell with a diameter like that. You can imagine that, and the noise that they made. We had a 240-millimeter battalion near us at one point, on a bend of the road. … I remember vividly riding by in a jeep when that 240, we called them "long toms," when it went off and the whole jeep jumped up … on the road, just jumped up off the surface.

EB: What were they shooting at?

TK: Well, they were shooting at the Germans, miles away.

EB: Would the shell open?

TK: On us? no.

EB: No, I mean on contact with something.

TK: Oh, yes. It would explode on contact, but we also had an advance that came along while I was getting ammunition--part of my job was getting ammunition for the division. They came up with what was then called a great advance, which was the proximity fuse. The proximity fuse could be set on the shell and … it would be radar, worked by radar, so that the shell would go off a certain distance from the ground. You could set it for ten feet, twenty feet, whatever, and, when the shell burst in the air, over a group of Germans out in trenches, you'd get flak over a huge area. So, artillery was nasty stuff.

SI: Being in an ordnance company, a big part of your job was getting supplies up to the front, correct?

TK: [Yes].

SI: Were you mostly bringing them to the artillery units or to the frontline infantry, or both?

TK: Both, and we were not running them up there. They were coming back and getting them.
SI: Okay.

TK: Each infantry battalion had a motor company and the motor sergeant was in charge of getting supplies for his battalion. So, he would come back, he or his representative would come back, pick up the supplies and take them back. The artillery, the same--each artillery battalion had a motor company and they would … come back and get our supplies and take them up.

SI: Were the vehicles that you were taking care of specifically assigned to your company or were they the vehicles that the infantry battalions were using?

TK: Infantry were using, yes. … Now, that's when we did go forward, occasionally, to pick up a vehicle that had been damaged. We had wreckers in the company. So, we would have to take a wrecker forward and, sometimes, into areas that were being heavily shelled, and pick up a vehicle and bring it back. … Then, we'd have to decide whether that vehicle was worth fixing or whether it was not. If it wasn't, it'd simply be written off. If it was, we would fix it, repair it and get it back in shape. We had a division commander named Ryder. Ryder is mentioned quite a bit in Rick Atkinson's book. He was a "cowboy," as we called him. He wanted always to be up at the front and he kept getting his jeep shelled to pieces. I don't know why he wasn't shelled to pieces himself. He somehow got out of the jeep before the shells hit, but one of our biggest jobs was bringing back General Ryder's jeeps and trying to repair them. [Editor's Note: Major General Charles W. "Doc" Ryder, a World War I veteran and West Point classmate of Eisenhower, commanded the 34th Infantry Division from May 1942 to July 1944.]

SI: A lot has been written, by Rick Atkinson and others, about how slowly the infantry advanced up the Italian "Boot," but what did that mean for your unit, the fact that you were not moving forward as quickly?

TK: Yes, he has described it as being the closest thing to World War I trench warfare, the Italian Front, and I guess other people have described it that way also, because it was inch-by-inch and the terrain was terribly difficult. The terrain was heavily mountainous. They threw the Tenth Mountain Division in there and they themselves had never been trained properly for that kind of [warfare], the mountain climbing. … They had to start a whole new branch of the service, which was the "mule skinners." They had to procure mules and train people to take care of the mules, because only the mules could get up these mountain trails and deliver supplies and bring the wounded back. I had a note somewhere that, one night, one of the motor sergeants told us that a two-hundred-pound man had been wounded and it took six men twelve hours to bring him down from the mountain, but they did. They got him down, and they saved him. [Editor's Note: In the Italian Campaign, several hundred mules were sometimes required to support infantry battalions by carrying supplies and casualties. On February 14, 1944, when the 34th Division was relieved by the Fourth Indian Division, they used seven hundred soldiers as litter bearers and one thousand mules to move back.]

SI: He was brought down by mule.

TK: Well, no, on a stretcher, just six men.
SI: Okay.

TK: Yes.

SI: You mentioned in your first interview that you welded litter bearing racks onto the jeeps.

TK: Yes.

SI: Did the slow pace mean that your unit had a chance to get established in an area before you had to move out?

TK: Yes, yes, we did. We were able to get established and that gave us an opportunity to have some comfort items. I mean, we eventually had tents. Initially, we were sleeping out on the ground, but, when we got into an area and we were there for a bit, we were able to get tents, we were able to get cots, we were able to manufacture little stoves for ourselves. We'd have these little stoves made out of shell casings. Our boys would build these themselves and they would have a tank with gasoline and drip the gasoline down, and that would keep us warm in the winter--things like that, that … you wouldn't have been able to do if you'd been on the move all the time.

SI: From where you were, could you see what was happening on the battlefield?

TK: When we were, as I've told you, … near Cassino, we could. We could see the whole battle spread out in front of us and that was a remarkable sight. We saw the shells coming in, we saw the artillery pieces firing and the shells going out. The monastery, I always thought [that] was where the Germans had their observation post. We all did. We all thought that, and, as Rick Atkinson points out, that was kind of obvious, because here it was, sitting on top of the mountain, and the Germans could pinpoint anything within range of that mountain. A single truck moving along the highway, way back, six or seven miles back, they could zero in on and drop artillery shells on it. I know from personal experience. I went up to reconnoiter a new area. They wanted us to be closer to the front. So, we went up, and the area was to be in a field that was sloping down to the river and here was the river and here was the town of Cassino and behind that was the monastery hill with the monastery. Now, we had to have good, hard ground for our trucks. We had heavy trucks. So, you didn't want to get into a muddy field. So, I went out into the field to test it, to make sure it was hard ground. … There was one stone wall of a ruined farmhouse there, thick stone wall, maybe two or three feet thick. … I approached the edge of it and I could have walked to the right or to the left. I walked to the left and I got halfway along that and a German eighty-eight-millimeter shell burst right on the other side of that stone wall. … I've often wondered why I walked left rather than right. If I'd walked right, I wouldn't be here, but what it showed me is that they had pinpoint accuracy. Now, they were probably training their artillerymen, saying, "Look, there's only [one man]." They wouldn't waste a shell on one guy, but I think they would do it for training, "Here's a guy in the field. Let's see if you can knock him off." They were that accurate and, naturally, we'd look up at the monastery and say, "Well, that's where they are, of course." Now, as revisionists have said, and they may be right, they were probably in the rocks below the monastery, which would have been
just as good. Atkinson points out that the general in charge was an Oxford scholar and an ardent Italianist, ... a student of Italian culture and history, and he said he never permitted troops into the monastery. Well, we didn't know that. [Editor's Note: From January 1944 to February 13, 1944, the 34th Division took part in the drive on Cassino.]

SI: I want to go back to this close call by the wall. When an eighty-eight-millimeter shell goes off right near you, what happens?

TK: Well, there's a big noise. [laughter] ... I didn't get knocked down, because this very thick wall was between me and the shell, but it was enough to scare hell out of me. ... I got out of there very quickly and we went through a town there and, as we went through the town, shells were falling behind us. ... We were moving and the shells were creeping up on us. So, we finally got out of the jeep and dived down into a ditch and stayed there until the shelling abated a little bit. Then, we went on our way. Obviously, we didn't move into that area. That was too close for comfort. [laughter]

SI: Would you say that was your closest call? Were there other times when you were fired on that closely?

TK: That was the closest one. There were other times when we were under shellfire all night. I lay there in my bunk, wondering if I were going to be hit or not, but you didn't know of a particular shell--you were just [bracing].

EB: Did that make the war more personal for you, since it was directly aimed at you?

TK: [laughter] No, no, I didn't think they were trying to hit me. Most of what happened was accidental. In the bombing, in the days just prior to the bombing of the monastery--the bombing of the monastery took place on February 15th--and, in the days leading up to that, there was a lot of bombing of the town of Cassino. ... We were watching planes go over and one of our artillery battalions, up forward of where we were, were standing in the chow line, watching the planes go over. ... We saw the planes. They would go over to the north, and then, they'd peel off and they'd come down and fly to the south and drop their bombs on the town. One of them missed the target and dropped a bomb right on the chow line of the 125th Artillery Battalion, killed about, I don't know, ten or fifteen men. They were standing there, looking up at the plane, and they got bombed. So, there were a lot of mistakes, but, no, I never felt anyone was aiming for me. [Editor's Note: On February 7, 1944, an American plane dropped a bomb on a chow hall truck while men were in line for food. Twenty-five men from A Battery, 125th Field Artillery Battalion, 34th Infantry Division, were killed.]

EB: I just meant the one with the shell ...  

TK: Well, out in the field, I thought they were aiming for me, yes.

EB: That was what I meant.

TK: I really felt they were aiming for me. Otherwise, they wouldn't have lobbed a shell.
EB: Did you feel any hatred towards them, since they aimed for you?

TK: No, no, I felt it was probably a training exercise.

EB: Training to kill you, though.

TK: Yes, training with me as the target, yes.

SI: By this time, had you become hardened to seeing these things, images of destruction?

TK: I guess, yes. Yes, I probably was. I was getting used to them, but there were terrible things on both sides. I reported in Africa, and … Rick Atkinson has a note on this from my interview in his book, about how … some of the soldiers in our own division were using the Arabs for target practice. They would say, one would say to the other, "See that Arab on the hill over there? I'll bet you can't knock him off." "I can," and they'd shoot and they'd kill people. That was terrible, … but the Arabs got even, because we would drive around in jeeps with our windshields down, because it was hot, and the Arabs took to stringing piano wire across the road. They decapitated about a half dozen Americans before we realized what was happening. … So, they brought the jeeps in and our company, we got the idea of welding about a four-foot piece of angle iron onto the front bumper of the jeep, so [that] it stuck up like this. … Interestingly enough, on reunion day this year, when my Class of '42 rode in those World War II jeeps that were brought by (Military Vehicle Clubs, the colonel, former colonel, who was driving our jeep was talking about that. He said, "Some of these jeeps that we get have wire cutters on them." I said, "I know all about wire cutters, because my company invented the wire cutter in Africa," [laughter] but I'm not answering your question, am I? [Editor's Note: Mr. Kindre's testimony regarding soldiers shooting Arabs is mentioned on Pages 462 and 463 in An Army at Dawn.]

SI: We can get back to that. Do you mind if we take a break?

TK: Oh, sure, yes.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Before we left, we were talking about how you became a little hardened to what you were seeing around you. Could you describe what you could see of the Battle of Monte Cassino, particularly the controversial bombing?

TK: Well, for several days in advance of the bombing of the monastery, there had been concentrated bombing of the city, Cassino, the town of Cassino. … We watched those planes come over every day and drop their bombs. … I had mentioned that one of those bombs fell by accident into the chow line of the 125th Field Artillery in our division and killed a number of men. We saw that happening. We knew, in a general way, that a decision was forthcoming on the monastery. We didn't know what it would be, but we knew that they were about to make that decision. Then, on the 16th, February 16th, they had made the decision to bomb the monastery. … The planes then came over in great waves. Instead of just a single flight going over, we saw
flight after flight after flight. I don't know how many planes were involved, … and we could hear the detonation. By that time, we were pulled back into a reserve area. I didn't have that view of the monastery that I described to you earlier. We were back a little further, but we could hear the bombs and we knew that the monastery was being pulverized. I went back, incidentally, … four, five years ago. Marie and I went back and went to Italy and I went back to Monte Cassino and saw what they'd done to reconstruct it. … They've done a lot, but, of course, they could never put it back the way it was entirely, because the frescoes were all destroyed on the walls. … Well, anyway, what else can I tell you about it? [Editor's Note: Operation AVENGER, the codename for the bombing of the Monte Cassino Abbey, occurred on February 15, 1944. Beginning in the morning and continuing into the afternoon, 250 bombers dropped six hundred tons of explosives in conjunction with heavy artillery.]

SI: Once you were pulled back into reserve, did you go back up closer or were you sent somewhere else?

TK: We weren't sent somewhere else. What happened is that, and this is what Mark Clark was accused of by the Texans at the end of the war, he, without any change in strategy, would simply throw a division at the line. He threw in the 36th Division. That was the Texas National Guard Division, that caused him so much controversy later, and he'd throw them in there until they were all chewed up. … Then, he'd pull them out and he'd throw the 34th Division in, and then, pull them out when they got chewed up. So, when the 34th Division was in the line, we'd be up close to the line, maybe four or five miles back. Then, when the 34th Division was pulled back and the 36th was put in, we would move back a little farther, maybe back around ten miles. So, we were always reasonably close, to know what was going on, but not as close as we were when the 34th would actually be in the line, but I had an experience that taught me what it was like when I was given the mission of taking a prisoner back to Casablanca. … Should I tell you about that? … [Editor's Note: In February 1944, the 34th Division's casualty rates for its rifle companies reached an average of sixty-five percent.]

SI: You did discuss that in the first interview.

TK: Yes, I did describe that, I think, yes.

SI: That happened in the middle of the battle for Cassino. Is that when you were sent back?

TK: Yes.

SI: Was he being court-martialed for not going forward?

TK: … The Rapido River crossing, that was at the Rapido River crossing. … He had been a platoon leader and his platoon was pinned down in a situation where he just watched while his men were getting picked off one at a time and they couldn't even see where the German fire was coming from. It was all concealed. So, he ordered them back and, because he had not received a specific order from a higher officer to do that, he was court-martialed, [for] misbehavior in the face of the enemy, and sentenced to death. … My job was to take him back to Casablanca. I guess I did describe that.
SI: Yes.

TK: Yes.

SI: What happened after you returned from that detached duty?

TK: Shortly after I returned from that, the Anzio landing took place. ... The beachhead was so small at Anzio that they couldn't send the entire division. So, they split the division in half. Half [of] the 34th Division went to Anzio, the other half remained behind in Pozzuoli, which was just outside of Naples, and, just by the luck of the draw, I was with the half that remained behind. So, I was back there at Naples; I didn't get to Anzio. The Anzio landing, of course, as history has proved, was botched, because they failed to take advantage of the opportunity to go inland. ... They stopped and that gave the Germans time to rally their forces and come in and make a major presence and make it the kind of beachhead it was, which was destructive. ... [Editor's Note: The Fifth Army landed on the Anzio Beachhead on January 22, 1944, under the command of General Mark Clark.]

SI: Was the area where you were, Pozzuoli, outside of Naples, relatively quiet?

TK: Yes, yes, Pozzuoli. It was a volcanic area. There was a volcanic lake there, as I recall, but it was very quiet, yes.

SI: One thing that many books on the Italian Front bring up is the use of propaganda by both sides. Do you remember being exposed to any German propaganda, whether it was on the radio or from pamphlets?

TK: I don't remember much on radio. There were a number of pamphlets; in fact, I had a collection of those. I think I gave them to Rutgers one time.

SI: Really?

TK: Yes, I think so.

SI: Maybe they are in the University Archives.

TK: Yes, I think Tom Frusciano has them. [laughter] I don't think I have them anymore. I had collected a number of leaflets that were dropped by airplane. We dropped them, the Germans dropped them--we dropped more than they did, I think. Yes, I'm sorry I don't have them with me.

ML: Do you remember what any of them said?

TK: Not specifically. I mean, they probably talked about atrocities that the other side was committing. That's what those old propaganda leaflets did. ... The Germans did as much as they could to take advantage of ... what they saw as a propaganda opportunity with Monte Cassino,
that the Americans were the people who were bombing Italy's heritage into pieces because they had no regard for human life or for history of human life, whereas they, the Germans, were the conservators and preservers and had carefully maintained the monastery without their presence in it, nothing to do with the military. So, they made a lot … of that. [Editor's Note: In the Mediterranean Theater, Allied forces dropped over four billion leaflets, which mostly encouraged Germans to surrender.]

SI: Did any of this propaganda have any impact on the Americans?

TK: No, no. They collected it and laughed at it, no, no. [laughter]

SI: You were in Pozzuoli …

TK: Pozzuoli.

SI: … Until the Anzio Beachhead was cleared up and they made the breakout.

TK: [Yes].

SI: Then, that was when the push on Rome began.

TK: Yes.

SI: Can you tell us about your role in the push on Rome?

TK: Well, we went up the Apennine spine. "The Boot" was divided in two, the British Eighth Army on the right and the American Fifth Army on the left. … We were--the 34th Division was-usually on the right flank of the Fifth Army. So, we were close to the line with the Brits, and that put us up into the mountains. … So, our 34th Division had a lot of mountainous area to go through, with all the problems I described earlier, about the mule trains and the difficulty of getting the wounded back, and so on, and our difficulty in reclaiming vehicles, and so on. So, we were up in the mountains and, in the Winter of '44, it was a very, very harsh winter and what I remember most about Italy in that winter is there was never any sunshine. It was overcast all the time. It was cold and overcast up in the mountains. I don't know whether that's typical of that area, but it was that winter. There was no sunshine anytime. … My duties were partly relieved at that time by my serving on the division court-martial board, which I think I also described, did I not?

SI: You may have touched upon it. I remember reading about it in your diary. Do you want to say a little something about what you did there? What kind of cases do you remember?

TK: Well, yes, it was that duty that this special mission grew out of, … where I took the condemned second lieutenant back to Casablanca.

SI: You started with that before Anzio.
TK: Yes, about then, yes, right. For some reason, I was asked if I wanted to serve on the division court-martial board--have no idea why. They asked my company commander if I wanted to serve. I somehow had the notion that it had something to do with the college education, because a lot of the men in my company were not college educated. Most of them were not. So, it might have had something to do with that. In any case, I was appointed to the division court-martial board. The president of the division court-martial board was a man who had been a regimental commander in the 34th Division and he'd badly screwed up. He screwed up so badly that everybody knew it, but, because it was a National Guard division, with lots of built-in links of comradeship back home--you know, somebody who worked for somebody else back home would work for him again after the war, and so on--he wasn't court-martialed, as he should have been. [Editor's Note: The 34th Infantry Division, or Red Bull Division, had been activated on February 10, 1941. It originally was made up of National Guard soldiers from South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota.] They brought him back and they gave him two cushy, rear-echelon jobs: division Special Service officer, which was getting the cigarettes and the candy in for the troops, and president of the court-martial board. … He was the most bloodthirsty son of a bitch I have ever known on these cases. … He and I tangled many times, because, just at that time, the division surgeon was beginning to recognize what came to be called battle fatigue. … He wrote a seminal paper on that, which he sent to the division commander, and which I long ago gave to Tom Frusciano. That was the beginning of the whole idea that a soldier could be incapacitated by wounds other than physical wounds. … These factors were being brought to the attention of our court-martial board, but the court-martial board president refused to listen to it. He was Patton, through and through. "You coward," that's it. If you didn't stand up, you were a coward. Well, in our own company, the ordnance company, which never fired guns directly at people and were never fired back at directly, we evacuated two men for battle fatigue. They couldn't cope anymore, from the shelling or whatever. They couldn't cope. They were gone. They had disappeared within themselves, and, after lengthy trips back and forth with division medics, we finally had to evacuate them. …

SI: Was it around the same time?

TK: Yes. I don't know … if anything specific had happened to them. I think it was just an accumulation, of maybe, somehow, coming to realize that they were in a situation where it could be dangerous and they had no control over it. … We were sitting back there being shelled. [laughter] No, you couldn't do anything about that.

SI: Pretty helpless.

TK: Yes. So, I think that's what it was, but, anyway, that was my court-martial experience, and I remember several cases. These were all cases that involved the death penalty. "Misbehavior before the enemy" was the charge and that was punishable by death. … The young lieutenant whom I was charged with taking back was in that situation and he described everything that he had done to me and I concluded that, had I been in his shoes, I would have done exactly the same as he did. So, it's luck.

SI: In these cases, what was the usual outcome?
TK: Guilty, mostly guilty, because the court-martial president swayed the other members of the board not to pay any attention to this new pseudo-science … that the medics were coming up with. He wanted no part of that. He said, "The men are playing a game. … Nobody gets battle fatigue. They're cowards."

SI: Would they be sentenced to death?

TK: Yes, many of them. Now, none of those sentences got carried out, because, toward the end of the war, … Eisenhower commuted all the death sentences, except that one famous one. What was his name, Private …

SI: Slovik.

TK: Slovik, yes. So, the man I took back, I know that he wasn't executed, but I never heard any more about him. [Editor's Note: On January 31, 1945, Private Edward Slovik, the only American soldier put to death for desertion during the war, was executed.]

SI: Can you tell us about the fall of Rome, the days leading up to it, then, going into the city?

TK: The days leading up to it, nothing was much different than it had been any other day. We knew that our division was making good progress, because, as I mentioned, we were getting the daily intelligence reports from division headquarters. I was plotting everything on the map, and we knew they were making progress, and then, we heard, one day, that, suddenly, elements of the 34th Division had entered Rome. … They had gone right through the city. They chased the Germans out and were moving on, and I'm a little fuzzy about the date. It was either June 4th or June 5th. [Editor's Note: The Germans retreated from Rome on June 4th, as the Fifth Army entered. On June 5th, the citizens fled into the streets to greet the Americans.]

SI: I think it was June 4th.

TK: 4th, yes, but, in any case, that was the night that … my fellow officers and I, about three of us, decided to drive into Rome, and so, we did. We got in a jeep and we drove into Rome. … I think I have an article in the Asbury Park Press about that. …

SI: Yes. I would like you to describe some of what you mentioned in the article. [Editor's Note: Shaun Illingworth exits the interview for a brief period of time.]

TK: You want me to mention that? Well, we got in the jeep--this was the evening of June 4--and we headed up Highway 7. … Highway 7 followed the course of one of the ancient Roman roads--the Appian Way--and it goes straight into Rome. … We had blackout lights only, because we [had] blackout conditions everywhere. Shelling was still going on. So, we're going along in the jeep, probably five miles an hour or less, and we didn't know where we were. We just kept going. We heard barking dogs, we heard voices, people were talking--we were going through a village. We finally got into Rome and it was a very cloudy night. Everything was clouded. It was pitch dark. You could barely see your hand. There was a full moon, but it was hidden. We were guiding ourselves along by looking at the roofs of buildings. We could see a
slight silhouette of the roof against the sky, and we kept driving along and we finally came out into some kind of an open area. … There seemed to be no more buildings. We're just out in the open, and there was small arms fire going on around, maybe a block away or so, sporadic small arms fire. … The Germans were still lingering in the city. They hadn't been driven out. Our division just pushed through and left pockets behind. So, while we were [driving], we get out in the middle of nowhere and we don't know what to do next and the clouds opened up and this full moon came out and we see in front of us these great stone columns. We're right in front of the Colosseum. [laughter] We look up and there's the Colosseum. We're standing right in front of it. That was a great moment. That was my introduction to Rome. [Editor's Note: Highway 7 is a north to south road that runs on the southwest side of the Alban Hills.]

ML: Did you explore that area? Did you go inside the Colosseum at all?

TK: Well, later, of course, later, when we had taken Rome, Rome had officially been taken. This was the night before it was officially taken. It was the following day that they had the victory parade. We were there the night before and, later, I was able to get a leave, a five-day leave, to Rome. In fact, I did that twice during the time that we were up in that area, and then, I was able to tour Rome, see all the historic sites--no tourists, no tourists around.

ML: You got a free pass, pretty much.

TK: Yes.

ML: Were all of the Germans driven out by the time you had the victory parade or were there still pockets of resistance?

TK: Oh, they probably were all out by then. I suspect they made an effort to get them out by then, because, in the victory parade, General Clark and others were fully exposed, coming through in vehicles, but D-Day [in] France was the 6th and the victory parade in Rome was the 5th. So, it must have been the night of the 4th that we went in and had our early look at it. Somebody, I think Rick Atkinson, quotes Mark Clark as saying, "They wouldn't even let us get the headline for the taking of Rome, because D-Day burst upon the scene and that's all the world knew about from there on, was D-Day." [Editor's Note: Operation OVERLORD, commonly referred to as D-Day, the Allied invasion of Normandy in Northern France, began on June 6, 1944.]

ML: How long did you stay in Rome?

TK: Well, … actually, we weren't in Rome. I went there twice for a five-day leave. We stayed in the Fifth Army officers' rest hotel and I was there twice, but that's all.

ML: You were there just for the parade.

TK: I wasn't there for the parade. I was there a couple times after that. …

ML: You just passed through Rome. Where were you on your way to next?
TK: Passed through Rome and kept on going, to the edge of the Po Valley. We were in a town called (Avignano?), I think it was, which was south and east of Turin, and that was our final staging area. It was from there that I was sent to Military Government school, which was in Rome, and, from there, back to Turin for the Military Government stint, which I described earlier, about stealing the vehicles, and so on.

ML: How long were you in the Po Valley?

TK: In the Po Valley area? I'd say from March until August '45, about four or five months, maybe. … Then, in August, or late July, I was pulled out and I came home on points. We had a point system, based on your service and length of time, and so on, and I had eighty or eighty-five points, whatever it was, which permitted me to come home and others not to come home, and that's when I got shipped home.

ML: In Turin, was there still constant fighting? Were you still receiving artillery fire there?

TK: No, the war was over. The war ended on May 8th, [the] European War, V-E Day, May 8th. Italy had, of course, surrendered long before that. Italy had surrendered, I think, a year before, but May 8th, everything was over. So, we were just in bivouac there. [Editor's Note: The Italian government surrendered on September 8, 1943. However, German forces remained in the country for the duration of the war and did not surrender in Italy until May 2, 1945.]

ML: How did you pass the time?

TK: Well, I didn't have an awful lot of time, because I was very quickly assigned to the Military Government, went to school and went into that area. The rest of our men were still there in the ordnance company. I don't know how they passed their time, [laughter] but, well, I remember a couple things we did. We drove up to Lake Maggiore, looked around up there. That was fun. I never got into Milan, but we did a couple of sightseeing things, but, mostly, I was off into the Military Government venture.

ML: What were your responsibilities there?

TK: In Military Government? Well, I was several things. I was the billeting officer for the City of Turin. I ran a small airline, [laughter] an Italian airline. I never did much about it. I mean, I remember talking to the executives of the airline and going over their records, but that's all. … My major duty was the ordnance duty that I described, stealing trucks. That was the most important thing I did. [laughter]

ML: Was that the biggest problem you had there, plus, the lack of food?

TK: The what?

ML: The lack of food, and how to secure more.
TK: Yes, oh, yes, lack of food. … I started to tell Shaun, earlier, I guess I did tell him, about going into the Fiat plant, which was … then the biggest auto factory in Europe, and getting the manager and telling him that we needed trucks. … He couldn't supply any trucks and I'd send my "commandoes" out and they'd come out with trucks. … He raised a huge fuss and I said, "That's just too bad." I was a little dismayed with him, because it was his people we were trying to feed, the Italian people, and he seemed not to care about that, but, anyway, we did it. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: You were sent to Military Government school in the Fall of 1944.

TK: No, this was in April.

SI: April 1945?

TK: April '45.

SI: What did you do between June of 1944, when Rome fell, and that point? We may have just covered this.

TK: Well, we were up in the mountains. … It was just nasty, rainy living up there and the division was slogging again. They were back to slogging. … I think that was the Gothic Line, I'm not sure, but it was yard-by-yard and the same old stuff. After the fall of Rome, it wasn't any easier than it was before, still going through the mountains, and then, emerging, finally, in March. Our troops, the 34th Division, had pretty well taken all their objectives in the Gothic Line and, by April, things were beginning to come apart. That's when I talked about the [event of] almost capturing the German regiment, because things were so fluid on the front. … Then, of course, May 8th was the end of the war in Europe, which included Italy. Italy had surrendered a year before, I think, or a year-and-a-half before. So, everything … had worn down by then.

SI: Where you were, were you seeing less German resistance from the Fall of 1944 on, when you were in the mountains, fewer air raids, perhaps?

TK: Oh, not many air raids anymore at all, yes. The German … Luftwaffe was decimated by that time everywhere. They were pretty well depleted. No, we had German airpower early, in Africa, and then, early in Italy. I'd say, … of course, in the Fall of '43 and through the first half of '44, but, after that, we weren't bothered by planes anymore.

SI: How about artillery attacks? Were they still able to keep that up?

TK: Still, yes, but it wasn't as bad after the fall of Rome. They used artillery mostly to defend the Monte Cassino area. That was the main corridor, north and south, and, once that was gone, there never was, I don't think, that same concentration of artillery again, although they were still there, but not as much.
SI: You mentioned that you had supply problems, in terms of getting parts for trucks, and so forth. What about other things, like ammunition? Did you have any trouble with getting that or getting it up to the troops?

TK: No. There was always plenty of ammunition. The vehicle parts were the main problem. We managed as best we could. … I made frequent trips back to the rear areas, trying to find particular things that we were looking for, like, one time, we were badly in need of windshield glass for the trucks and I scoured the docks at Naples trying to find some and we weren't very successful. We were always looking for special things like that, that were in short supply. Some things were just in short supply, and I don't know why.

SI: Was there any behind-the-lines harassment, by either the Italians who were sympathetic to the Germans or any Germans that were behind-the-lines, or anything that the Germans left behind, such as mines or booby traps?

TK: Yes. In the areas that we came into, those things were mostly taken care of. … When the infantry was moving fast, it was different, a different matter then. Then, you had to be very careful, because they would go through and there might still be booby traps in towns, and so on, but … most of the time, it was very slow going, as you know, in Italy, so, the infantry had time to defuse things and search for booby traps and search for mines, and so on. So, most of the time, when we moved into an area, it had been demined and defused, although we had a terrible accident. Our division ordnance officer, our colonel, and a captain, who was then the division ammo officer, and one other man were killed while testing out a new form of mortar that they were developing. They'd walked into a minefield and were killed--really bad. That brought it right home for us. So, you always had to be careful, but I remember going out and walking out in the fields. The local people could tell you a lot. They knew where the mines had been planted and they would say, "Don't go in that field over there. You know, stay away from that, because we don't know what's there. They might have put something in there," things like that. So, you had to be cautious, though. As far as Germans and Nazi sympathizers, no, I never encountered any. The Germans were pretty well cleaned out. We got all the prisoners. … Early on in Italy, we'd occasionally pick some up. One time, two Germans wandered into our area and the guys brought them over to me--I was the officer of the day--and they were pretty sorry looking. … I asked them when they'd had anything to eat and they hadn't had anything to eat in three days. [laughter] So, I took them right to the mess tent and got them fed. … Our job was not to interrogate them. We had to just hold them until the division intelligence group arrived and they would take them and interrogate them, but I was not impressed by them. They were pretty sorry looking. … They looked as though they were scared. They looked like farmers, maybe, or they weren't sophisticated people. They were happy to give up. We didn't encounter too many of them.

SI: This is kind of a general question, but, when you were in the mountains, doing your job, would you say it was basically a twenty-four-hour-a-day operation?

TK: [Yes].

SI: What kind of physical toll did just doing your job and being out in the field take on you?
TK: Not a great deal. I mean, you say a twenty-four-hour-a-day job, but it wasn't really a
twenty-four-hour-a-day job. It could be at any given time. I mean, something could happen in
the middle of the night that would require attention, but, most of the time, it was a normal work
day, because, remember, everything was blackout conditions, so, there weren't many vehicles
moving at night. Nobody from the infantry divisions would come back at night to us and we
wouldn't go up to them. So, it was pretty much a daylight operation in those terms. If an
emergency erupted, like, in the middle of the night, [like] the General's party had been ambushed
and you had to go up and get the vehicles out or something, then, of course, you did, but that
didn't happen too often. So, in terms of a physical toll, no, I didn't think there was, wasn't bad.

SI: Were you able to get sleep regularly?

TK: Except when we were being shelled, yes. [laughter] There were periods when, for maybe a
week or so on end, we weren't getting an awful lot of sleep. That was tough, but, then, you'd
move to another area and it would be a little different. It wouldn't be as bad. So, that was really
the toughest physical problem, was that, when you were involved in constant shelling. Yes, that
took a toll, [laughter] when you can't sleep.

SI: In April, you were pulled back for Military Government training.

TK: Yes.

SI: What did that entail?

TK: Well, it was a two-week course in Rome and the basic precept of Military Government was
to restore order, avoid insurrection, feed the people--those were the things you had to do. You
had to feed the people, make order, restore services and prevent insurrection. The goal was not
to advance civilization or worry about the education of people or anything. It was restore order.
The primary thing they wanted was, "Let's not have any problems with the civilian population.
We want to keep them well fed and quiet, so that they don't get in the way of our ongoing
operation." That was basically what it was. It was not humane in the sense of advancing their
interests, but, then, we weren't going to be there for very long, you know. It was humane in the
sense that you wanted to get them fed, restore order. We went into a village, for example--this is
with the ordnance company now. We had big M5 generators, they called them, the kind of
generators the artillery used. … We had some of those and we went into this village and they
had no power. We hooked the generator up to their power system. The lights went on. The
mayor threw a party. Everybody had a great time. Wherever we could, we did things like that,
… but Military Government, oh, and the other thing that I point out to people now--I'm a critic of
the Iraq War, I've written some things about this, and the Afghanistan War--what I've said is that
we never had a real occupation policy in Iraq. We haven't--we haven't had [one]. Our
occupation policy in Italy, and I know it was true in Japan, it was true in Germany, when you
occupied a country, you went into every town, village, crossroads--you were everywhere. You
were there to help the people get fed and restore services, but, also, you were the eyes and ears.
You knew if there was going to be any insurrection or anything. You'd know it immediately,
right down here on this street corner, whereas in Iraq, we went in there with so sparse a force that
we don't know what's going on in the country. You can't occupy a country that way. Three years ago, … when I was in the National Security Seminar at the Army War College, I queried … the lieutenant colonels, … these are active duty lieutenant colonels, in my seminar group. … These guys all had advanced degrees in history or sociology or political theory or something, and I said, … "Is our occupation policy in Iraq going to work?" and they said, "No, it can't work." It can't work. You can't occupy a country without occupying it. So, anyway, that was what the Military Government primarily was. Now, the tools that they gave you were assorted. I can't remember them all. I mean, there was a manual and there were sample proclamations to make, if you went into an area where you had to make a proclamation, but, mostly, it was the basic things of food and services and doing the best you could with those.

SI: Once you went for this training, you were no longer in the 34th Division.

TK: That's right, yes. … From the school in Rome, I was sent immediately to Turin, where I was assigned to the staff of the headquarters commandant in Turin. … My job, while you were out, we were talking a little bit about it, I was the billeting officer, I ran a small airline. [laughter] …

SI: Really?

TK: Yes, and I was also in charge of getting food into the city. I've told you about that. Those were my primary duties.

SI: Let me pause.

[TAPE PAUSED]

TK: Oh, sure. When I was assigned to the headquarters commandant in Turin, one of the principal problems was feeding the people in the city. It was a large city, maybe a couple hundred thousand, and the German policy upon retreat was to either destroy or take with them everything they could. It was a "scorched earth" policy. So, the Germans had taken every vehicle in the city. If they couldn't take it, they destroyed it, and they took with them everything they could. They broke into stores everywhere and stole everything—clothing, radios, whatever they could take. So, there were no vehicles in Turin, and the principal job was to get the city fed. There was a lot of food out in the countryside. The farms were all in good order, but there was no way of getting that food in. So, the headquarters commandant, who was … a military police major, a tough-bitten old guy, he said to me, "You're wearing those Ordnance bombs [the Ordnance Corps insignia]." He said, "You're an Ordnance officer." He said, "I want you to get some trucks," and I said, "Well, how am I going to do that?" He said, "I don't care how you do it. Steal them if you have to." [laughter] He had tried to get them through channels, but, going through channels, you had to go from Military Government to army to theater command, back to Washington Command to army to Military Government. It would have taken a month to get any kind of approval for us to get trucks. Now, there were plenty of trucks, because, as these Germans were surrendering, they were turning in all their vehicles and there were these American depots scattered all around. They had hundreds of trucks, German trucks, but they couldn't give them to us, because we weren't authorized to take them. … I put together a
"commando" group of maybe four or five or six. We had assorted British and American. I remember, I had one British non-com, he was a great guy, from Yorkshire. ... We had British and Americans and we had about six people and we'd go to one of these depots and I would talk to the officer in charge. He was an ordnance officer, I was an ordnance officer, so, we could talk. ... I told him what our problem was and, ... of course, I knew what he was going to say. He said, ... "I'm not authorized, Lieutenant, to give you any vehicles. I can't do that, I can't do that." So, I would make this little signal behind my back and my "commandoes" would disperse throughout the depot and we would hear the engines starting up and they would be driving out with the trucks. ... The officer in charge, at that point, would call his guard. He'd get very upset, and I would get out of there as quickly as I could. ... We'd go down the road and look at our ill-gotten gains and, sometimes, we had two or three trucks, sometimes, we had only one, depending on what we could lay our hands on. ... As I mentioned, we had, by the end of the time there, ... a collection of enough ignition keys that we could start any vehicle in Europe, any kind of vehicle. We had all kinds of ignition keys. In those days, the ignition keys were standard for a type of vehicle. It wasn't special to the individual vehicle. It was standard. So, if you had a Ford Mustang, your ignition key would start any Ford Mustang.

SI: Really?

TK: [laughter] So, we were able, over a period of time, I figured, to get away with about thirty trucks and got them into the Transportation [Corps] people in Turin and they were able to get the food into the city and begin to get the people fed. ... We could never go back to the same depot where we had stolen trucks, of course. We had to go find a new depot each time and, over time, it got more difficult. ... I often wondered what would have happened had we been caught, because I've described that to people in the judiciary and they said, "Well, you know, in wartime, stealing government property in wartime is a punishable offense, pretty tough punishment." So, fortunately, we weren't caught. ... I have described that as the best thing I did in the Army. That was the thing, the activity of which I was most proud, breaking the law. [laughter]

SI: You would just drop the trucks off to the Transportation Corps people. You were not involved in actually moving the food into the city.

TK: No, no, I just gave them the trucks and they'd put them into use right away.

SI: Does anything else stand out about your time in Turin?

TK: No, I guess not. ... As billeting officer, I had my choice of quarters. So, I had an apartment on the top floor of the Albergo, Principe de Piedmonte, which was a very fancy hotel, and I had a terrace and, from my terrace, I could see Mont Blanc off in the distance, great view. No, not much else went on there. ... I had some Italians working for me in my office. I had an Italian girl who spoke good German. [laughter] She had studied German in anticipation that the Germans were going to take over Italy. So, she was a good secretary, though, and then, I had an assistant who was an elderly man who had been in the Yukon Gold Rush, I remember. He was an old character, and some sad incidents happened there. One of my compatriots, a second lieutenant who was there with me, a man named Dearborn, had been in the infantry and had survived, terrible time, but, in our peacetime situation there in Turin, he got too careless. He got
drunk and he was driving a jeep and he had his knee sticking out of the jeep, like this. … He sideswiped a cart, an Italian cart, and it took his leg off. After being all through the war in the infantry, now, he's back in civilian government and he didn't do very well. Anyway, it was routine stuff there.

SI: As billeting officer, were you only finding quarters for military personnel?

TK: Yes, military, yes.

SI: How long were you stationed in Turin?

TK: … I guess from late April until the beginning of August, and then, I went home on points. I was found to have eighty or eighty-five points, I think it was, that permitted you at that point to go home and I was shipped to Naples and I came home with the 88th Division. … While I was waiting in Naples to board the ship, I came down with a severe case of tonsillitis. I had had my tonsils out when I was six years old and I had tonsillitis. They must have left a piece of the tonsil in there and I had tonsillitis, very bad--I mean, went to the hospital. … I was there for several days and I lost a lot of weight, but, anyway, I got on the ship and the ship, I think it was the day before the ship left that we got word of the A-bomb [attack on Hiroshima, Japan], August 6th. I think the ship left, like, August 7th. So, there was a wild celebration as the ship was leaving, [laughter] because we were all sure, up until that point, that we were headed for Japan--not immediately on that ship, but transshipped after we got back to the States. So, that was a wild celebration.

SI: Just the news of the first atomic bomb being dropped made you realize that spelled the end of the war.

TK: Well, I think we pretty well did, yes. … The actual end of the war wasn't until, what was it, the 14th, I think?

SI: Yes, it was about a week-and-a-half later.

TK: Yes, but it certainly signaled the end, as far as we were concerned. … That was a tragic day for me, too, because, as I learned later, my first cousin--we were very close. He had been in the Air Corps, in the Eighth Air Force in Britain, and had flown a lot of missions and was now back in Idaho, in a hospital rest home, I guess, there, and he committed suicide on that date, August 6th. … We never knew whether it was because of everything that he saw and did or whether it was something else. He didn't have a very confident personality at that time and all the things that he'd done, I think that made it very difficult for him to live with himself, but that was tough. So, anyway, that was it. I came home on the West Point, the ship called the West Point. [Editor's Note: The USS West Point II was the largest Navy troopship during World War II. Launched on August 31, 1939, the ship was summoned to wartime conversion on June 1, 1941. After the war, it was renamed the America and converted back to civilian use.]

SI: Were you able to maintain, through letters, contact with home, particularly your wife?
TK: Definitely, yes. … I wasn't yet married. My fiancée, my wife-to-be, wrote to me every day for two years.

SI: Okay. I thought you got married before you went overseas.

TK: No, no, married in 1945, when I came home, but Inez wrote to me every day for at least two years. … I wrote to her less frequently than that, but fairly frequently, and, when I arrived home, she did something that I always thought was great. I didn’t understand it at the time, but I came into New York; no, no, wait a minute, where did we come in? We came into Newport News, and then, up to Fort Dix, came into Fort Dix, and that's where I was discharged, from Fort Dix. So, I called her from Fort Dix and said, "Will you be at my parents' home?" She lived in Short Hills, my parents were in Rahway. I said, "Should we all meet there or what?" She said, "I want to come to Trenton and meet you," and I said, "Well, if you want to do that, that's all right." So, she said, "Yes, that's what I want to do." So, she came and we met there on the station platform in Trenton, and a very emotional time. We spent a lot of time just looking at each other, and then, we went and had a drink in a restaurant. We sat and we talked for, I guess, a full hour, just talked all kinds of things out, and, at the end of an hour, she said, "Now, I've got some bad news for you." … She told me about my cousin who had committed suicide a week earlier, I guess it was. By the time I got home, it was about [the] 13th, 14th [of] August. He'd committed suicide on the 6th. … She said the reason she wanted to come to Trenton was so that I wouldn't be deprived of my homecoming, because, if I had gone straight home, my mother would have said, "Oh, Tommy, oh, what happened to your poor cousin, have you heard?" It would have immediately been grief and Inez wanted me to have my own homecoming. So, we had it, together, for about an hour before she gave me the bad news, which I thought was kind of interesting. It was kind of tough going home to the family group, which included his parents and everybody, for the homecoming party for me when he was gone.

SI: Was it particularly difficult because you were a Catholic family?

TK: Yes, that was part of it, sure, yes.

SI: When you first saw your family again, did you notice a change in them?

TK: Well, they were older. [laughter] We all were--psychologically?

SI: Any changes.

TK: I didn't notice.

SI: How do you think you changed as a result of your experiences in the Army?

TK: It's a hard question to answer. You'd really have to ask people who knew me. I don't know how I changed. I put most of that experience behind me, because, you must remember, we all had taken time out of our lives and we were very eager to get started. I wanted to get married, I wanted to get a job, I wanted to start a career, and so, that was all immediately put behind, and I never joined a veterans' organization. I never went to a reunion, because my division was the
National Guard Division of Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota. They were out there in Minneapolis. I was in New Jersey, and I had nothing [to do with them]. I never went out there at all. So, over the years, I had nothing to do with them at all. So, I had no foot in the military at all after the war. … I was concentrating on what I wanted to do, and so, I don't know that it changed me. I don't know. You'd have to ask somebody else that question, Shaun.

SI: Did you have any kind of lasting effects from the war, like bad dreams, that sort of thing?

TK: No, no, I never did. I've had more dreams more recently than I ever did in the past about the war and other things, no, no, but, over the years, no, I don't remember being affected in that way at all.

SI: It was not difficult to readjust to civilian life.

TK: No.

SI: Why do you think you are having dreams now? Is it because of the movies and documentaries that have been coming out?

TK: Yes, yes, sitting and watching Ken Burns brings back a lot of stuff. … If I watch Ken Burns for two nights in a row, I find, … in the middle of the night, I don't know whether I'm thinking about something or dreaming it, but I'm back there, and I wouldn't want to sit and watch that every day. I mean, I'm ambivalent about Ken Burns, as a matter-of-fact. I can't stay away from it, but, at the same time, I've seen so much of that documentary stuff that I don't know whether his is better or worse than all of it. … A lot of it is new, stuff that hasn't been seen before, but I can't tell you that I think it's wonderful or I hate it. It's somewhere in-between. [laughter] [Editor's Note: Ken Burns' film The War, a seven-part documentary on World War II from the American perspective, originally aired on PBS from September 23 to October 2, 2007.]

SI: Okay, maybe you need time to absorb it.

TK: Maybe. [laughter]

SI: All right. We have to go downstairs in a couple of minutes.

TK: All right.

SI: Is there anything else you want to add to this recording?

TK: Can't think of anything. You've got a lot of clues, if you can think of another one you want to ask me.

SI: We really appreciate everything you have done today, coming in for the interview, being so accommodating with the class and the press.

TK: … I'm waiting for one thing, Shaun--I'm waiting for you to sing Dirty Girtie.
SI: *Dirty Girtie*, if I could read music, I would. Do you remember how the tune goes?

TK: "Dirty Girtie, from Bizerte/Hid a mousetrap 'neath her skirty/Made her boyfriend's fingers hurty." That's all I remember. [laughter]

SI: That is pretty good.

TK: Do you know that's mentioned in Rick Atkinson?

SI: No.

TK: Oh, yes, yes.

SI: Is it in Rick Atkinson's book or Matthew Parker's book?

TK: No, Rick Atkinson mentions it, toward the end. I don't know how I could find it. [Editor's Note: Atkinson mentions this "barracks ballad" on page 521 in *An Army at Dawn* and notes that the song reached over two hundred stanzas.]

SI: We are going to conclude this interview session. Thank you again.

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

Reviewed by Jesse Braddell 2/18/11
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 6/7/11
Reviewed by Thomas A. Kindre 8/22/11