

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
Orville W. "Sonny" Martin, Jr.
Career Army Officer, World War II
1995

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Martin, Orville W., (1923-1999). Oral History Interview, 1995.

User Copy: 9 sound cassettes (ca. 489 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 4 sound cassettes (ca. 489 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Abstract:

Orville W. "Sonny" Martin Jr., an Oshkosh, Wisconsin native, describes his experiences growing up in a military family; serving in the 3rd Platoon, A Company, 59th Armored Infantry Battalion, 13th Armored Division during World War II; training the 4th Field Artillery Battalion and the 35th Quartermaster Pack Company during the Korean War; serving in Taiwan in 1959; and working at the Pentagon during the Vietnam War. Martin describes the service of his father, a Neenah (Wisconsin) native, during World War I and his parents' wedding at Camp Stotsenburg (Clark Air Force Base) in the Philippines. Martin touches upon his military ancestry including a great-great-uncle, "General" Warren Healy, who was a drummer boy during the Civil War and became Paymaster General of New York during the Spanish-American War. Martin grew up an "Army brat" on various bases, including: West Point (New York), Fort Ethan Allen (Vermont), Fort Sill (Oklahoma), Schofield Barracks (Hawaii), Fort Hoyle (Maryland), Baton Rouge (Louisiana), and Fort Leavenworth (Kansas). He discusses at length his schooling and social interactions among children of officers and enlisted men. Martin details family life on the base which he calls a "very moral society." Martin tells stories of corporal punishment and officers disciplining others' children, a practice that faded in the 1960s. He recalls special occasions like officer parties and Boat Day, when troop ships arrived in Hawaii. Martin comments on ethnic diversity in the Army and relates positive experiences with Russian and Polish immigrants who sparked his interest in boating and international relations. Martin describes several interactions with African-American soldiers and orderlies at Fort Leavenworth (Kansas) before integration; he also recalls witnessing impressive practice maneuvers by African-American regiments. Martin attended three years at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the ROTC before joining the Reserves in 1943. Martin discusses students' views of the war. The Young Communist League protested vocally on campus, but after Germany declared war, they changed overnight and supported the war effort. Martin, who joined the Reserves the summer of his junior year, details his OCS and Armor School training from August to December 1943. In 1944, he was assigned to the 13th Armored Division as a 2nd lieutenant at Camp Bowie (Texas) where he trained troops for the D-Day Invasion. Martin describes encounters with Generals George C. Marshall and George S. Patton. During World War II, Martin's father was the Division Artillery Commander of the 7th Armored Division and fought in North Africa and the Battle of the Bulge (Belgium). With pride, Martin relates that his father praised the 13th Armored Division troops Martin had trained. Martin addresses the military nature of his relationship with his father. In 1945, Martin was deployed to Britain, then France and Germany. He mentions encountering the Women's Royal Navy Service and a female officer who piloted his ship

across the English Channel. Martin saw action in the Ruhr Pocket (Germany) where some Nazis held out. He tells of receiving a Bronze Star when a group of German infantrymen surrendered voluntarily to him. Martin describes positive relations with French, Belgian, and Dutch civilians, remarking that his unit used half-track vehicles to till fields in Normandy. He discusses at length the differences between American and German technologies, including: tanks, artillery, and communications systems. He points out that the German army still used horses to transport much of their artillery. Martin reveals in detail American soldiers' views of the German, Japanese, and Soviet armies, many of which were negative. He discusses matters of daily life, such as: quality of uniforms and gear; types of rations; and management of gas and munitions. Martin calls the African-American soldiers of the Red Ball Express heroes for supplying the front lines with crucial ammunition and gasoline during the Battle of the Bulge. Martin also addresses hygiene, stating he required his men to shave, take care of their feet, and wear long-johns. Martin mentions public health warnings about sexually transmitted diseases and that condoms were issued to all soldiers. He volunteered as a Troop Information Education Program Officer, disseminating information and leading discussions on educational topics. This included some vilification of the enemy, which Martin criticizes as "indoctrination...that was probably overdone." During the occupation of Germany, Martin remarks that soldiers quickly learned Germans were not all bad people; however, he describes American soldiers as wary, partly because fraternizing with civilians was forbidden. Martin was present for the liberation of a few German prisoner of war camps. He characterizes the liberated Dutch, Belgians, and Jews as grateful and "peaceful." However, he portrays Eastern European POWs as rowdy and troublesome. Martin touches upon visiting Dachau after its liberation. His division held a dance for some of the nurses ministering to former Dachau prisoners at the chateau they were occupying nearby. Martin implies Army secrecy about the Dachau concentration camp, saying his orders were to go to Munich. Martin discusses at length being billeted in a German chateau owned by Count Von Toerring-Jettenbach, where his unit discovered negatives and photographs by Heinrich Hoffmann (Hitler's personal photographer). The Army appropriated this material for the National Archives. Martin explains that Hoffmann's relatives disputed the ownership of these photographs in a Federal Court in the 1990s, and he was called as a key witness. Martin expresses feeling relieved on V-J Day. He is thoughtful about the consequences of the atomic bombing of Japan and admits Americans were not given full information at that time. Martin does not feel the atomic bomb saved him personally from dying in a prolonged battle, even though he was scheduled for redeployment in Japan. From 1946 to 1949, Martin served with the Constabulary force during the occupation of Germany. During the Korean War, Martin was promoted to Captain and trained the 4th Field Artillery Battalion and the 35th Quartermaster Pack Company at Fort Carson (Colorado). Martin was the last mounted officer to serve in an Armored Division in the Army. Martin explains pack animals were supposed to be useful in the Korean mountains, but there was no natural feed for the mules and horses there, so the pack company was never deployed. Martin feels the South Koreans had a skilled army and could have beaten the North Koreans on their own, but he believed in a nuclear threat at the time. Beginning in Korea, Martin feels NCOs became less effective leaders; they were given more responsibilities but had less experience than the older, savvy sergeants of World War II. According to Martin, poor leadership continued to be

problematic in Vietnam. Martin discusses the Cold War, America's military preparedness for a Soviet attack, and disputes within the Army over the severity of the threat. His views on the Soviet Union were influenced by seeing Soviet allies during World War II brutalizing their own POWs who had just been liberated from German camps. During the occupation of Germany, Martin says the Army was worried about the Soviet "bear sitting across this [border] with unknown intentions." Martin thoroughly describes his experiences serving in Taipei (Taiwan) in 1959. He mentions the prevalence of spies sent by the Republic of China to listen in on the U.S. Army, their ally against the Communists. During 1960s, Martin worked at the Pentagon in the Office of Reserve Components. Martin criticizes the rotation and deferment policies during the Vietnam War, which he says caused feelings of resentment and discrimination. Martin feels the Army should have sent Reservists and the National Guard to Vietnam before draftees. He speaks positively about the "intellectual revolution" that occurred within the Army in 1974 when the "moral pollution" among soldiers and NCOs gave way to a new group of talented young officers with "integrity [and] ethics." Martin is also critical of Defense Secretary Robert McNamara (who he worked with at the Pentagon) for burying reports about the Vietnam War and having "no respect for the truth." After the Pentagon, Martin became the Editor in Chief of *Armor Magazine* for four years as part of an assignment in the Army's Public Affairs department. At *Armor Magazine*, he worked with General Edward "Shy" Meyer who he praises highly. After retiring, Martin became the administrative director of the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison and expanded their administrative department. He mentions participating in various veterans groups including: American Legion, 13th Armored Division Association, U.S. Constabulary Association, Association of the U.S. Army, and Coast Guard Auxiliary. Martin was one of the founders of the U.S. Commission on Military History and served as president of the Council on America's Military Past.

Biographical Sketch:

Orville W. "Sonny" Martin, Jr. (1923-1999) was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. His father, a Neenah, Wisconsin native and World War I veteran, met his mother while serving in the Philippines. Martin was raised as an "Army brat" and went on to be a career military man, retiring with the rank of Colonel. He attended the University of Wisconsin in the ROTC for three years before serving in the 13th Armored Division during World War II. After a long Army career spanning World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, Martin served as administrative director of the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison and participated in numerous veterans associations.

Interviews by Mark Van Ells, 1995

Transcribed by Joanna D. Glen, WDVA staff, 1997; and Katy Marty, 2008

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Interview Transcript:

Mark: Okay, today's date is November 7, 1995. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, doing an oral history interview this afternoon with Mr. O.W. Martin, "Sonny Martin", Jr., a veteran of the U.S. Army of many different capacities and conflicts [both laugh]. Good afternoon, thanks for coming in.

Martin: Oh, it's good to be here.

Mark: Absolutely appreciate it. I usually start off the interviews by having people tell me a little bit about what they were doing prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor or whatever, but that's not really going to apply to you. Why don't you tell me a little bit about where you were born and a little bit about your family background.

Martin: I was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and thereby hangs the tale. My mother's parents had both died by 1921 and ah—so, she had two bachelor brothers and one of them was a captain in the Army, by the way, and he was going to the Philippines and she was quite disturbed at her mother's death. It left her literally an orphan in a sense, you know, and so. She was a rather sensitive woman, a wonderful person. And, so she went to the Philippines with her brother and there she met my father who was born in Neenah, but entered the military academy from Oshkosh and was graduated on the 1st of November 1918 with one of the two classes that were rushed out and of course, the armistice occurred right thereafter. They had the interesting experience of going to Europe, after graduation leave of a couple of weeks, and being taken on a tour of battlefields, not only of World War I but also the Napoleonic Wars and so on and so forth. They traveled around on a British hospital train. It must have been a tremendous experience because they had actual participants as well as military officers who were military historians from the French army particularly and the Brits, who explained all these things and walked them over these battlefields and so on and so forth. But, at any rate, back to the Philippines. My mother and father met and they decided to get married and indeed, they were married in the Episcopal cathedral in Manila and they—I always like to tell people I was conceived in the Philippines [Laughs] even though I was born in Wisconsin. My father was in a Filipino pack outfit at that time—pack field artillery.

Mark: And where was this in the Philippines?

Martin: At Stotsenburg which is now part of Clark Air Force Base which is now part of heaven knows what under Philippine administration. It was then—that part was known as Camp Stotsenburg, the Army's part. My uncle had a horse-drawn field artillery battery and he wanted to give them the traditional caisson ride but it was decided by some people in my father's outfit, which was a pack

outfit, that nothing would do but they had to have a ride on one of the pack mules.(laughs) So they had this reception for them when they came back from their honeymoon in Manila and they had one of the largest gun mules in the Officer's Club of all things! [Laughs] That was what constituted their caisson ride. A little footnote to history, as it were. Then, my father though—they came back to the United States.

Mark: I was going to say, did your father stay in the Philippines --

Martin: No, no.

Mark: when you were born? They both went back?

Martin: No, they came home in 1922 and ah—well, they were married in 1922 and they came home later in 1922 and my father was then stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington in the 10th Field Artillery which was part of the rather renowned 3rd Division. It was predicted that my mother would perhaps have a rather difficult accouchement which, incidentally, turned out to be true and my grandparents, my Martin grandparents, said, “Well,” you know, “she must come here.” And so she went to Oshkosh where there was a very fine obstetrician. As a matter of fact, he was, at one time, the President of the Wisconsin Medical Association, of all things. He was a good friend of the family apparently. So that's how I happen to be born there. We went back to Fort Lewis, I am told, where my parents had quarters, if you could call them such, in an old World War I barracks which —there were knot holes and the rats would come through [Laughs] and the occupants would run around with coffee can covers, nail 'em down, to keep the rats out.

Mark: Not the most plush of surroundings.

Martin: Not terribly plush. From there we went, again, I am told, to West Point where my father taught math for four years and he always used to like to relate the fact that he taught the “goats”. He literally taught the last—the lowest section. You know, at that time, they used to examine them about once a month, I think it was, and they got reassigned to sections depending on how good they were and he had—he had the “goats” and he always used to like to relate the fact that he had taught math to a great many of the generals in World War II [Laughs], the younger generals.

Mark: I'm not sure I understand this term “goat”.

Martin: Oh, the “goats”? The “goats” are the people that are at the bottom of the class. In fact, the “goat” is the bottom graduate of a given class.

Mark: I see.

Martin: It may indeed be related to the fact that the Navy's mascot is a "goat". I think that might be.

Mark: It makes perfect sense.

Martin: So he stayed—you know, he stayed there and I—that's the first place I can remember anything. I was very, very small. I was—you know obviously oh, four and a half or so when we left there and I don't really remember very much. But, I do remember the old Ordnance Museum and your model of a—I believe in a Civil War caisson on up there, reminds me of it. They had these, it seemed to me hundreds, and having gone there later, I think there were several hundred models of artillery pieces of one sort or another. Now they have a modern museum much like this one, only displays one of a hundred different things. A very nice museum. From there my father went to Fort Sill, the whole family went to Fort Sill. He went there as a student for a year.

Mark: That's the artillery school?

Martin: The artillery school, yeah. Field artillery. And—I remember a few things there. My uncle was an instructor there and he had an Airedale dog of which I was very fond—and incidentally, to backtrack a little bit, when we were at West Point, this is something I can remember and I could not have been over four, four and a half. One of my great grandfather's brothers, General Warren Healy, had been a drummer boy in the Civil War and then, incidentally, he was a very wealthy man. He was the principal of the Healy Carriage Works which made carriages which rivaled the Brewsters, although they didn't make as many and some are in the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian has four. I think there are just two on display. But at any rate, Warren Healy, great grandfather's brother on my mother's side, had this estate at—overlooking the Hudson river near West Point and I can remember going there with my father and the reason he was called General was he was the Paymaster General of the state of New York during the Spanish-American war, and—by which time he was in the carriage business and he —another thing that was unusual about him was that he was a member of the Legion d'Honneur, but more for his civil works he was—and things he had done toward France, particularly in World War I, I think. Interesting coincidence, my father was awarded (laughs) the Legion d'Honneur in World War II. So there were two of them in the family, in a way. He was quite a, he was quite a horseman and I remember his estate. He, too, had an Airedale. That's what reminded me of it and I rode on that dog I am told. Now, I don't remember that, I remember the dog. So then we got to Fort Sill.

Mark: You must have been what three? four? maybe five by then? starting school?

Martin: No, I didn't start school yet. No, I was about five when we went to Fort Sill. I started school—after that my father went to the 6th Field Artillery at Fort

Ethan Allen, Vermont which is now—I think its St. Michael’s College is the name of it. They took over the buildings after—considerably after World War II. I can remember a number of things there. I remember one very dramatically. I shall never forget—

Mark: In Vermont.

Martin: In Vermont. I was playing out in our yard with some, little, you know, lead soldiers and little trucks of some kind and there were, at that time, the garrison prisoners in the Army wore blue dungarees— well everybody wore blue dungarees. Not the officers, all the enlisted men. It was a work uniform, you know, but the prisoners wore them and they had a big “P” on their back. There were prisoners working in our yard. These were minor miscreants, you know, Garrison prisoners had a one-month sentence, but they actually put them in the guard house, in a cell. There was a guard from the 18th Infantry who was guarding ‘em, and, innocently I scooted or walked or ran between the guard and the prisoners and about that time the Provost Corporal came along and he was a mean old son-of-a-gun who’d been in the Army since Caesar marched through Gaul. [Laughs] He must have been from a machine gun company ‘cause he always carried a cleaning rod like they used on a machine gun, the rigid one. You know, the ones the riflemen used came in about four sections and unscrewed and went in a canvas pouch and they have one here. But the rigid one he carried and he turned me over his knee and whacked me a couple of times and he said, “Don’t you ever walk between a guard and his prisoners – ever again!” [Laughs] I was, I think, six.

Mark: How did your father take to this?

Martin: Well, I don’t know that he knew about it for years. But he would have thought that was a good lesson. The Army was very different. The Army brats were post property in those days.(both laugh) You were supposed to behave and anyone detecting you not behaving could take some reaction. That really was true.

Mark: That’s interesting that you –

Martin: Yes, yes. I can tell you later, a much better—at Fort Hoyle, Maryland about, I’ll make a note here so I don’t forget—it’s an even better illustration of it and how my father took it.

Mark: Okay. So you started school about this time. I’m interested in some of the—

Martin: About that time, I started school.

Mark: I’m interested in what sort of education you were receiving and something about your fellow Army brats, if that term is not pejorative.

Martin: No!

Mark: -- give the impression --

Martin: Heavens, we're very proud of it!

Mark: That's what I figured.

Martin: Here I'm 72-years-old and I'm still proud of being an Army brat! [Laughs] And, I wouldn't be a Navy Junior for all the world—that sounds so effete!

Mark: Is that what the term is, Navy Juniors?

Martin: Navy Juniors. Navy Juniors and Army brats.

Mark: I never heard that. I don't know why.

Martin: Like a lot of things, the Air Force kids inherited from the Army the appellation of Air Force brats.

Mark: I was in the Air Force myself actually and that's the term I always heard.

Martin: Good service, yeah. Yeah, but the Navy are Juniors. [Laughs].

Mark: Yeah, that's fairly effete.

Martin: So, well let's see. The school, ah—I went to was a private school actually, on the post.

Mark: On the post.

Martin: Um-hum. It was run by a couple of ladies. I have a note somewhere that I could even remember the name of it, which is irrelevant. But at any rate, it was a good little school. I remember walking to school. One of my real memories there was walking to school through these—it was like a tunnel, the snow banks were so high and, you know, I was small and so you just went down through this tunnel. They had a, each one of the quarters, which were double-sets. They were nice quarters, fireplaces and so on and so forth, just like the one I lived in when I retired at Fort Leavenworth as a Colonel. [Laughs] I lived in a Captains quarters when I retired, what used to be, you know. But at any rate, on the front steps each one had a nameplate and they were done with white lettering, but the background was in the branch colors. It was infantry blue or cavalry yellow or field artillery red and then some, you know. We had a medical officer living next door and he had maroon of course. It was an enamel plate. They were nice plates. I wish I still had the one from our quarters there. And I would go along and if I had gotten

distracted talking to my friends, all of us were the same way, we'd look up these sort of tunnels going to our own or to each of the quarters until we saw our own and go in. We had a coal stove.

Mark: Is this the proverbial one-room schoolhouse? Or how big is [unintelligible]

Martin: No, the school was in a—it was a—a building. I don't know what its original purpose had been. It was a lot like an officer's club in a way. It wasn't the Officer's Club, I know that. There were a—I don't know how many kids there were. There weren't too many, but the quarters were interesting, incidentally. There was a #5 Army range in the kitchen, one of the coal ranges. We had a maid who was the wife of the Staff Sergeant Fire Chief. The firemen were all enlisted men. They weren't civilians the way they became later. And ah—we had a—the maid was French-Canadian and we had an orderly who was French-Canadian, Pettibone. I still remember his name. He was a fine lad and he and I were great allies. From Bernice the maid, and Pettibone, the orderly, I learned a lot of French-Canadian or Canadian French which in those days was an appalling language and no one was more appalled than my dear mother who had belonged to the Alliance Francaise in New York [Laughs] and who spoke beautiful French and one of whose best friends had been the daughter of the French Consul General in New York!

Mark: They spoke a slightly different French!

Martin: Oh my!

Mark: 'Cause my wife is a French-Canadian background.

Martin: Oh, really?

Mark: Her grandmother was born in Canada and we'd go up to Quebec sometimes. It is a very different French 'cause my wife learned French in college and of course, it's Parisian French and you go up there and it's completely different. Even I can tell the difference.

Martin: It's getting better now though, than it used to be. It really—honest to goodness it is. And ah—so that was one of the great footnotes to history there.

Mark: So in the school are there officer's kids and enlisted kids all in the same class or are they separated some sort of way?

Martin: We had, as I recall, we had both. The NCOs' kids—ah, sometimes—usually had older parents because a soldier couldn't get married until—they had to have permission to get married and he couldn't get married until he was a

Corporal. And with rare exceptions, some of them that were specialists and like on their second enlistment, they would get permission to get married, but as a result they tended to be, —you know, the parents sometimes were a little older. But, yeah, we had—all the schools that I went to except purely civilian schools, which we might come to later, had officers and NCOs' kids and we all got along fine. Incidentally, we didn't socialize after school.

Mark: You mean the—

Martin: The officers' kids and the NCOs' kids, in most cases. Yeah, not in most cases.

Mark: Consciously or unconsciously?

Martin: I just—you know, I must say that when I was that age, I never thought of it. I had friends in school and we played together and we used to play some games because there weren't enough kids on the post and everything, but we really didn't socialize. We didn't much go to each other's houses or anything like that the way we did amongst the officer's kids.

Mark: So, on an Army post as you are a young boy, I get the impression it was kind of like a nine to five type of thing. You went to school and you came back and your father would come home from work and your mother was probably at home or something like that.

Martin: Um hum.

Mark: Is that pretty much how it was?

Martin: Um hum.

Mark: Except that you'd move every couple of years.

Martin: Yeah [Laughs], well, not quite that often in those days --

Mark: How often did you—

Martin: Well, let's see, we were—my father must have been about two years at Fort Lewis, Washington and then he was selected to be an instructor at the military academy and that was a four-year tour. We did not live at West Point. We lived in Newburgh and he used to have to commute over the Storm King Highway. At that time they didn't have the new one, the new 9W. Then we were at Fort Sill only a year. Fort Ethan Allen was— that must have been two years—must have been—from there we went to Hawaii and we were there three and we were there after at Fort Hoyle, Maryland for three years and then in Baton Rouge, Louisiana my father was on ROTC duty for three years at

LSU and then he went as a student to the Command General Staff School as it was then known, later it became a college at Fort Leavenworth and he was there about half of the year and they cut the class short. This was in 1940.

Mark: This has taken you up pretty much to at least college by now.

Martin: Well, no, I was a senior in high school at Ft. Leavenworth and then my father went to the 7th Cavalry Brigade, Mechanized, at Fort Knox, Kentucky which was the Army's first mechanized unit.

Mark: As you traveled around did you come across kids you had known before?

Martin: Oh, sure.

Mark: I imagine it's a fairly small world.

Martin: That's it. You came across kids you had known before and you were immersed in a culture that was not foreign. And ah—

Mark: So if you went to Hawaii, it didn't seem to a ten-year-old boy or whatever, terribly much different.

Martin: I was eight when we went out there.

Mark: Except for the snow, obviously.

Martin: Well, Hawaii was quite different. Lots of things were quite different about Hawaii. While we were there, incidentally, we lived at Schofield Barracks for two years and then the first six months we were there we lived in Honolulu on the beach, which was great. My father commuted, and the last six months we did that. Hawaii at that time had—was much more exotic, by far and away. The oriental groups and they were groups, they hadn't intermarried very much then at all.

Mark: The Japanese and the Chinese.

Martin: The Japanese, and the Chinese, and the Filipinos, the Portuguese who were mostly Cape Verde Islanders, very dark, who had been whalers, you know, and sort of gotten dropped off. There was a decided German—within the white society, there was a decided German group. I mean this is the "society" society. (laughs) And then there were still English people there and then there were the old settlers who were Caucasian entirely, you know. Then there was the Army and the Navy and it was—it was sort of a different—it was different than in the States. Definitely

Mark: I'm sure it wasn't nearly as commercialized as it is today.

Martin: Oh, heavens no!

Mark: Have you been back?

Martin: Yes. Never to live, but been back to visit twice and ah—its changed. It's very commercialized and the Japanese are there now as tourists rather than as a segment of the population, you know. It's quite different.

Mark: I'm sure. So you spent about three years there. If you could describe each of these posts just a little bit, or if there is anything terribly descriptive about them.

Martin: Well, Fort Ethan Allen that we mentioned of course was about ten or twelve miles north of Burlington and just at the edge of a little town called Winooski and it was near the mountains, near Lake Champlain. It was in—not in the mountains nor on Lake Champlain, but it was close. Incidentally, one of the kind of interesting things that illustrates a little bit the sort of thing that went on in the Army, there was a great dispute between the state of Vermont and the local authorities and the United States over the extent of the reservation. This was not the part where the buildings were and all that, but the firing range, which incidentally to an Air Force guy this would appeal to you maybe, it became a bombing range for a long time. But, at any rate, it was decided that if an officer, an Army officer, acceptable to all these people would do a survey they would accept it. So, my father was nominated for the job. Of course, I guess being a field artilleryman he'd done a lot of surveying in those days, and then he also was a civil engineering student here at the University of Wisconsin for a year before he went to West Point. So he and a survey party of about four enlisted men, I guess, a good part of one summer, surveyed the reservation and the last I knew which was a few years ago when the Air Force surplused that bombing range, the survey, the official survey was still signed by O.W. Martin, 1st Lieutenant, Field Artillery.(laughs) And —it's a—there again, it's sort of a social commentary, how life was. An officer's word was his bond, you know, I mean, it was -- and they were—most of them were pretty competent. There were a few that got the "B Board", (laughs) as it was called, but most of them were pretty good.

Mark: Now what does that mean to "B Board"?

Martin: Well, they had a "B Board", I don't know if there was an A Board or not, but the "B Board" was a board that met in Washington similar to boards that meet today, you know. They examined the records of officers who had been nominated to have their records examined.(laughs) They had, sort of, less than stellar efficiency reports etc., and they were let go. Downsized.

Mark: As we would say today!

- Martin: That's right [Laughs].
- Mark: So in Hawaii, you spent three years there and as you mentioned, there was a rather large Naval presence there, as well.
- Martin: Um-hum. Pearl Harbor.
- Mark: Did you have much dealings with the Navy?
- Martin: No. No, other than a tourist. You know, it was fun to go there and see some of the things, us kids, you know.
- Mark: Probably like in the schools, you went to school on your post –
- Martin: That's right.
- Mark: And the Navy's kids went to school somewhere else.
- Martin: I went to school at Wahiawa. I went to one of the public schools which was an interesting experience. But the schools were, well—they probably were, at least that one was a lot like a lot of the schools today, I think, where it was very racially mixed for one thing. And there was a lot of conflict and there were a number of students, pupils, who really weren't that interested in learning, they were far more interested in playing barefoot football or just creating a disturbance and as a result, most of the Army people didn't send their kids to the public schools. They since have become very good, but —so then I went to a private school on the post, which was run by two English ladies, both of whom were married to Non-Commissioned Officers. Wonderful people. They were both people of great education and they—the great thing there was the immersion in the English language and, you know, the classics and all sorts of things like that. It was really good. I was very fortunate in that respect. I had some very good English teachers [Laughs].
- Mark: Then you went to Fort Holabird?
- Martin: No. To Fort Hoyle.
- Mark: Where?
- Martin: Fort Hoyle. H-O-Y-L-E. It was named for --
- Mark: Never heard of that one.
- Martin: for F De Russy Hoyle who was a Civil War, or no, I mean a Revolutionary War general.

- Mark: And where is that?
- Martin: It's about 40 miles north of Baltimore along Highway 40, and ah—it's now part of Aberdeen Proving Grounds.
- Mark: Mmm. Oh, [unintelligible]. I guess I heard Holabird, but Hoyle is not one I'd heard.
- Martin: We had some friends at Fort Holabird, which was where the Quartermaster School was at that time, by the way.
- Mark: I interviewed a WAC who had been stationed there. I guess that's how I got --
- Martin: At Fort Holabird?
- Mark: Holabird, yeah. I guess that's how I got it in my head.
- Martin: Yeah.
- Mark: So as you are growing up in an Army family, did you give thought at a fairly young age to pursuing a career in the military yourself? Did you decide that you weren't going to? I mean I'm interested in how that affected you or your choice of careers.
- Martin: Oh, I think that a lot of us—a lot of us sort of had the idea of probably, probably we would—we would probably go to West Point, become Army officers, I mean [Laughs]. Ah—however, you know,—as you—when you're young your ideas go back and forth. At one time when we were at Fort Hoyle, Maryland, by the way, we had some young bachelor officers there who were right out of West Point literally. They had friends at Annapolis still that they played against, you know, in various sports and one thing or another, who were probably first classmen. They were probably in, you know, the last year and we used to go down there to sail, some of us would go down. That, incidentally, was—there were two just magnificent things at Fort Hoyle that I shall never forget and have had a great influence. In the one case, lifelong and in the other case, not so much so because of the mechanics, but one was riding horses. They had plenty of horses and the batteries were all short on men so they were glad to have some of us kids ride them, you know. We could go down and get a horse at the stables and go out and ride around the reservation and so on and so forth and thereby comes the story I was going to tell you.
- Mark: Okay.
- Martin: One day there were, I suppose, [End of Side A, tape 1. ca. 30 min.] [Approx. 5 sec. of dialogue is missing] vets' two boys were there, both of whom—they

were twins—both of whom became officers, both of whom graduated from West Point. One of them was killed in the same division I was in, matter of fact. And, myself and the post Quartermaster's son, Doc Grieves (??) The four of us went out and we came back and went to our respective stables and I went back to A Battery stables and I—there I was met by the stable sergeant who was a Polish Count among other things, (laughs) one Sergeant Grabowski. The Battery was about 80% Polish. Most of them kids from Pennsylvania, coal miners. Good soldiers. But Grabowski was this old Polish Count and he had gold spurs, I'll never forget that as long as I live – they were real! Solid gold spurs!

Mark: If I can interject for a second, how did this guy end up as an enlisted man in the U.S. Army?

Martin: [Laughs] I have no idea.

Mark: That's kind of a strange thing.

Martin: He came to America and I guess he didn't have anything better to do so he enlisted, you know. He'd been in a long time. He had hash marks all over. So did the 1st Sergeant, but the 1st Sergeant was native born. He was Polish and could speak Polish and he was of Polish descent and he had a slight accent. A marvelous man! Who incidentally followed my father around. He was very personally loyal to my father and he did not like horses at all. He could ride one beautifully but he didn't like them. Anyway, I came back and the Stable Sergeant said, "The horse, she is hot." And I said, "Sergeant Grabowski," very respectfully, "I walked the horse, you know, for a mile" and I really had. He says, "Don't argue with me!" (laughs) and he tied the horse to the picket line, put me over the picket line, I was at this time twelve and paddled my behind with a rein and I'm over the picket line, I'm looking like this between my legs and who should appear out of the side door of the stable but my father. I thought that he and my mother, it really was irrelevant, but I thought they had gone to Baltimore. Wednesday afternoons were off, you know. There he was, in uniform and everything, and he came to the door and he looked, and he smiled, and he turned around, and he walked off. He was apparently very concerned about one horse that was very, very—it was ailing and they hadn't put it in the veterinary hospital, he had come to check on the horse. This—you asked how my father's reaction was to the— [Laughs]. Well, to this the reaction was, that was it, it was the smile. But this was never discussed in the Martin household until I was a Captain myself (laughs) and my father had retired and we got to talking about the old Army and I asked him the question you asked. I said "Well, you know, what did you think?" He said, "I knew that Sergeant Grabowski was right." [Laughs] That's all my father said. The subject went on to something else. It wasn't abruptly changed or shut off or anything but that's it. "I knew that Sergeant Grabowski was right."

- Mark: Hmm. That's interesting.
- Martin: It says a lot for my father (laughs) and also for the Sergeant and for the system.
- Mark: Yeah. So when it comes to family life in the Army at the time, was it difficult, the sort of moving around and that sort of thing?
- Martin: No. It was exciting! It was exciting! It was like being able to travel. We couldn't afford to—oh, we could travel in the sense of going to visit the, you know, the grandparents and some other family members and so on and so forth, but—
- Mark: That was one of the things I was going to ask. I mean, did you have -- your roots had been in this state here and did you have much contact, did you come back every once in a while and visit relatives?
- Martin: Yeah. Frequently we came to visit my grandparents in Oshkosh and my father's sister lived there also. When my father was on ROTC duty in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, he would go to summer camp at Fort Benning and my mother and I came up here. My mother didn't care too much for hot weather. It wasn't too good for her as a matter of fact, so we would come up here, oh, for, six weeks or more of the summer and then I came to school here at the University, for three years in the summer school.
- Mark: I think back to my days in the service, I was a young, single guy of course, but I mean, you observe things, and there's various social activities for families. The USO tours to Paris or whatever the case may be. Were there any sort of planned or sanctioned social activities to keep families—for families such as yourselves or pretty much on your own?
- Martin: Well, --
- Mark: I realize it was a much smaller --
- Martin: Society was much different in those days than it was—than it is today. And the kids didn't have the temptations. As a matter of fact, I think back, it was—we were—oh you know, we had tricks on Halloween and all kinds of things like this, but there was a sort of a social structure that you—you just—you kind of tended to play by the rules. I mean, you just – and there were some real things. I mean, you know you literally—it wasn't cheerless at all, but it was a very moral society, it really was. Ah—divorces were next to unheard of.

Mark: Now, this gets into some of the things I was going to ask. Again, going back to my own experience, a lot of divorces, alcoholism, these sorts of things, that didn't seem to have been –

Martin: There were some people. Some of the officers drank a tremendous amount, which was a subject of commentary here and there, but I don't—I don't really remember that there were—we certainly never heard—and I had no experiences intimately, as I knew a lot of the families and you know it's a closed society. These posts were very small, most of them. Ah—things like wife-beating and so on and so forth, this sounds kind of snobby and I almost hate to say it but I know we heard of cases of some NCOs that would do something of that sort, and from my own service I'm familiar with a couple of them.

Mark: But it happens in the general society too.

Martin: Yeah, except that –

Mark: -- it's not necessarily --

Martin: When I was a kid it didn't seem to happen in officer's circles.

Mark: Yeah. It's certainly - it's nothing that seems to be relate to traveling a lot or stress on the family due to military service --

Martin: You know I don't remember a lot of stress. I—people, it seemed to me were (a) happy and (b) rather well adjusted to the life that they were—that they were in. Ah, the wives, the officer's wives are mothers, you know, and did all they could to make it a pleasant place to be and live and bring the kids up right and ah, participate in various charities and church work, you know, the Chapel Guild and things of this sort. It was a different world. I don't remember any wives that worked.

Mark: Was there a post exchange?

Martin: Not officer's wives.

Mark: Officer's wives.

Martin: There were NCOs' wives who worked because they had to. It was an economic proposition with them, especially say a Corporal's wife or something. A younger one, and they weren't that young.
Post exchange?

Mark: Was there a post exchange –

Martin: Oh, yeah –

Mark: And that sort of thing –

Martin: And in most places there was a –

Mark: -- some of the institutions on the post –

Martin: there was a post restaurant most places, too. A lot of them run by Chinese, curiously enough.

Mark: Was that pretty much universal no matter where you went?

Martin: Oh, yeah.

Mark: Like in Vermont for example.

Martin. Oh sure, oh gosh there was a good Chinese restaurant on the post in Vermont [Laughs], known as the Chinaman's, it was always known as the Chinaman's. The one in Fort Hoyle, Maryland was run by some Baltimore Jewish people and they had good things. But, you know that too, they had an area, sort of a separate dining room, small for officers and their families and then they had one for NCOs and their families, and then they had the shwentwah (??) for all the rest of the people [Laughs]. But, the place would sometimes be a little hilarious when you went there, this was after beer came in, and ah—but things quieted down when one of the officers came in. You didn't hear any bad language or anything like this.

Mark: And you would otherwise perhaps?

Martin: Oh, yeah! I know I've gone as a kid to get—after the PX was closed, to buy some ice cream, you know, a quart of ice cream or something they'd hand pack it you know, and you'd hear some great ones [Laughs]! Although not as bad as today.

Mark: Is that right?

Martin: No, no. The language was zesty but it wasn't as—as foul as it is today.

Mark: Still, there were things you wouldn't repeat around your father for example.

Martin: Oh, heavens no! Certainly not my father particularly. There were some of the fathers who had rather good vocabularies [Laughs] but they were usually pretty careful around the kids too. My father was a model of probity, he really was, without being a stuffed shirt. It's interesting. Let's see the other

institutions, there was the chapel that I mentioned. All the posts had a—they had a theater, movie theater.

Mark: Would the movies be current?

Martin: Oh, right up to date! There had long been support by Hollywood. It didn't start during World War II but sometime in, I don't know '20's or '30's whatever, to give the Army theaters first run films and you could buy books of—of tickets and you got a discount when you got a book. The first run supergrade film was during the '30's as I remember was 20 cents, a ticket was 20 cents for that and the others were 15 cents, like the grade B movies with Ronald [Laughs] Reagan and all [Laughs]. At any rate, they had that and then there was the Officer's Club of course, and there was a—sometimes if the post was big enough to support one, an NCO Club. And then the privates went to, the usually, the beer hall. There were beer halls.

Mark: Off post?

Martin: No, no.

Mark: On post.

Martin: On the post.

Mark: This was after 1933.

Martin: Yeah, yeah. We were in Hawaii when the prohibition was over. I remember—I remember as a matter of fact, going to a restaurant off the post by the name of Khmu's which five years ago was still there, by the way. Ah—and—they had Japanese beer. That was the first. There were all these stories that Khmu was a Reserve Intelligence Officer in the Japanese Army and that when Pearl Harbor came, he put on his uniform and was spying [Laughs], Can you imagine such ridiculous stories [Laughs]? It wasn't true at all. He was a real patriot as a matter of fact.

Mark: The Army was a small, enclosed world but it did attract people from various regions of the country I would imagine.

Martin: Oh yeah, yeah.

Mark: Could you, perhaps, describe how some of the—how all these people from different regions of the country got along, melded together, to create this sort of insular society.

Martin: Well, the officers of course, were appointed to the military academy by Congressmen so there was a lot of dispersion there. Although sometimes a

Congressman would appoint somebody from another state because he didn't have anybody who wanted to go. The a—but some idea of the scale of the thing was that at its height during the Depression at any rate, during that period, the Army had 165,000 people in it. Officers, warrants, very few warrants, and civilians, and the a—or—not civilians, soldiers, enlisted men—and they were all enlisted men. There were no enlisted women then. The only military women were Army nurses in the Army Nurse Corps, who were—

Mark: Extremely small in number.

Martin: Extremely small number and they were unique. They didn't even wear uniforms like other people. They wore uniforms but a, but they weren't like the other, weren't like the other people. It wasn't like, for example, when the WACS came along. They had a distinctive female uniform. Well now the uniforms are almost the same. In fact, the field uniforms are unisex in essence. And of this, there were about 10% officers so people tended to know a tremendous number of people, especially in their own branch. Some of the posts, you know, like the Coast Artillery were almost all Coast Artillery except for the ordnance officer they might have and they might have a quartermaster officer and so on. Incidentally, there was something very, very, in a way, very interesting. Some of those posts, those smaller posts, did not have an ordnance officer, but they had an ordnance sergeant and or a quartermaster sergeant and these people had warrants from the Secretary of the Army. They were appointed by the, well, the Secretary of War, whereas other non-commissioned officers had held their warrant from the regimental commander believe it or not. It was really decentralized and they had to either make a mutual transfer or take a reduction to transfer somebody to somewhere else and take their chances on getting an appointment, a warrant, from the new regimental commander. That happened when Sergeant Flaut followed my father to Hawaii, unknownst to my father. He went down at—Boat Day was a big thing – when the Army transport—

Mark: Boat Day?

Martin: Boat Day! When the Army transport came into Honolulu to Pier 9 everybody turned out. Bands went there, and everybody turned out and they usually stayed there a couple of days.

Mark: And this was new troops or people leaving—

Martin: Well, that's right. It was coming and going, you know. They used to have what was known, and they did in my day too, as a hail and farewell a party at the—at the Officer's Club. At any rate, you'd go down there and lo and behold, here comes off this very distinguished looking soldier, no stripes [Laughs]. My father saw him and he walked over there and he said, "Sergeant

Fly what are you doing here as a private?” and he said “Sir, I heard that the Lieutenant needed a 1st Sergeant” [Laughs].

Mark: But he was a private?

Martin: He was a private. I guess his spies had told him that there was a vacancy and of course my father went to the Regimental Commander and told him the story and the Regimental Commander called the agent and said to him, “Issue the orders. We needed people like this” [Laughs]. And they did. My dad always got crummy batteries. They weren’t when he finished up. He got a crummy DIVARTY too, that’s how he got it. I got some pretty strange outfits, I don’t know. It ran in the family I guess.

Mark: We’ll get into some of those.

Martin: We got ‘em straightened out.

Mark: This Boat Day, though, I mean how often would that happen, just out of curiosity?

Martin: Oh, once a month, every six weeks maybe. I don’t know.

Mark: It’s not this annual event or something.

Martin: No.

Mark: That it happened fairly frequently.

Martin: Maybe every two months.

Mark: Yeah. More than enough to make it an event.

Martin: Oh, it was a big occasion, big occasion, big event, yeah. Everybody who could possibly do so went to Boat Day, you know, the officers anyway. And the senior NCOs would come. Especially if they knew there were friends coming through and all that sort of thing. People would go down and meet their friends and take them to their quarters to stay overnight and, you know, things like this. Get their laundry done up for them.

Mark: What was I going to ask? Oh, the different – the regional disparities, people coming together.

Martin: Oh, yeah.

Mark: Sometimes you talk to GIs and some of the Southerners are still fighting the Civil War and some of the East Coast people are a little snotty.

Martin: Oh, I suppose if they fought the Civil War, but people, I don't know, I think people got along all right. I don't think there were too many --

Mark: Nothing beyond sort of ribbing?

Martin: Oh, soldiers used to have fights every now and then, enlisted men. (laughs) In fact, they would have them between units and the favorite weapon was to take your garrison belt, a leather belt with a big brass buckle and wrap it around your hand and have the buckle here [Laughs]. And ah—you know there is something you may have run into and you may not. Have you heard anything about warrant officers? I mentioned warrant officers.

Mark: Not terribly much.

Martin: Warrant officers were a strange breed of cat and it might be useful to you all, you might run across this sometime. Warrant officers are not at all like they are in the service today where they are specialists who, rank-wise, sort of reside between—well, they reside between most senior, just above the most senior enlisted people and then they run up into the officer ranges now when you get into the O5, they're roughly equivalent to a major in pay and so on. They wear a distinctive insignia as you know, and so on, but in those days, there were very few warrant officers and they were descendents of what used to be known as quartermaster field clerks and such things. They were highly specialized and they wore an officer-type uniform, but instead of—they wore a Sam Browne belt but no cross-belt on it. It was around the waist like an enlisted man's but it had all the mountings and everything of an officer one. They wore no rank insignia. Those came in in World War II. They were just warrant officers, period. They got different pay due to longevity and they were neither officers nor enlisted men. Most of them that I remember were bandmasters, but they had some in the Army Mine Planter Service. They were masters of the mine planters which were kind of, a little bit like a tug boat, you know. And there were some quartermaster ones and some finance ones. Those were just about it. And—and the poor devils were neither fish nor fowl. At the Commanding Officer's, the traditional Commanding Officers New Year's Reception, the warrant officers were expected to attend with their wives and go down the receiving line. This is the only time they ever appeared at the Officer's Club. Some of them, apparently, sometimes would go to the Non-Commissioned Officer's Club but they did so in very—making sure that it was a discreet occasions and so on. So, they didn't sneak there but I mean—but they didn't come to the Officer's Club at all except to the Commanding Officer's reception. It was the darndest thing in the world. There were some, some very—we had a bandmaster at Fort Ethan Allen, Mr. Scolton, who was Dutch, I mean he was born in the Netherlands and had an accent and he was a real musician and knew a great deal about music. Used to give some lectures at the University even, so on and so forth and his wife was

a woman of great culture. She was European too. I suppose Dutch, I don't know. I just barely remember her, but she was very dignified and real, you know. But—but they were—they had a strange, strange status. Course, came World War II they became, for social purposes and everything, officers.

Mark: Yeah. Um, just a couple of little tidbits here.

Martin: Sure.

Mark: I know you were just growing up as part of a military family but as far as the enlisted ranks are concerned from what you could tell you've mentioned a lot of immigrants and that sort of thing. Back in the 19th century it was very common to find immigrants in the Army ranks. Was that pretty much the same in your experience? Or am I just reading what I have read about the old Army into what you are saying?

Martin: I was trying to strike some kind of a percentage.

Mark: I mean, I realize it's just a guess.

Martin: It sure would be just a guess, but I would guess that probably—probably 5-10% of the enlisted men in the Army were immigrants and maybe as much as 1% of the officers. I can remember a lot of the foreign born ones quite, quite well. I guess they sort of stuck out.

Mark: That's what I'm wondering. They do seem to stick out in your memory.

Martin: Well, my memory—they were colorful. I sort of enjoyed learning things from them, I guess. I guess that was a—that was a lot of it. I remember—I remember two at Fort Hoyle particularly. We were talking about how the commanding officer, old Bull Ennis so loved boats and so on and so forth. He had maneuvered into the Army's property at Fort Hoyle a captain's gig from the Navy. It was, you know, surplus we would call it today, and a J-boat which had been a rum runner the Coast Guard had seized and didn't want any more and so we had this little fleet there on the Gunpowder River at the docks and the Harbormaster, in essence, was a Corporal from my father's battery who was a Russian. His name was Timko and he'd been in the Coast Guard and he was very good and there were several of us kids who lived down there on the waterfront. In fact, old Colonel Ennis decided that we were acceptable and not only could we learn to drive in draft but we also ought to learn how to build a clinker built dory.

Mark: What's that?

Martin: Well, this is a-- A dory is a fairly large rowboat that they use in fishing out on the ocean. A fishing boat goes out, in the old days, and the people get out in the dory. One guy rows and they'd pull the net tight and all that sort of thing.

Klinker built is you put one—one board, like a lath almost, over another like this and they go up. In fact, you see some boats today that the fiberglass is molded that way. Sort of a fake clinker build. Lots of boats were built that way and he decided we should know how to do this, so we devoted a number of hours over one winter building this dory, of which all of us were very proud. It was a beauty! Believe me, it was a beauty. He would tolerate nothing but the best craftsmanship. But, he taught lots, you know. This corporal taught us—taught us a lot about, it doesn't sound very modest but when I was twelve I could handle a thirty-five to forty foot boat like that Admiral's or Captain's gig better than a good many of the people we see on Lake Mendota today [Laughs].

Mark: That's undoubtedly true[both Laugh]. I don't have trouble believing that at all.

Martin: You asked about influences and so on and so forth. In 1977 after I had retired and come here and I was working for the Historical Society, I joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary and I still belong. I think a lot of it came from, oh maybe a maritime heritage on my mother's side to an extent but I think an awful lot came in these very formative years there at Fort Hoyle. I so enjoyed the waterfront activities. And when I came here to the University, I sailed, you know, the whole smear.

Mark: I was going to ask about black troops, how the Army was segregated at the time.

Martin: Yes, it was.

Mark: Did you have—I mean, at any of the posts you were at, were there any black troops at all?

Martin: The only one, the only post was when we went to, in 1939 at the beginning of the school year, to Fort Leavenworth. There was the Regimental Headquarters and a squadron, the first squadron as a matter of fact, we only had two line troops, A and B, which was typical of the, so called, peacetime table of organization. The artillery outfits were the same way. They were all short a battery. The old 10th Cavalry, the regimental song of which was, they'd been in the Philippines for a number of years, was "The Monkeys Have No Tails in Zamboanga". Marvelous. And another sort of a footnote in 1922 when my father and mother came home from the Philippines, some wag, the—the a—the first squadron of the 9th Cavalry was coming home from the Philippines. The one about—about whom the book The Little Gods was written, interesting novel by the way. Some wag decided that my father, despite the fact that he was a field artillery officer, should be the squadron commander for that unit in transit [Laughs]. So he was. He brought them back, you know, to port in San Francisco and turned them loose so to speak, turned them over to

somebody. I think he and a couple of young 2nd lieutenants were the only ones, only officers with this whole squadron. But, he said it was no problem at all, they had all these old-timers. And then the 10th Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth was interesting. They were horse mounted. All the orderlies came from the 10th Cavalry, the officer's orderlies. They had—for the student officers they had one per about four apartments. Now there's a—there's quite a story there. Gee, things come back. We arrived there and we were just settling in to this apartment, very nice apartment in the old, one of the old brick barracks. They're still there—still apartments. As of a month ago [Laughs] we were down there. And we—we ah—just were to the point of getting there and our stuff had not arrived yet and this *old* corporal, straight as a ramrod but you know black people don't get white hair until they get pretty old and he looked like, you know, a little bit like the old family butler you see in the movies. And he had this white [unintelligible] hair and some through the top and he had hash marks like you wouldn't believe and he was all in his blouse showing brass. He looked like a million bucks, you know? And he came walking and he knocked on the door and my father opened the door. My father looked at him and he said, "Corporal Buffner", they didn't wear name tags then, and this old guy broke into tears. He says, "The Captain remembers me!" He said, "I was in the 9th Cavalry when you brought us home from the Philippines." My father said, "Yes, I remember well." And he said, "You were a PFC., one of the youngest ones then." "Yes, Sir." I don't know what kind of service the other three families got, but my father and I could put a pair of shoes out to be shined and they were gone. The old boy really took good care of us. He was really good. And after my father went down to Fort Knox and my mother and I stayed there for me to finish high school, and [Approx. 5 sec. of dialogue is missing] twice a day to find out if my mother needed anything. And he'd whisper, "Ma'am, what do you hear from the Captain?"

Mark: But that was rare 'cause there were rather a small number of blacks in the military at the time.

Martin: There were.

Mark: In the Army --

Martin: There was the 1st Squadron of the 10th Cavalry was at Fort Leavenworth and the headquarters and the 2nd Squadron was at West Point. The 9th Cavalry was at Fort Reilly. The 24th Infantry was at Fort Benning as school troops. The machine gun troop of the 10th Cavalry, though, was at Fort Meyer, Virginia for some reason or another. I really don't know why. It was detached from the rest of the regiment. There were no—there were no other—I don't—I don't believe that there were any, even service troops. There weren't very many. And, of course, those units all had real distinguished histories. They were really something. One of the interesting things that happened at Fort

Leavenworth, they decided in the fall of the year they had this surprise alert and they had a quartermaster corps company, they had a battalion of the 17th Infantry and they had the headquarters and the 1st Squadron of the 10th Cavalry and that was—that was about it. The 3rd Battalion of the 17th Infantry. This—this alert was called and they —this was to be a wartime one, not one of the ones for the disciplinary branch, if somebody got out. They used to have those too. And then, that was another thing. There was the guard and service company. So at Sumner Place at the parade ground all these units assembled in typical alert gear. The 17th Infantry's barracks were right there and their cooks were all in whites you weren't supposed to do any [Approx. 15 sec. gap in tape] one troop was at the north end and one troop was at the south end, when all of the sudden, one began to hear, it was a mounted regimental band, mounted on horses playing "The Monkeys Have No Tails" [Laughs] and here they come in all their glory. Everybody in the same uniform. They each had the rifle in the boot, a saber, which the Cavalry still had [Laughs] Now this is 1939. Talk about a creative anachronism. A pistol, you know, the officers all had their sabers. Theirs were drawn. They were riding and holding them, you know. The enlisted men's were all still in the scabbard and the machine guns were all in the pack saddles. They were ready! [Laughs]

Mark: Very different world.

Martin: It was a very different outfit. You talk about the black outfits. And you know a lot of these guys, what they did was they were orderlies, they were strikers. They heard that siren go off and they went down there and they got their set of wartime equipment, saddle bags, camo rolls everything. The rest of the people looked like a bunch of bhungis.

Mark: I just have one other last tidbit and it may go nowhere but the Army, of course, has its pomp and circumstance and that sort of thing, banquets at the Officer's Club and that sort of thing.

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: As an officer's child, what was your involvement in that? Were there things at the Officer's Club that were family affair type things? Dinners and that sort of thing or did they have to get the babysitter for you guys?

Martin: Well, yeah, usually, when you know, though —the babysitter depended on where you were and what age you were of course. But when I was very small and at West Point, for example, I am told, that when my parents had to go, you know the command performance thing was not unknown in those days. You were expected, as an officer, and your wife to show up unless you were sick. And when they had to go to one of those sorts of things, a departmental party or faculty party or whatever, all post party, there was a—there was a

civilian teenager I imagine, girl, that used to be a babysitter. I don't remember her. I have no idea of what happened at Fort Sill. Probably something similar. But when we were at Fort Ethan Allen, the maid— there were built into those old quarters were apartments for the maids and the maid was usually was there, you know, and she kind of looked out for me and if not, the orderly did. It was the same in Hawaii. As I was getting a little older, the orderly there was like a big brother. He was really a —we had two of them, McInerny and Buggy. I still remember them. Mc Inerny became a very senior Master Sergeant before they had Sergeants Major. In fact, my father went back for one of his reunions to West Point, just after the war ended. McInerny was in charge of the list of detail that was looking out for all the baggage and one thing and another. He was the overall planner for it. And then oh, by that time I guess I'd pretty much outgrown babysitters beyond there.

Mark: I suppose it's time to start getting on to World War II a little bit.

Martin: Yeah, well, the eve of 1940 I graduated from high school at Leavenworth.

Mark: I'm thinking even before that as a young Army brats, did you notice that the Army was changing at all? Or, did it prior to 1940?

Martin: Related to that, I can say a couple of things about when we were in Hawaii which was '31 to '34. We were having dinner. We had driven down to Honolulu, which we did sometimes and my mother did some shopping and my father and I went to Fort DeRussy and swam, (laughs), which is right next to Waikiki Beach. In fact, you wouldn't distinguish the two today. And the extras came out that Hitler had marched into the Rhineland. I remember my father saying, "That is the beginning of World War II." He didn't pursue it very far at the time. My mother was a bit upset. He didn't say it loudly or anything but ah—. At that time, the Navy people principally, but also Army people which included the Army Air Corps, but the Navy particularly knew that Japan was the enemy. And that that they they would —the war with Japan was inevitable and they were itching for it, I think. A lot of the Navy people were anyway. They wanted to have at the Japanese fleet. I don't know why they left all their battleships on Battleship Row. At any rate, what began to happen, as a part, it seems to me my recollection is a part of the public works, you know WPA and PWA

Mark: Depression era things.

Martin: The depression era sorts of things, yeah, making work, making jobs. The Army got a lot of physical improvements and you can see it today if you drive on one of those older posts you see all the PWA beautiful brick construction. It's all nice stuff. It replaced a lot of old wartime tarpaper shacks, you know, and so on and so forth. They really, literally were covered with tarpaper in

those days. Some of them survived beyond World War II, believe it or not, including Fort Knox, but at any rate, I don't recall that the Army got all that much in the way of wars largesse The Navy was built up. I remember a couple of kind of funny things. They took the old World War I 4-wheel drive trucks, the wobblies and they, which were made here in Wisconsin by the way, Clintonville, and they rebuilt those to put pneumatic tires on them and they reengined them and so on and so forth and they rebuilt some of the old Class B liberty trucks the same way. They modernized them. They began to motorize some of the field artillery, I do recall that, with commercial model trucks and they put high speed wheels and so on on the old French 75's and took the shields off of them. [Laughs] That amused me as a kid.

Mark: Now, those are technological improvements but in terms of numbers of guns and numbers of troops, that stayed pretty much the same?

Martin: Yeah, It stayed; it was pretty stable until the 1940 mobilization, the National Guard and then the Louisiana Maneuvers. That's when things began to pick up. But, for example, when my father went to the 7th Cavalry Brigade, mechanized, at Fort Knox, that was the only mechanized unit larger than a battalion in the United States Army. As a matter of fact, most of the tanks were in tank companies. Just a company like in Hawaii, we had 'em, and they had the old Renault Tanks and came that time I wouldn't be at all surprised what if they didn't still the—the 11th Tank Company had those. They may possibly have gotten something else, but there was the 7th Cavalry Brigade mechanized which included at that time, the 1st Cavalry, the 13th Cavalry with what were known as combat cars. It was that sort of twin turreted, very light tank. There was the 68th Armored Field Artillery Regiment which my father was in. He was the S3 of it. Which had half-tracks with artillery pieces mounted on them, 75's. There was an armored engineer company and then they moved the 6th Infantry from Jefferson Barracks at St. Louis and they made it truck born and that was it for a while until the half-tracks came along, and the 69th Infantry from Fort Benning which was a tank outfit, plus a couple of miscellaneous tank companies were moved to Fort Knox in 1940 if I'm not mistaken, the year I graduated from high school. But, gosh, they—in a—they were still carrying the revolvers in the backwards holster like this so that you wouldn't shoot your horse in the neck. That was the first time I ever saw those. It had always been 45's everywhere else. They had motorcycles. It was, you know, we thought it was thrilling. Some of us kids, the Army brats, it was fun being an Army Brats We'd—I had gone on maneuvers with a horse drawn outfit from Fort Hoyle and --

Mark: What do you mean you'd "gone on maneuvers?" You went with the troops?

Martin: Yeah, I had soldiers uniform and I was driving a swing team on a caisson. (laughs) I'll never forget going across the Conowingo Bridge going up for service practice up at Indian Town Gap. I was—I think I was just 13—I was

12 almost to become 13 or 13 and the Chief of Section, he had done it backwards. He had been a Pennsylvania State Policeman. Most of them went the other way around. (laughs) Sergeant Majewski another one of the Poles although native born and without an accent, came along and I was going to sleep. Going along [Laughs] and the horse—the swing team is the one in the middle, you know, they have a lead team, a swing team and a wheel team. He reached over and picked me up off the (laughs) horse and took me back and stuck me on the caisson and told one of the guys there, told one of ‘em to watch out for me and told the other one, who they called, Sherman, even the Poles couldn’t pronounce his name it was this long Polish name, and told Sherman to get up there on the horse. But at any rate, then at Fort Hoyle we used to go out, you know we had uniforms, even one of the revolvers in a backwards holster and going on problems and maneuvers and everything with the troops. And most of the officers were like my father. They said if we were going to go do a soldiers job, we were going to do the job. I had to go to radio school (laughs). My father made me go to radio school to learn dits and dots. I never did get very good at it, but boy I could lay wire. I really—I was really good at that. I worked with the wire detail, some. It was really, really fun. One of the things that was interesting, in social life, the first time I guess that we really ran into this to any great degree was at Fort Leavenworth but at the school posts which you know had a fair gathering of people. They had these dramatic societies and at Fort Leavenworth they had a really good one. They used to get us kids; we were all—either one of the high schools, either Leavenworth High School or Immaculata. And incidentally, at Immaculate they were some 65% of the students were not Catholic, myself included. It was just a good school, very good school. At any rate, they would get some of us boys to usher at the things and we used to have to wear our ROTC uniforms with the brass all shined up and white gloves and all this (laughs) and usher for the dramatic presentations. You asked about the kids getting to things. There was one thing that was a tradition and it continued during my service. It was traditional for the officers of the unit and their families to go and join the troops for Thanksgiving dinner and/or Christmas dinner. You’d get all gussied up and go, you know, and it was always—that was a great occasion. They had a—it was a great meal and us kids thought it was marvelous and all the NCOs’ kids came too.

Mark: As we’re getting into World War II there are a lot of famous personalities that come out of the war, obviously. As you mentioned the Army before the War was a pretty closed society. So I wrote down a list of names and I want to know if you knew of any of them through reputation before the war. The first one would be Eisenhower.

Martin: No.

Mark: Did you ever hear of Dwight Eisenhower before the war?

Martin: No.

Mark: MacArthur?

Martin: Yes, ah...

Mark: But you never had any contact.

Martin: No, no.

Mark: But he spent his whole time in the Philippines?

Martin: Yeah, and he'd been the superintendent at the Military Academy and he was considered by—I just sort of remember this believe it or not, when I was a kid—you know as sort of dandified [Laughs] and I think he was regarded variously. I guess that's a good way to put it, really.

Mark: Always has been. (laughs)

Martin: Yeah, you know. My father, for example, was always a little suspicious of some of these showy types. [Laughs] He never said much about this. But suspicious I think s'about the right word.

Mark: And, Patton? That's the one I thought of in the first place.

Martin: Oh, yes.

Mark: Your father was at Fort Knox—

Martin: Yeah. I remember, I remember him first when he was a Lieutenant Colonel. And—he was always quite flamboyant, as a number of the Cavalry officers were but not as much as he is, was. I knew his son quite well. My wife's opinion of young George is that he's a horse's tail. [Laughs] She doesn't care for him too much. Principally because when I was the editor of Armor Magazine which we'll get to later, he called me up and told me I had to print an article of his. [Laughs] This was about 2:30 in the morning which she didn't think was very good at all. He had apparently had a great many spirits fermenting. [Laughs] But I—I saw General Patton a few times at Ft. Knox and then—oh, during—right after—no, during the war, during the war, toward the end of it, he—of WWII, he came and talked to all the officers and NCOs of the 13th Armored Division and he gave his standard “Some German will sneak up behind you and hit you over the head with a sock full of you know what” speech. It was just about like the one in the movie. Honest to goodness it was, only this one was al fresco. It was outdoors. Who else? Did you have any—

- Mark: Those are all I had in mind. Any jump to your mind off hand? Just for anecdotal purposes if nothing else. I'm interested by this sort of enclosed community. I'm not surprised you ran across some of these persons at some point.
- Martin: It reminds me of an anecdote. When I was a Captain in, it must have been in about 1955 I guess when I came in from Germany, I was sitting in my parents living room in Arlington, Virginia and I said to my father, I said "Do you know where have all those characters that we used to know, in the so called "old Army" gone? It seems to me that it's different today, you know." And he looks, my father was a rather quiet man, he said, "Have you looked in the mirror lately?" [Laughs] I guess most of the family never did get over the fact that I was originally commissioned in the Infantry because I had Infantry ROTC, but as soon as Armor started up I transferred. I was a Cavalryman by heart. In fact, I never was in a tank outfit except in the training center for about a month after I got out of OCS. I was always in armored cavalry units, or you know just going to school or staff or whatever. They tend to get colorful characters, officers and enlisted.
- Mark: Well, I suppose its time to get on to your military career. You finished high school in 1940 you say?
- Martin: 1940.
- Mark: And then you went off to college, but you were in ROTC before?
- Martin: No, I—well I was in high school ROTC. Thereby hangs the tail. I came here to the University, I was just 17. I was 17 in August, the 13th of August and— ROTC was compulsory and I'd had a year of high school ROTC and as a matter of fact, I went to Immaculata and all the seniors were cadet PFC's. So I was a cadet PFC and I became a Platoon Guide for some reason or other and I got promoted at six weeks, when they made these—some various appointments, I was promoted to Cadet Buck Sergeant and I was a platoon guide and the platoon guide, in those days, ah, in the Army too, was the second ranking enlisted man in a platoon, the platoon sergeant being the first ranking. The platoon guide then came and then the squad leaders. But, at any rate, at that time, by the way, the platoon sergeant was a staff sergeant. The platoon guard was a buck sergeant and the squad leaders were corporals in the Army. Assistant squad leader was a private first class. At any rate, I came here and you filled out some form and you enrolled in the ROTC and I [unintelligible]. So, I got an appointment. I got sophomore status and got an appointment as a—as a —as a platoon guide. And then I got promoted to Platoon Sergeant. The next year, my sophomore year in college, I was a junior in ROTC and I was a Cadet First Sergeant. The second semester they appointed eight of us as Cadet Second Lieutenants from the Infantry Regiment and from the Engineer and Signal Regiment. I—I think it was about six, I

know it was eight, eight of us in the first regiment. And it got to be—and it was very unusual to be a cadet officer as a junior. Usually they're just all seniors. Then in my senior year in ROTC, my junior year in college, I was a Cadet Captain and commanded A Company. I had an affinity for A companies, for some reason. I don't know why, you know, I would get in Company A many places later too. But that was the beginning of any—well then, in my—toward the end of my junior year they came out and said that we could enlist in the Enlisted Reserve Corps and depending on the decision of the Professor of Military Science and Tactics as he was then known, he is now the Professor of Military Science, we could be given a rating in the Reserve as either a corporal or sergeant. One of the lieutenants came around, you know, on the staff, and he said, "If you enlist, you'll be a sergeant." And—I said, you know, "That sounds pretty good," so—I enlisted in the Enlisted Reserve Corps. I got a buck sergeant's rating, which was very nice because our ROTC class did not have a summer camp between junior and senior year and as a result we all went in the Army as enlisted men, and those of us who were Reservists got called up in our Reserve rank and while waiting to go to OCS, we had to go to OCS instead of summer camp, what a trade off—instead of six weeks of ROTC fun and frolic, we got seventeen weeks of OCS, (laughs) which is hardly a frolic!

Mark: I'm sure.

Martin: At any rate, the big advantage was I got paid as a buck sergeant, I got seventy-eight bucks a month, where these other "Skokie's"(??) got twenty-one bucks until they went to OCS and then they got to be corporals, at which time their financial circumstances doubled. There was a big disparity. It was twenty-one bucks for—still—well, it was thirty bucks by that time it was thirty bucks for a private and forty-two for a corporal, and seventy-two for—for a buck sergeant. So, financially, it was advantageous.

Mark: Now, on campus—well, first of all, I should ask, when you went to college did you intend to go into the Army? As you said, ROTC was compulsory so that may not have been the case.

Martin: Well, I wouldn't have passed it up in any event. I would have gone for a Reserve commission. And I might add—that when I was in my junior year in ROTC and my sophomore year in college, toward the end of it, I was proffered a shoo-in appointment to West Point and I turned it down.

Mark: Why was that?

Martin: Because my father was already overseas and I thought the war was more important than going to the school for boys on the Hudson and I thought I'd take my chances. Like—my uncle, for example, was not a West Point graduate. I'd take my chances on a regular commission if that's what I wanted to do. I was still, like this, I was International Relations major and

my intent was to become a foreign service officer. I was always attracted by things foreign, and, I really hadn't made up my mind. I knew I wanted to be in the war. I felt very strongly about it. Ah—very much so.

Mark: Well, —let's go with that then. You were in college when Pearl Harbor happened.

Martin: I remember it well.

Mark: Why don't you --

Martin: Do you know the—do you know the a—where the Pine Room is in the, the old dorms on the lake, the old Lakeshore Dorms? The two quadrangles?

Mark: I know the Lakeshore Dorms, but not --

Martin: You know there's the two quadrangles, and then there's that little low building. The Pine Room is in there now. That used to be a refectory. It's called Carson Gulley. I guess it still is.

Mark: Yeah, it still is.

Martin: And I remember Carson Gulley. He was black you know, a wonderful man, God, he was great! I was, was having lunch there or dinner on Sunday, I'd gone to church at St. Francis House and came back and we were having Sunday dinner and one of the kids came in. I remember who he was. It was a kid by the name of Selik Ginsberg, who was a refugee from Germany, a beautiful cellist among other things, and he came in and announced that this came over the air and we thought he was just sort of trying to pull our legs and everything. He said, "No, no. It's really true". I don't recall that any of us ate dessert [Laughs]. We all went for the radio, you know, and, ah, that's when it was.

Mark: You were anxious to get in the war once we--, as you mentioned.

Martin: Yeah, yeah, but, I wanted to be an officer. I wasn't so stupid that I was going to run out and enlist because I, I, you know, I could see the ROTC progression. At that time, we didn't know that, we might have the trade-off of no summer camp and seventeen weeks. I think I still would have. It was still a good bargain. I would have gone for it.

Mark: In terms of your motivation to go fight. I mean was it the fact that we were attacked or did you have um, sort of—

Martin: No. That was just, that was, you know that goes back to the Hawaii picture. That was no surprise to me at all.

Mark: Oh, that's interesting.

Martin: Absolutely not.

Mark: You saw that coming.

Martin: I –

Mark: Well, not the specific day and time, but—

Martin: No, I didn't see it coming. That's right. I couldn't have put a time on it but the fact that we were attacked by Japan was not a surprise to me at all. And I had followed [End of Side A, Tape 2. ca. 30 min.] the events leading up to that, you know, the delegation and the peace talks and everything. I'm sad to say I'm not a man of great prejudice, but I must say that to this day, I do not understand the Japanese. I'm very much, but not nearly as holy as, the gentleman who was the, the missionary bishop of the Episcopal Church in Japan who lived there his entire adult life, actually taught classical Japanese at Tokyo University and so on and so forth, was treated very kindly by them in the war, was evacuated on the Gripsholm and all that. Went back, reestablished the church with the native bishops not just long ago and I remember Bishop Wilde once telling a small group of us he said, "You know, I love the Japanese people" he said, I don't understand them." What an immersion he'd had. And I've never understood the Japanese and I, I just, I don't feel uncomfortable but I don't feel positively comfortable. It's strange. I don't feel that way about any other people in the world including the Koreans who are among the most volatile people you'd ever want to know, but I love Koreans. I just think Koreans are marvelous—even the crooks. (laughs) The slicky boys! And, you know, I don't have any other really, big prejudices at all.

Mark: Well, we'll get to the Koreans. I'm interested in the Germans. You eventually went to the ETO to do your fighting and—

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: It was your father's recollection of the march into the Rhineland, in the history books it's the march to war in Europe really takes center stage. I'm interested in how you perceived Fascism and Nazism and what was going on in Europe and how it may have affected your willingness to go fight in the war.

Martin: At this point, it might be useful to an understanding to say that my mother's family is an old New England family who until her generation had never moved more than 50 miles from Plymouth, literally. This is true.

Mark: I believe it entirely.

Martin: My grandmother even, who was in New York, because her husband was there for business, my grandmother whom I did not know, is buried in the Fort Hill Cemetery at Hingham, which is the new cemetery, which was opened and I think it was 1720 or 1740, I'm not entirely sure. A friend of the family, an officer in the Army also, used to say "Patty's family", my mother's name was Priscilla by the way, but they called her Patty. "Patty's family is one of the oldest and dirtiest families from New England". (laughs) He was from upstate New York. My father's family, the furthest we can trace them back was from upstate New York and they were Dutch and Yankee mixture. And they came to Ohio and here and, well then part of them were New Englanders too, from around Boston, the earliest we can go there. But at any rate, I had a German great-grandmother whom I remembered vaguely. Very misty recollection and so, and my grandmother, who was her daughter, my Grandmother Martin, was very anti-German and she was very German [Laughs]. In many, many respects. She really was very German. But I was not anti-German, by any manner of means, and my grandfather, who was not German, who was not only part Dutch of descent, but also very Dutch and Yankee if you can imagine such a combination, was not anti-German and my father was not anti-German. But I thought that the Nazi development in Germany, even before I knew very much about the concentration camps and so on, was one of the most hideous things that had happened to a nature, a nation that I regarded as on, despite it's rather bellicose nature, stemming from Prussia, had a tremendously long and deep immersion in culture and I've always been a tremendous admirer, as long as I can remember, at any rate, of north European culture. And I just thought that it was a horrible development and that I thought it was a very worthy cause to extinguish it. On behalf of the German people as much as anything. And of course, our own people and our own traditions and we have so many Germans in this country.

Mark: Especially in Wisconsin.

Martin: Here in Wisconsin, yeah. I mean these were not bad people. They were not evil people. Some of them were stupid, some of them were, you know.

Mark: Just like the other people.

Martin: Yeah, well they really were, and some had strange political notions in my opinion, especially those of the pretty far left and notwithstanding the fact that the two best mayors that Milwaukee's ever had were Socialists. But I—in other words, I didn't stem, I didn't proceed from an anti-German point of view but I felt very, very strongly and I felt much more messianic and much more like a crusader about the war in Europe than I did about the war in the Pacific.

- Mark: After the attack on Pearl Harbor and the German Declaration of War against America, how, on campus here, how did things change? Or didn't they? Among, I mean 19-20-year-old-men these are the guys that are going to eventually end up out there. I'm interested in how—
- Martin: I, I, I recall patriotic attitudes, attitudes of inevitability. I don't recall people being inordinately upset, you know or one thing and another. I think there was a feeling that this was a job that needed to be done, etc. The one thing I remember as far as change is concerned, was among other things and I suppose that some of my former colleagues feel the same way, I'm very proud of the fact that I was thrown out of several meetings of the Young Communists League on the campus. (laughs) They would advertise "Open discussion about so and so," so you'd go and throw in a little open discussion that didn't happen to coincide with their point of view and they would literally throw you out. Literally! We got into some good fights too. It was quite fun. [Laughs] But, there was an Irish kid, speaking of someone, you know, foreign, that was particularly warlike, he used to go with us. Oh, he was good with his fists too. He cleaned them out sometimes. But any rate, the Young Communists League had all these anti-war buttons and all this sort of stuff you know.
- Mark: Anti-war against, anti-war against the Nazis? That's what I'm trying to—
- Martin: Oh, yeah, they were --
- Mark: So it was before 1941?
- Martin: Well, you see, ah, well, it was not so much anti-war but they were against us getting in the war.
- Mark: Don't fight for the capitalists.
- Martin: Yeah. That's it. That was really the line. And we had some veterans of the Lincoln Brigade and those guys were somewhere left of Karl Marx. But at any rate, incidentally, they were very good at assembling and disassembling weapons and things like that. They were, they'd had some good training. It was amazing. But at any rate, they had all this propaganda and everything and the day that the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, everything changed. Overnight! You know, they were the great patriots.
- Mark: Behind the war effort now and—
- Martin: Absolutely. Absolutely. Buy war bonds! Support the war effort! All this kind of stuff.
- Mark: That's interesting.

- Martin: And, you know, and we hadn't even gotten in it yet. But, they could see what was coming I think.
- Mark: So you finished up your—did you get your degree before you went on active duty?
- Martin: No. I had three years and a summer school. I was a senior in good standing. [Laughs] I subsequently got my degree, my Bachelor's Degree from the University of Maryland.
- Mark: Why don't you tell me about your OCS training that you —it seemed to have made an impression on you.
- Martin: It made an impression on everybody!
- Mark: I've spoken to a lot of enlisted men. You know, they go to the standard basic training, eight weeks, whatever the case may be. I get the impression from talking to you that this was a little more grueling than that may have been.
- Martin: Well, it was fun in a way, too. (laughs) It depended a lot on your attitude.
- Mark: Where did you go for this?
- Martin: I went to the Armor School. Most of my classmates from here went to Ft. Benning to the Infantry School, but I wangled myself into the, into the Armor School because I, I wanted to go into the armored force. Excuse me, and at that time you came out and you were commissioned in either Infantry or Cavalry, but you were you were Armored Force and you wore a tank, the mark A tank insignia, commonly known as the pickle. (laughs) It does look a bit like one. Well, OCS was seventeen weeks and the a—I guess the first thing that everybody remembers was the unit formations. They had these charts of all the different armored force uniforms and these included tankers jackets and that funny little hat like an airplane pilot's and the bib bottoms and then we had coveralls and then you had a Class B uniform with a wool shirt and wool trousers and combat boots or, or GI shoes really, actually at that time the combat boots hadn't come in. And ah, the a, and leggings or not leggings and then you had the blouse. It could be worn with a wool shirt or with a khaki shirt and there were all these varieties of uniforms. I, I, I think, without exaggeration, there were about thirty different combinations. Well, they would have these uniform formations and you'd fall out, you know, at attention and everything and they'd announce the next uniform. You'd go dashing up the barracks steps, put on the next uniform, hang everything up (laughs) and you didn't button the shirt, so you'd taken the wool shirt off and just hung it up and you didn't button it—you got some gigs demerits for that (laughs) you know, chicken is hardly the word for it, I'll tell you! The tactical

officers used to come through and put —the greatest one was that they pulled on a couple of guys, I think they must have been trying to get rid of them. They ah, they unscrewed the handle on their bayonet, which was hanging on the end of their bed and put a burned out match in it and screwed the handle back on and then came by, you know, for inspection the next day, took off the— “unauthorized object in bayonet handle”. (laughs) This was the – you know the whole idea was a troop harassment project to see if they could make you fold. It was some—try to find out, you know, I guess, how psychologically sound you were.

Mark: And —how many, how many weren't? I suspect there was a considerable washout.

Martin: Earlier classes had graduated more because they needed officers more. By the time I went through from August to December of '43 they didn't need officers so badly and so they were more particular, let us say, and they washed out , I think it was 51% of our class. I think there were 49% we figured was our figure, not theirs, that graduated. But the interesting thing was they had a number of these, in our class, it was about half and half of, soldiers that had come from other places. Some of them were noncommissioned officers up to the grade of Tech Sergeant. Some had been in the South Pacific and then the other half of us were all college boys, so to speak. And, we all got along very well together. We had, our class had a wonderful class esprit. There were only a few that we didn't think fit in at all and we were happy to see them go, so to speak. We left the going to the tac officers. They were good enough at it. But we all pulled together and especially we pulled through some of the enlisted people who hadn't had as much education and had more trouble with gunnery and things like this. And the thing is that we'd—none of us had had tank gunnery but we'd had—without firing—we'd had machine gun gunnery and things—you know we were familiar with the—a lot of the various instruments and things of this kind. A little bit different application. These guys were real familiar with a lot of the things. Some of them that had been in tank units was different, but some of them came in from Infantry or Engineers or whatever and map reading was a really—it was a bear of a course. It was the one that everybody said “Watch out for map reading!” I didn't think map reading was any trouble at all. We were out on one exercise, as a matter of fact—you know they kept you going and I went to sleep riding in the back of this half-track and the instructor handed me the map and said, “Candidate, where are we?” Well, fortunately, as I mentioned, I had gone on maneuvers with the 7th Cavalry Brigade and then the 1st Armored Division when it first started up, and I looked around real quick and I said, “Right here, Sir” He said, “I'll be damned.” Then he didn't say anything else. [Laughs] He thought he had me. But ah—it was a very intensive experience, but a real learning experience, I thought. I enjoyed it. I think most of us that survived, either had a feeling of achievement or really got a [unintelligible]. We had a good, we had a good class.

- Mark: Well, of course you had some --.
- Martin: We stuck together.
- Mark: Background in the military.
- Martin: Absolutely.
- Mark: Do you think that somewhat helpful?
- Martin: Oh, sure it was helpful. You bet! I knew when to keep my mouth shut among other things! [Laughs] Don't fight the problem, you can't beat the system. It's loaded.
- Mark: Against you, too!
- Martin: We had one guy, I'll never forget, some of the strangest characters we had were from the University of Washington. I don't know what kind of an ROTC unit they had, but judging by what they sent us, not a very good one. There was this one character, Bates and we called him Scaly for some reason or another. Something was always befalling him. The laundry came back one time and what should Bates have in his laundry but the largest, the color was olive drab of course, O. D. 1's, the largest brassiere that you've ever seen in your life! It must have been about a 44F, honest to goodness! Some of the guys saw this and held it up and they said, "Gees, what are you going to do with this, Bates?" You know, and so on and so forth. And he was all flustered.
- Mark: Do you think someone was planted it there?
- Martin: No, no, no. I think it was, you know the German P.W.'s working in the laundry, were—you know, they threw things in. [Laughs] Maybe it got left out of somebody's laundry and they just put it in to get rid of it. But at any rate, we were out drilling one day and there was this swale—it was concrete lines, you know. It was a drainage for when they had a lot of rain and he gave us a flanking movement and here's the whole platoon marching on a flank about to go into this thing and there was a Lieutenant by the name of Browning who had been a 1st Sergeant in the National Guard was the tac officer. He was wonderful. He was a pistol. And he said, "Mr. Bates, the least you could do would be to kiss them good-bye!" [Laughs] Another time, not long after that, Bates was in charge of drilling us—you know, they'd rotate—and they would harass you something awful. But if you ignored it, it was fine. One of my good friends was the acting platoon leader one day and old Major Riley came by in his jeep and he said, "Candidate, what are you doing, going to a funeral? Get those men at double-time!" We were double-

timing. So we pick it up, you know. He goes around the corner, harasses some more people and comes back. He says, "Candidate, are you trying to kill those men? Slow down!" (laughs) I mean, this was the kind of thing they'd do. Just to see what your reaction would be. At any rate, Bates was drilling the group and he gave some sort of command and then he couldn't get anything else out. Fortunately, this time we weren't going to the swale and Lieutenant Browning yelled something at him "Stop standing there like" something or other "and he was so upset that he wet his pants. We were wearing khaki's, which made it even worse. Lieutenant Browning just called on one of the others and he said, "Mr. So and So, take over." He went over and he put his arm around the guy, and he said, "Come on, let's go." We never saw him again.

Mark: Odd.

Martin: Yeah, well, you know, they had a quick board. Three people get together in the next half an hour if three officers and say, "Bates is obviously not officer material".

Mark: And here's the evidence. So after you finished up there, what happened then? You got a commission?

Martin: Came out as a 2nd Lieutenant, yeah. And I went to the Armored Replacement Training Center, which was also an officer pool and we trained trainees and I went to a couple of cycles of so-called battle training. I was only there a couple of months and I went to the 13th Armored Division.

Mark: Which was where?

Martin: Camp Bowie, Texas. This being February of 1944.

Mark: You went there and that's when you had to meet your company and get acquainted with the Division and where was this Division in terms of readiness at the time?

Martin: It was—it was quite ready. It was—it was one of the newer armored divisions, but it had, it had achieved quite a status of readiness and shortly after I joined we went through the Division Series, so called, the D-Series, the testing series and passed with flying colors and that meant that all the subordinate units had also passed all their tests and so on, and it was a deployable division. When, that spring, boy things happened fast in those days, you know, March or April, April strikes me—April, it must have been April, they stripped us and the infantry battalions of all our privates and P.F.C.'s except the ones that were in the hospital. And the engineers, they did the same thing. The artillery lost about half of theirs and so on.

Mark: For what reason?

Martin: For replacements for the invasion which was to come. The morale in the Division was not good, needless to say. They left all these ready to go officers and noncommissioned officers and they assembled all of us in the Field House one day and the Chief of Staff, General Marshall came to talk to us. He said "I can't tell you what or exactly why, but you are, very soon, going to be able to be very proud of the men you trained and of the contribution that you have made toward the war." And this must have been in May, I'm guessing. I don't think I really have anything that it recorded either, but about May. And it showed something of the stature of the man, to me. It was one of the best speeches I'd ever heard. It wasn't very long, but it was very, very good. Oh, and he told us, he said "You are, you are going to be needed sooner than you may believe and your task now is, we are going to fill you with excellent material and you will be trained very rapidly for deployment." And they filled us with the Army Specialized Training Program, the old ASTP that they cut back, and aviation cadets that they didn't need any more. They didn't need that many pilots and boy they were really high caliber. Jumping forward a little bit, in May of 1945, my father came down from Halle, where he was Division Artillery Commander of the 7th Armored Division. This is after the war was over, to visit me down in Bavaria, along the Inn River, and the Division Artillery Commander was a classmate of his by the way, so he drove through the divisionary and he went over to see Col. Casner and he came back and he said, he told me, he didn't [tell] any of the other officers, but he said, "You know I could darn near have cried". He said that "And I've talked to some of your soldiers and some of yours in the Battalion here" and he said that "these people could have been officers in the 7th Armored Division." He said they're better material than some of the officers we had who were good combat officers. But, you know, he said that some of these lads that could make a career of it. And —it showed, you know, the caliber of people we got. So we really didn't have any problems training them up.

Mark: Yeah. Now, back to this 'Marshall speech', what did you think at the time? And then sort of continue on—

Martin: I thought something important was going to happen. [Laughs] I was a 2nd Lieutenant, he was a 4-star General.

Mark: And here he is.

Martin: And he told me something important was going to happen and he was glad of the way I trained, actually, the men of two platoons—helped to train them. I thought that was very nice of him. [Laughs]

Mark: So when you learned of the invasion —

Martin: Yeah, yeah, well —

Mark: Did you realize then –

Martin: On the 6th? Yeah, sure we knew. We put two and two together. And as a matter of fact, we began getting letters from some of our men shortly thereafter that we had trained. Some of them wrote back through their friends or some of us officers even and they had gone to the 2nd and 3rd Armored Divisions, for the most part. Now, some went to other places, but they went to comparable units that really needed the men. When they were going through the Beaucage country there in Normandy, they were losing armored infantrymen especially, like flies. And so, you know, I mean we really did take pride in that and we went forward to train a division again. Yeah.

Mark: So when were you ready to go overseas again?

Martin: We were ready to go in about October, but we didn't get sent until December. Shipping became a problem and then, of course, we always felt sort of bad about it because the Battle of the Bulge came along. It started on my father's birthday. He said "Something catastrophic always happens on my birthday!" The 16th of December. The 7th Armored Division in which he was the Division Artillery Commander was over in the Netherlands in the British 2nd Army— of all things. They weren't even operating with the Americans and that's one thing that old Monty did right. He said, "You guys get on the road and go help out your buddies." (laughs) That's exactly just about the way it happened. And that's exactly what they did. But we didn't get over there until January.

Mark: You have maybe ten minutes left.

Martin: Ten minutes?

Mark: Yeah, maybe. I want to cover two basic things.

Martin: Okay.

Mark: First of all, your first command. And some of the—you had been in an Army environment for your whole life but this is the first time you actually commanded troops and I'm interested in your reaction to it. What were some of the challenges of it? Some of the most satisfying and least satisfying aspects of it in the training segment—in getting these—getting the first crop and then the second crop ready to go overseas?

Martin: Yeah, the first, actually I guess the first platoon I was the commander of was in the Training Center, but that, that, you know, was during the finishing cycle before we sent the people out as replacements. It was nothing, you know, not all that exciting. It was interesting. We didn't have any NCO cadre. We were using , trainees as cadremen, the best of them. That was sort of challenging.

But the first, what I would say really was the first command that I had as, as just a platoon now you know, was the reconnaissance platoon of the 59th Armored Infantry Battalion. Incidentally, two weeks ago my former Battalion Commander for whom I later served as adjutant, I was also a rifle platoon leader, came through here from the Division reunion. We had a marvelous evening. But, at any rate, I went to the 13th Armored Division and the G1 who's the chief personnel guy, Lieutenant Colonel, interviewed me and said—he didn't have very many questions—he welcomed me to the Division. He said, "Martin, how old are you?" I said, "Twenty, Sir" and he said "Well, that's good," he said "you are going to the 59th". I didn't know whether this was a mess kit repair detachment or what it was. So, I got taken up on the ration truck just like in combat. They were out in the field on maneuvers, and the a—I got to the 59th which was an Armored Infantry Battalion and the Adjutant greeted me and there was a—and he said "The Major, "Col. Malone was a major then, was pretty busy while at the moment and there was this most forlorn Lieutenant standing there, it was raining by the way, and I'm in a class A uniform, right jacket and everything. So finally he said, the Adjutant came out and he said, "The Major will speak to you now." He said "Make it short. Don't give him any long answers. Very busy." He was, too, indeed, real tactical situation and everything, and he greeted me, very warmly, and he said, "Martin, can you read a map?", and I said "Yes, Sir". He said "You're going to be my reconnaissance platoon leader. I'm on the 6th one right now". I said, "Yes, Sir." He said, "Captain Brandel, the Headquarters Company Commander will be here to pick you up any minute," you know. So he did. So I go to the platoon all dressed like I was going to a parade and it's in the dark and Capt. Brandel lets me and my baggage off in these mesquite bushes and he said "Sergeant Froy", the Platoon Sergeant, "will be here any minute." He'd no more than gotten away with the beach, and this heavily accented voice says, "Lieutenant" and he comes out of the bushes and he says, "Welcome." He was a Russian who'd been in Admiral Kolchak's army as a corporal at the end of World War II and during the Revolution—or World War I. He was the finest platoon sergeant I ever had. He had faked his age. He was a gambler, a professional gambler in civilian life in San Francisco, in the émigré colony there and he knew more about the land and so on and so forth than you'd ever want to find and it was a real—you know, he taught you a lot about leadership. That was my first command. Unforgettable. Never—I'll never forget Sergeant Froy. We were talking about him the other night.

Mark: Now, when it came to the men in your company there, as you mentioned there were a lot of ASTP.

Martin: Well, that was—the ASTP types sort of showed [Approx. 3 sec. of missing dialogue] went to, at that time that was before we lost the first bunch.

Mark: Oh, I see.

Martin: Yeah. And then we got, well, then we got new ones in and I got some ASTP guys in the recon platoon. Shortly thereafter, however, I was transferred to A Company. It was a 1st Lieutenant's job, they—it was designated as a 1st Lieutenant's job and we got a 1st Lieutenant in, and he was made the recon platoon leader and I was transferred to A Company to be a rifle platoon leader. I went to the Third platoon of A Company and had another superb platoon sergeant who had come in the Army with the first draft and had been in the 8th Cavalry and he was well trained. He's a fine man to this day, and ah—that was a good experience, and it was there, when I went there they were still getting men in because I remember very dramatically I was given the job of addressing some of these that came in and some of them had been aviation cadets, were corporals and so on and we had men that we wanted to promote and I made a clean face with it. I said, "You know, you're going to have to work to keep your ratings," and so on and so forth, "Be on notice". One of them came up to me and he said, "Lieutenant, I'm going to keep my rating." And I said, "What's your name?" and he said, "Benecki". I said "Okay" and I went back to the 1st Sergeant and said that we got a replacement by the name of Benecki and he's a corporal. He said, the 1st Sergeant on line says, "Oh, *one of those*," you know. I said, "I want him". He turned out to be one of my best squad leaders. He was good.

Mark: I'm interested in how a twenty-year-old Lieutenant keeps all these different guys in line and how you sort of project—

Martin: Yeah, the Battalion Commander was 25 and [laughs]—the Platoon Sergeants who were old-timers were 30.

Mark: Well, the Platoon Sergeants I suppose would be a little older.

Martin: The 1st Sergeant at Headquarters Company, Sergeant Horvath, was a regular Army soldier and, I don't know, he was 32, something like that. Seemed old to us [laughs]!

Mark: Old, old, old. But –

Martin: I grew a mustache when I was twenty and I've had it ever since [laughs]. The reason I grew it was the S2 had a real unkempt, big, bushy one. He was a funny sort of a guy. He still is. An eccentric, real eccentric—the Intelligence Officer you know. And we were talking about mustaches or something and I said, "Gee, I think I'll grow one". He said, "You couldn't do it." I did. [Laughs].

Mark: Did you have any discipline problems you had to deal with? Where you, in the training part anyway, were you a dispenser of chicken yourself? Or did you—

Martin: Well, it depended on one's point of view.

Mark: What's your point of view?

Martin: One of my best friends in OCS classmates told me here a few years ago and he was very, very sincere, he was a successful businessman, he's a millionaire, and we were in the same company. He was another rifle platoon leader in that same company. He stayed in the company and I went back up to headquarters after some combat casualties among the staff to become the Adjutant. The old man pulled me up there. But he said, "You know Sonny, I used to think you were kind of hard on your guys". He said "You know, thinking back on it, you were right". He said, "Your platoon had fewer casualties, between you and Sergeant Miller, had fewer casualties than any of the others." And I said, "Yep". And I said, "Also, you'll remember that Eldon Miller was wounded shortly after I left the platoon. Sergeant John Smith, the 1st Platoon Sergeant took over and that platoon never had another officer platoon leader until after the war was over." He said, "You're right." So I don't know, you know, one man's chicken hit is another man's training.

Mark: Yeah. Well, yeah from an officer's perspective what is the purpose of —

Martin: I owed it to them, I thought. I owed them the best I could give them. And, we were not an unhappy bunch. No, neither the recon platoon where everybody spoke at least to a degree some language besides English, except two I think out of the 25 or so. Nor in the rifle platoon I had in A Company.

[Approx. 5 second gap in tape]

***** End of initial session of interview. Tape 3 resumes with second day of interview and catching the tail end of a story whose beginning is not included on this tape record.

Mark: Okay, today's date is, oh man what is it? 14th, 15th of November.

Martin: It's the 15th of November.

Mark: It's Wednesday, 15th of November, 1995. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, resuming our interview with Col. Martin, which we left off last Wednesday, actually.

Martin: Right.

Mark: And we were talking about, we were talking about training your division to go overseas, and just as the tape ended, you told me a story about —about a person who later became, I suppose what you call, a professional veteran who wouldn't get out of the foxhole. And I thought we'd start by having you resume that story. I thought it was an interesting anecdote, so I want to—

Martin: I think—I'm trying to remember exactly where we ended up. Had we—had we gone —had we left Camp Bowie to go to the port of embarkation when we --

Mark: I don't think so.

Martin: I don't think we had.

Mark: I don't think we got to port of embarkation.

Martin: Okay. Because the story sort of hangs on this. Well, there was a fellow who still exists, very much so, who was in my , in my platoon, the 3rd Platoon of Company A of the 59th Armored Infantry Battalion, in the 13th Armored Division who every time we had any kind of a live fire exercise, and there was any artillery support, he would disappear. He was nowhere to be found. (laughs) And he, then, one time we had one of these exercises and I had always trained my people and I led them. As a matter of fact, but insisted that they move forward with the artillery, staying close to it. Being an artilleryman's son, I knew that the probable error was very small and very few short rounds ever occur, red which were usually not the fault of the artilleryman but the manufacturer, but at any rate, we did this and on one of the a, one of the exercises I remember, my right leg of my coveralls got torn, as a matter of fact, from a shell fragment and the Division Commander who was a friend of my father's happened to be observing that one and he saw me there and he said, "Sonny, following artillery fire closely is good but you can be *too* close." Any rate though, this guy on this one exercise, was —I guess it was probably a shell depression of some kind, looked a little, a little bit like a fox hold and he wouldn't get up and move out so I came up behind him and kicked him right in the rear end and told him to get going, with some appropriate exhortations. And as a matter of fact he did. So time went on and we went overseas, and some of the people in the division when we were in France getting our equipment together some officers and I think some selected N.C.O.'s went up to some of the front line armored divisions to gain experiences from them and so on. And one of the things they came back with was that there weren't enough gas can handlers on the gas trucks. They couldn't refuel fast enough and it exhausted the drivers and so on. So they were calling for extra men and our Company Commander came back from this meeting at Battalion and he, he told us about this and he asked for volunteers from the platoon leaders and the platoon sergeants who were there and the first two to volunteer anything were my platoon sergeant and I [laughs], and we said we would gladly, we would gladly volunteer this guy. Time goes on and we got in combat and up in the Ruhr pocket. The trains were ambushed by some people in the 2nd Division. The parachute division that had been in Crete, who were quite a—quite a—they were a fine bunch of soldiers, tough fighters. And this little character, he is kinda short, stocky, dismounted one of the 50 caliber machine guns from the ring mount, draped

some ammunition belts over his shoulder, grabbed two boxes of 50 caliber ammunition and one of those was not very light and jumped off this truck and set up shop on a low lying wall and was very effective. He delivered some very effective fire and as a matter of fact he earned a Bronze Star medal. As I think back on it, he really, really deserved a Silver Star. He was recommended, however, by the Service Company Commander because they were attached to them. But now, he is one of, from our company, he is one of the true patriots. He's gotten a stand of Division flags and just all sorts of things like this. He goes to all the Company reunions and so on, and he's still a very unusual guy I might say. [Laughs]

Mark: Was it difficult generally to sort of discipline the citizen soldier and get him used to the Army? You were obviously, but in the war you had with all these civilians coming in who weren't in tune to the military lifestyle necessarily. Was it a problem? Were there others like him? Or did people pretty much—

Martin: Oh, I think –

Mark: [unintelligible] the Army on business –

Martin: I think that was – most, most, I think, most Americans in those days were fairly patriotic. I think that they very much believed, at least what we saw in Europe, they very much believed in the cause despite the fact that a lot of them—I had a couple of very fine soldiers from Wisconsin, by the way. One of them was of Dutch descent and the other one, Schoenberg was from Milwaukee. He was German and could speak German. These people, I think had sort of patriotic motivation from all parts of the country and they, ah, they weren't a problem. A lot of the men that we had in the 13th Armored Division as I mentioned to you last week, had come in with the second group after we'd shipped the first group overseas as replacements, of privates and P.F.C.'s. Incidentally, they were not a big problem, at all. They were, they were really, they were good people and—I don't remember, really, any real disciplinary problems that we had with those people. I have a dramatic memory of one guy that we had when I was the Recon Platoon Leader of the outfit when I first went to the 59th at Camp Bowie. I had this one Indian, who had been— American Indian—as a matter of fact he was a Navajo and he had been in the Recon Squadron and had been a Sergeant there and I imagine he was probably a fairly good one, but he had a bit of a sauce problem. He really drank too much sometimes, not all the time. He wasn't an alcoholic. And one night he really got into the marmalade and at that time, we had little— the officers had little hutments. They had four of us in one of those and the enlisted men had sort of shacks. They were tarpaper sort of things that held a squad. And, they sent one of the—the Charge of Quarters sent one of the soldiers down—we were very close to the building, very close, to get me because Kay, this Indian, was really on the rampage and he had gotten his bayonet and he didn't like the half-track driver, Nowakowski, for some reason or other, I'll never know why,

and he was after him. And I went up there, hastily attired, and said to him, “Kay, stop where you are. Drop that bayonet.” And he did. He stood at a very shaky attention and said, “Yes, Sir, yes Sir, I’m not causing any trouble, Sir.” [laughs] It was really, it was kinda funny in a way, although it was also sort of scary. Poor Nowakowski was scared half to death. He was from Chicago.

Mark: I bet I would be too.

Martin: Polish guy. Oh, yeah. I don’t blame him! He was a bit quiet, almost shy. A good soldier, he was a real good soldier, good half-track driver. That was the – and, you know, we didn’t do anything about that. I suppose I should have made a big rumpus about it, but I didn’t. I told him to go to bed and he did.

Mark: Now would that have happened in the old Army, say 1933?

Martin: Oh, I wouldn’t exclude the possibility, but I think what would have happened then was probably some of the NCOs would have solved the problem. As a matter of fact, in this case, I don’t know why they didn’t either. I remember now that you asked that. I remember that somebody said that they couldn’t find the 1st Sergeant. He was a regular by the way. There were very few of them. He would have solved the problem, believe me. So, somehow, or other - they also knew at least the men in my platoon, my recon platoon; they also knew that Kay had a lot of respect for me. Which was very good. I played my cards there and it worked.

Mark: I’ve just got one more question about training and then we’ll head overseas I suppose. That involves training accidents and sorts of hazards of training. Something that a lot of people don’t always understand. You mentioned getting some artillery in your pants and that sort of thing. (Martin laughs) Were there many training accidents? And, what was the cause of them that you experienced personally?

Martin: I’m trying to think over the whole expanse of time I was with troops and so on and so forth, I was aware, as you are, perhaps more so even, of training accidents. They were known to occur. I don’t know. It’s probably some combination of good luck and insistence on standards. I mean it’s a function of discipline. There are some that are genuine accidents. They really are. But, most of the so-called “accidents” in quotes that take place are just as they were in the Air Force, they’re “pilot error”. Only the pilot’s on the ground in many cases. That’s true of automobile or vehicle accidents and it’s true of firing accidents. If your people are careful, they, I don’t know, you don’t have very many. I don’t really remember any real horrifying ones. I remember a couple of jeeps overturned and nobody got hurt. As a matter of fact, I was in a jeep that overturned. Not in training but after the war – and the fault there wasn’t even mechanical. The shocks on it were no good and there was a series

of pot holes. This was in Germany after the war. People do take chances. They get carried away with, you know, on maneuvers with the situation. I don't recall it. It must have been some combination of luck and hopefully, had something to do with my own units. But even the ones I observed had something to do with "good order and discipline" as the expression went.

Mark: That's good.

Martin: Yeah, people live longer that way. You know ,my platoon, the rifle platoon that I trained and was in combat for just a very short time, then was taken over when I went to be the Battalion Adjutant was taken over by the Platoon Sergeant. I think maybe I told you last week that one of my friends told me that I was, he thought I was awful hard on these people sometimes, training. But I'm very proud of the fact that there was never a man killed in that platoon. We weren't in combat forever and a day like some of the old units that had been there for a long time, but some of them were rather badly wounded, but nobody was ever killed. It was the darndest thing.

Mark: Amen to that.

Martin: Yeah, yeah.

Mark: Okay, so I suppose its time to go overseas. You disembarked from --

Martin: Well, we yeah, we disembarked at, in --

Mark: Or embarked I guess. Where did you leave from?

Martin: We left from Brooklyn Army Base. We staged through the infamous Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.

Mark: Why do you call it infamous?

Martin: Nobody liked it there. (laughs) I think among other things people were anxious to get going and it was kind of boring and everything. Many shakedowns for equipment and so on and so forth and one thing I remember is at Brooklyn Army Base we went to somewhere in New Jersey and got on ferries which took us to the Brooklyn Army Base. We were dismounted. Transported to the ferry prior on trucks, but. They had this old, he seemed old to me, Lieutenant Col., inspector general type, World War I veteran so he wasn't real young. He was asking a random sampling of the men if they wanted to go overseas. So, he got apparently, he got all positive answers and one of the most amazing ones was, we had a mortar gunner by the name of Merrick in the Mortar Squad in my platoon. An armored infantry platoon is an interesting organization, was by the way. It had three rifle squads, one of which was also the Headquarters Squad, a Light Machine Gun Squad and a 60

Millimeter Mortar Squad. It had its own organic fire power so to speak. Plus the 50 caliber machine guns on the half-tracks. But, at any rate, he, Merrick, had fallen, actually, that was a training accident, had fallen and broken his collar bone and he wanted to go overseas in the worst way. This was just before we left and the Battalion Surgeon was a marvelous old country doctor from upstate New York and it was healing well and he got it all fixed up and had a figure 8 on it to hold it stable and everything. All his pack and his duffel bag and all that were all stuffed with paper and the rest of the men had his stuff. Here's this kid, and he was one of the ones that got asked. He said, "Yes, Sir!" He really wanted to go. He was a good soldier and we hadn't been in France very long and it was completely healed. He was totally back in action, but that was kind of typical. The other funny thing that happened on the pier there was there was an announcement that came over the – they had someone playing the radio to entertain the troops and there was a news break of some kind and said the President had announced that none of our 18-year-olds were being sent overseas. This, presumably, to make all the mother's of America happy and I had I suppose, in my platoon, about ten or twelve of them anyway. There were fifty-one men in one of those platoons and we were up to strength, plus two as a matter of fact, and there was this chorus. There was some real, real fun fellows there. This chorus, you know, sort of three or four of them anyway said "Lieutenant, can we go home now?" (laughs) They didn't mean it at all, it was just a big funny. Everybody laughed. So we got on the transport that we went on which was a ship called the Marine Raven, which was built – it was one of those wartime built ships. However, it was a good model. I believe it was a C4. They had a civil service crew on but they had a Naval gun crew. Of course they were all blacked out. We went in a convoy. The interesting phenomenon of that convoy, I think, was the H.M.S. Rodney was in it.

Mark: I'm not familiar with that ship.

Martin: That's the one of the two large Washington Naval Treaty British battleships which had all their main batteries forward. Unlike the Wisconsin, they weren't distributed fore and aft. They had this big foredeck with gun turrets on it and it had been hit in the Atlantic and it was repaired at Newport News and it was not in the convoy to protect the convoy, but to be protected. (laughs) It was going back to Britain. In addition to the Naval gun crew, they had a whole lot of machine guns and they, 50 caliber machine guns, which they manned with troop passengers so to speak. Formed up a couple or three platoons which were in areas of the ship and I had gone to the 50 caliber antiaircraft school at Ft. Bliss while we were training at Camp Bowie, Texas. I was sent off there and I – so I was selected to be one of the platoon watch commanders which was kind of fun because we got to ride up above, you know. It was cold. It was always cold as anything. We had Navy gear and we could see what was going on as much as you can see in the dark. In the daytime you could see the convoy and so on and so forth and we got to eat in the Navy's Mess when we

were on watch. It was really kind of fun. The convoy broke up in Southampton inside of the boom. We didn't land there in England. I will never forget as long as I live the H.M.S. Rodney had a Marine band on it – British Marine band and they played as they went through the boom. They were glad to be home. They hadn't been home for two and a half, three years I guess. It was very impressive. Another thing I remember was that I had – when we were here at the University when I was a senior in ROTC and a junior in college they had at Mil Ball they invited a group which was actually eight people of WRNS, the Women's Royal Navy Service from Washington. They were attached to the embassy there, to come as guests at the Mil Ball. Well, as luck would have it, I was between girlfriends and I volunteered to escort one of them. We became good friends. My mother was in Washington during the war after my father had gone overseas and I would go there on leave occasionally before we went overseas and Jack and I, her name was Jocelyn, but they called her Jock would, you know, we'd go to things, and they were -- you got into wonderful parties because these young women were very popular in the embassy circuit, you know (laughs). Young, unaccompanied attaches, and things of this kind and so we went to there were always lots of fun things. But the interesting thing is when we were there at Southampton, we picked up a pilot to go across the Channel and the first person from the pilot boat that got on was a great big tall Scottish lad, a rating, a sailor, and then the pilot got on who was a WRN officer who was probably all of 5'1" tall.(laughs) Some soldier made the comment, "Oh, looky, we're going to have a girl pilot!" This Scottish lad, I thought he was going to pick me up and wrap me around one of the stanchions, he said, "Look Jocko, (laughs) that girl as you describe her is an Admiral's daughter and knows more about boats than you'll ever know!" Or ships, O guess he said. I got a chance to talk to her and she was a friend of Jocelyn Davies, the one I knew. Just one of those coincidence things.

Mark: Small world type things.

Martin: Small world type things, yeah.

Mark: So your voyage overseas, the trip itself, lasted how long?

Martin: Oh, Gee, I don't remember.

Mark: Fairly quick I would imagine – I'm thinking back, but I think it was like twelve, fourteen days anyway. When we went in through the boom at Southampton, by the way, the night, no two nights before we really had a lot of fun. They called General Quarters and that meant that all these 50 caliber platoons, all of us went up, all three watches and manned them so we could pass the ammunition and so on and so forth. There was a group of submarines out there. They really fired a lot of stuff and there was a little Canadian Corvette and they came in. They got to come in through the boom first. Those

were a miserable little ship. They bobbed up and down like a cork.(laughs)
The skipper on that was a young guy and he was wearing a big, knitted
turtleneck and a bridge coat and so on and so forth and they had a broom up
for a clean sweep. They'd gotten one.

Mark: Now you had been on a ship going overseas when you went to Hawaii for
example so perhaps you had some sea legs. Was that the case with others on
the ship? I listen to young guys talk about the voyage overseas and I'd say
nine out of ten of them almost were sea sick --

Martin: Were really seasick. Yeah. They really were. The only time I got seasick on
that trip was one night when I went down in the hold and I went down every
night to check and see how my men were doing and so on and so forth, and I
went down and it was, I don't know, a particularly rough night and a bunch of
them were sick and I urped once. I think that's the only time in my born days
when anything from ten or twelve feet on up that I've ever gotten seasick. I've
always been a pretty good sailor.

Mark: Sounds like you chose the wrong profession almost.

Martin: Well, I think I mentioned earlier I thought at one time of going to Annapolis.

Mark: You did, yeah.

Martin: Yeah, and, I belong to the Coast Guard Auxiliary now, for, let's see, since '77.

Mark: So you got to England when?

Martin: In January of '45.

Mark: '45. How long was it before you got into France, or Germany by that time I
suppose?

Martin: We got to France right away, of course. We went across the Channel during
the night and part of the next day to La Havre and we unloaded there and then
we went inland in Normandy and the Division was billeted around in various
towns there where we had to -- we didn't take our equipment with us,
individual arms and things of that sort we did. The only vehicular type thing
that we had in our battalion that we took were the three 75 millimeter M8
assault guns in the Assault Gun Platoon. They were the only thing.
Everything else was issued to us. The interesting thing was that we had had
M5 and M9 half-tracks back in the States, the latest International Harvester
models, a beautiful vehicle. I wouldn't be surprised but what the Israeli [End
of Side A, Tape 3. ca. 30 min.] Reserves don't still have some of them by the
way, seriously. The last pictures I saw of anything going on in Israel, there,
some of them were still rolling. But, at any rate, when we got overseas we

were issued ones that had been in North Africa and Sicily and Italy and they had been sent back to the States and rebuilt, shipped overseas and the interesting thing about them was that a great many had been hit with armor piercing projectiles and they had welded plates all over them, (laughs) patchwork, welded plate over 'em. We had all that, most of that stuff came out of depots up in Belgium. Brussels, Antwerp, and so on, which of course was, Antwerp was the target point for about not quite a month earlier, the Battle of the Bulge which the Germans never reached, thank God, but it was kind of interesting. I had an interesting experience there. I went with some of the convoys that went up into Belgium to get various supplies. We'd start out with a truck with a whole bunch of drivers and then we'd go get some vehicles and bring them back. Then other kinds of supplies. That was very interesting. One of the most interesting things was you could go across the border of France and Belgium at night and at that time, there was no border. There were no border police, and some of the barriers were still there with the red and white stripes but then some places there weren't because it had all been under German occupation. They hadn't replaced some of them. But, you could tell when you went from one to the other because when you got to Belgium the windows were clean and they sparkled, even at night. Honest to goodness.

Mark: I believe it.

Martin: At least in Picardie that was true, you know. I don't think it would have been true over in Alsace, but in Picardie it was true. Amazing. That's kind of one of the memories I have of that period.

Mark: Well, that kind of leads into a topic I like to bring up anyway and that's contact with the natives. I suppose we can touch on that now.

Martin: Oh, sure. In France, for example, my personal contact with the natives was very good at that time. I spoke wonderful French. I don't anymore, sadly. They told me I still have a pretty good accent, but my mother spoke French. She had been very good friends with the daughter of the French consul in New York. That was one of her best friends I guess, and I think I mentioned earlier at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont, I learned to speak Cannich which appalled my mother, but then I took French in high school and the practice, the supervisor teacher at University High in Baton Rouge, LA where I went was a native French woman, Mademoiselle Lou(??) and two of the practice teachers I had were French girls who had come to the States to complete their studies and then when I was in high school at Immaculata, the last year, my home room teacher, Sister Edward taught French and I had a free period when she was teaching sophomores and she asked me to help out. So I did. I came here to the University, I took two years plus Diplomatic French plus Conversational French and the latter two were from Mademoiselle Renoir who was a native of France. A lady of a certain age, as the French would say.

She was a fascinating character. She was a single lady, was lots of fun. She would go out with us students and we had little groups and we'd speak French. So my contacts were very good, and I had a sergeant in my platoon who - we split up. The Company Commander sent me with two other platoons a kilometer away in another little town because I could speak French and Sergeant Pody, whom I've seen as recently as a year ago, stayed down in what was then called Englesqueville. It is now called Val de Seine. Now the rest of the people, we had one other guy who spoke French who was from Maine. Horrible French. He was French-Canadian. The rest of the soldiers got along quite well with the French generally, most of 'em. There were some, though, that were not very friendly. The mayor in the little town I was in was not particularly friendly. But I was billeted (??) with his secretary and he and his wife were extremely friendly. Not only to me but to others. The best source of information we had was the postman a Monsieur Enuff(??) who was a Breton and he didn't like the Normans.(laughs) He would tell us all the gossip, he and his wife both, and he was very good with soldiers. He was a World War I veteran who was highly decorated as a matter of fact. He had been a corporal. He hadn't been all that high but he was marvelous man. The old priest was, he was very friendly to us, and as a result I think, you know, the people didn't - and down in Englesqueville it was, it was good. A lot of the things in France then were much less modern than they are today, I think let us say. One of the great memories I have a little bit in picaresque was some of us, my Company Commander was Roman Catholic, among other things. It had been said, you know, it was a good idea to go if you were Catholic to go to the church. So, fine. So he asked me to come down so in case he met anybody, (laughs) I could translate for him and so we were going to church and we were walking down a very small, short street and here is the mayor who is relieving himself on the little four foot high wall around the church and this lady comes along and he takes his hat off with his right hand and says, "Bonjour, Madam." (laughs) I'll never forget that.

Mark: I don't think I would either. It's not something you'd see on State Street.

Martin: (laughs) It was an older lady. Marvelous, you know, but we had some interesting experiences there. And then of course we made quite a long march across France to northern France to Lorraine. One of the great memories I have of that, I remember some of the darndest things, the soil there is very alkali (??) and it burns people's faces terribly. This is in the winter of course still, it was shade less, too. Brushless. We had been issued some, among other things, some British brushless shaving cream and we had never found any use for it but somehow or other a lot of it hadn't gotten thrown away and we found that it was very good. You could smear that on your face and you looked like a clown but it provided a barrier to all this alkali. It was the only thing it was good for. It was no good to shave at all.

Mark: I've never heard that before I don't think.

- Martin: The soil was so alkali? Yes, it is very alkali. Enough that it burns.
- Mark: So this is jumping ahead a little bit but as you got into Germany, then, how did your relations with the natives change?
- Martin: Well, first off, there were very strong strictures about fraternization. One was only supposed to speak to Germans in line of duty so to speak. Whatever your duties were, which would, you know, include interrogating POWs or asking for directions or any number of things of that sort, but there was not supposed to be any friendliness and what not. So my perception was that the soldiers I observed in the Battalion I was in, and the tank battalion we worked with and so on and so forth, was that the relations with the Germans were what I'd say were coolly correct probably. And, pretty much vice versa. The most worrisome people that we ran into were some of the liberated prisoner of war camps or naturally small concentration camps. We didn't liberate any large ones. There were a few sort of work camps and some of those were sort of almost nondistinguishable from the prisoner of war or civilians that had been impressed from the Netherlands, Belgium and so on and so forth. Now, the Belgians and the Netherlanders were no problem at all. They were very glad to see us. The biggest problem were from some of the less advanced nations, the Soviet Union included, or some parts of it.
- Mark: Eastern Europe.
- Martin: Yeah, yeah for the most part. They would take to the firewater among other things and some of them were a bit difficult to handle. You had to be very threatening and herd them back into the circumstances or something. It wasn't our job, of course, to do much about this except to defend ourselves so to speak and not have them impede our progress. At that point, the very few Jewish people we ran into were in these small groups and a lot of them were Eastern European of course. They were peaceful sorts of people as far as we were concerned. Now they would create incidents with the Germans but again, we were advancing in most cases except when we first came into Germany. We were in Corps Reserve and, well, we went into Corps Reserve and then we were responsible to support military government and then we did have some problems with trying to get them to live with the rules.
- Mark: This was after the war was over or still --
- Martin: No, no. This was when the war was going on. After the war was over it was a whole another story.
- Mark: We'll save that one for --

Martin: Yeah, but they, some of the French to mention that in Normandy, they were not terribly friendly and some of them had been collaborators I think that they were very concerned of what we might do. Frankly, we paid but scant attention to all these accusations people would come up with and everything. Again, it wasn't our job. That was military government's job and they didn't create any problems. Things had passed on long enough that, except in northern France when we were up there. But the free forces of the interior, the FFI, the Forces Francaises de L'Interieur they weren't really very active anymore. You know there was a terrible shortage of men in France. From casualties and from the fact that a lot of them were prisoners still in Germany and some even had gone further east than that. They had been liberated by the Russians, but they hadn't been sent back. I remember we had a lot of farm boys and we did some (laughs) plowing with our half-tracks for them. You know, winter plowing. It was a pretty efficient thing. You put one of their plows behind one our half-tracks. There was a shortage of animals too.

Mark: I was gonna say, I suppose it beats a horse or an ox or something.

Martin: Well, the ox, you know you'd see teams of a horse and an ox, for example, which is a very inefficient rig – not good at all. A lot of our boys, myself included could drive a team of horses, but you couldn't find too many of them in a country where they had raised them. But that was the whole thing. You know there's a very, very interesting book and this is just a footnote, but there's very, very interesting book on how dependent the German Army was on horses and how they kept refurbishing their own stocks by capturing horses, including in the east from Russians. Some of my greatest combat memories are of a couple of German units in particular with the horse drawn Artillery. Most of their artillery was horse drawn. We think of the Battle of the Bulge or we think of the Blitzkrieg and all that stuff is charging forward. It's motorized. The artillery was not. The tanks were of course, but the infantry was footborn and they didn't have as many trucks as we did to pick their people up and lift them. They moved a lot by rail. Even getting ready for the Bulge. My starkest memories are of German artillery units that were caught on the road, horse-drawn by our artillery with the Posit fuse and oh what a slaughter. Just really something else. Also remember the practical Germans out there butchering the horses for the meat. It was fresh, there was nothing wrong with it. It wasn't contaminated or anything, quite fresh as a matter of fact. The gutters would run with blood. It was terrible.

Mark: I suppose there is a psychological or cultural barrier to break. It is good meat I suppose.

Martin: Oh, you mean the horse meat thing. I'm sure that the same thing went on in France. Yeah, I never saw this in France –

Mark: Well, the French eat a lot of horse, yeah.

- Martin: The French eat a lot of horse meat, indeed, yeah.
- Mark: C'est la vie.
- Martin: C'est la vie.
- Mark: That's up to them I suppose.
- Martin: C'est delicieuse (laughs).
- Mark: I suppose it's time to move on to some of the combat actions. So when were you personally first involved in a combat situation? Why don't you describe leading up to it, preparations for it, and sort of personal impact, emotionally, psychologically?
- Martin: Well, as I mentioned, we toward the end of February, we got on the road and marched, a long march, from Normandy up into Lorraine where we were involved in some rather light actions really. This probably was purposely planned, but I recall those as being sort of live ammunition maneuvers.
- Mark: There were Germans that were actually engaged.
- Martin: Oh, sure. But, things went substantially as planned. No great surprises except the casualties were real light. Then things went – as I mentioned – then we got into Germany. We were in Corps Reserve, 6th Corps I think and we had for a week or so on a support military government mission and that was for the most part uneventful. We controlled some of the roads and oh, we picked up, we diverted refugees to places and we picked up a few prisoners that had disguised themselves and various things of this kind and suspected SS people. It wasn't, you know, not all that thrilling. The war kind of moved forward. Then there was a good break of things moving northeastward quite rapidly and the 4th Armored Division which was a fabulous division. I was one of the leaders. Actually, I've jumped ahead a little bit. We were moved then. We got on the road again and moved up and crossed the Rhine River shortly after the Rhine was crossed initially. We crossed at Saint, Sankt Goar, Sankt Goarshausen which are right across from each other. My real memories of that were the snaky roads. They really were. Snaking down into the Rhine Valley across on a pontoon bridge. There had never been a bridge there. I think I'm right in saying. There is not today a bridge there.
- Mark: I'm sure there isn't. I was in Wiesbaden s
- Martin: Were you?
- Mark: I know that part of Germany.

Martin: So you know that part of – yeah, yeah. At Sankt Goar, Sankt Goarshausen, there's not a bridge. We were just three years ago or so on a Rhine trip and it's very scenic.

Mark: Oh, it's very nice.

Martin: Yeah, very, very scenic. So we crossed there and we were going to go in a, again a kind of be ready to do anything mood when that was scratched and we were given the order to really shag and go up to relieve the 4th Armored Division to maintain the momentum up near Kassel. I've always wondered at this. I thought, you know, in retrospect, At the time I wondered about it but in retrospect I wondered about it even more. At the time I didn't wonder so much because you know I was the good soldier [unintelligible] (laughs). We marched, I should get a map out, it was a very long march for an armored unit, and the tanks blew a lot of bogies, those little wheels they called a blown bogie, the tire comes off of it and when you march an armored unit real hard you're usually going to have to have maintenance before you employ it and here we were being marched a great long distance for an Army unit of those days to relieve another one, you know, – to go right into combat. Take their positions – I should have brought a map. It was up and go right on forward eastward. About this time we got up above Alsfeld and somewhat east of Kassel. I know its up near Mellrichstadt someplace. At any rate, we got STOP ANTS and with all the distance we'd marched we got stopped, reverse engines, move to the Ruhr pocket.

Mark: Going back west.

Martin: Going back west because the Germans had been surrounded but it was thought not completely contained in the Ruhr pocket. There were tremendous number of troops in there. Tremendous. And, they'd just been bypassed. Good armor type operations and the infantry divisions had loaded their people on trucks from the truck companies and so on and they had just kept going. There are those who will say today and there have even been a couple of books written on this that the allies should have kept going. Just let the Germans stay there. The real typical armor doctrine that they couldn't really have organized well enough to have attacked the Americans at the rear. They could have cut the supply lines. There is pretty much no doubt of that I think, but at any rate that was the order and we went back there then to an assembly area not too far from Eisen. I might say that as a platoon leader and later a Battalion Adjutant, I operated off Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club map of Germany.

Mark: Where did you get that from? I mean, did you pick it somewhere?

Martin: Well, somebody's house.(laughs) This tells you something about how fast we moved and how the map supply didn't keep up. The artillery forward observers had maps. The Company Commanders had maps but they didn't

get any further down than that so if you wanted to know where you were or what was going on or whatever, you committed a lot of things to memory or you went and looked at the forward observer's map or whatever.(laughs) So, at any rate, we moved up there and we went into a rapid assembly area and then we moved - our battalion went across the Sieg River near Siegburg. We passed through an infantry division, the number of which eludes me at this particular point and our mission was to go pretty much parallel to the Rhine River to, up to the objective, - the Division objective was to Mattmann which is a little bit beyond Dusseldorf and while the first or second day we were in there I guess, is when some of the battalion staff gathered on a crossroad, which is something you never do, it was stupid, which was shelled with the German "screaming meemies" those mortars they had. They were very effective. Really good mortars. We had good mortars too but we didn't have anything that big except the chemical people had one that was the equivalent size, the 107 millimeter one. At any rate, the battalion adjutant was killed, the S3 was wounded and one of the other officers was hit. I can't remember. I think it was McCarthy, the liaison officer. The reason I can't remember is that you wouldn't have missed him anyway. He was one of those. We didn't have too many, but at any rate, I got pulled up out of A Company to be the Battalion Adjutant. The Company Commander was furious.(laughs) It sounds rather immodest of me to say this but he was. He was absolutely furious. I think he wondered who in the world was going to do the paper work. The Executive Officer was not strong on paperwork. He was a good maintenance officer. He was terrific, nice guy, real good fellow. I saw him not long ago too. My OCS classmate, Charles Wood was a real fine combat soldier but he was nuts. He didn't care too much for paperwork, I guess.(laughs). I used to do all the Executive Officer's work as a platoon leader. At any rate, I guess that's how I got to be the adjutant. Then when we were there in the Ruhr, there was a secondary airport. Today it still exists, not far from Cologne. It's east of there and I think a bit north, as I recall. I should have brought my map. One night - you know in Armor you have task forces which are named for the Commander. What they do is they take some, typically for example, our Battalion would have two of its rifle companies and then it would have a tank company from the 24th Tank Battalion with us and then our logistical support and then we would send a company over to the 24th. Well, we had these two task forces that got somewhat confused to say the least and they got cut in half - both of them and they were intermingled. It was a mess. Of all things, we even had a few 8" Howitzers of corps artillery in this long snake the front of which was ostensibly engaged in combat. It got broken in half and nothing much seemed to be going on where I was. We had, there were three of us. There was the Battalion Mortar Platoon leader and Heavy Machine Gun Platoon that was kind of anachronistic - they were both good officers, fine guys. We got our heads together and while we were talking, we thought in a pretty well sheltered position, the Germans shelled this little town and we managed to get in the gutter about as fast as you can get in the gutter. (laughs) At any rate, we decided something should be done

and we sort of formulated a plan how we were going to – we took a look at a – Leo Marks, the Mortar Platoon Leader had a map. He had, a good map, a one to fifty thousand, and we figured out where we were gonna go, and so each of them took part of the column and took multiple routes and I took part of it and got one of the tanks to lead them and this airfield was defended by a – this was very, you know, was sort of toward the middle part. The Germans are starting to quit in the pocket there, I think some of them realizing it, and the 88s, the antiaircraft artillery belonged to the Luftwaffe, the German Air Force. It was not as with us, a branch of the Army. We came upon this airfield just predawn. At very first light. Here came this group with a white flag. (laughs) That was really, funny, and there's a German Corporal there an obergafreiter and a little older, 35 or 40 and he says, "We are want to surrender. I have learned English by the self-taught method. Professor 'Somebody or Other's' book. Please excuse mistakes" or something and he like this, you know, (laughs) he was the spokesman. These were all enlisted people. Some of them were very senior enlisted people. I said, "Where are your officers?" He said, "Oh, they all went, took off to the town and are staying in some gasthaus and they left all of us here and besides, they're no good anyway and we want to surrender." He told me what they had and they had a sketch made out, bless their hearts, of where all the guns were and everything. [End of Side B, Tape 3. ca. 30 min.] About this time we moved up onto the airfield and about this time we linked up with the other group. They had come down from here someplace. We were just a little at the edge of the airfield. That was a strange experience. I got a Bronze Star medal out of that. (laughs). That was interesting.

Mark: That brings up effectiveness of the German resistance. As time went on did they get less effective until situations like that would have to – in your own experience --

Martin: Oh, yes.

Mark: They started out fairly tough and then sort of deteriorated. That's the way you remember it?

Martin: Yes, that's true except in the Ruhr pocket. It varied and you didn't know what you were going to hit next. You could hit one of these old German units that were tough as nails. Both the parachute divisions were in there, both – the famous ones, the 2nd and 3rd. I asked my father about this and he said, "Well," he said, you need not feel since you got over late and so on and so forth, you need not feel badly about this or that you were in a totally second rate effort." He said, I was in North Africa until just before Kasserine Pass, you know, when I was wounded and I was in Normandy, not in the invasion, sixteen days later – and in the middle of Battle of the Bulge at St. Vith and he said "some of the severest fighting I saw was in the Ruhr pocket. Some of those old German units just were not going to quit. It was foolish. It was foolish." It

just could make you cry to see these fine soldiers being killed off for nothing. It was stupid.” So that was about it. Now, thereafter, after that broke up we – when the Ruhr pocket came to an end we were moved rapidly. Well, we stopped for maybe some days a week or something like this to do maintenance on the equipment which badly needed it. We then moved down to south of Regensburg, or just barely beyond Regensburg and crossed the Danube River and went into a kind of a rapid movement through Bavaria down toward the Inn River. Some interesting things happened there. There were little groups there that put up a tremendous fight. We had an engagement at a place called Magersdorf in Bavaria. There was no sense for this. This is toward the end of April and they fought like tigers. Our casualties were relatively heavy. It was amazing.

Mark: Did you know who was putting up these fights? Were they old Nazis or something like that?

Martin: No, they were German units usually, some of which incidentally were from the Volkssturm and had a lot of fairly young guys you know, Boy Scout age, senior Boy Scout age. Some of those units though were very, very poorly trained. Some of them had veterans of World War I in them, older men. But the remnants of some of the better units were the ones that were really tough. Some of the airforce anti-aircraft units were - you know they hadn't been worn out on the Russian front, and various things like this. The Germans kept reforming units. The leftovers from units that were decimated. Some of them were very effective. Others weren't. One of the funniest things I ever saw, though, in a way was, as I say, I was the Adjutant and I don't know what, the old man sent me to do something – he wasn't that old either by the way, and I drove down this road near Straubing and here are two MPs from the 508th MP Battalion, with famous 3rd Army spearhead MP Battalion. They're on this road junction. There isn't anything around. I had already begun to get the uncomfortable feeling that I was in noman's land and about to run into some Germans. I didn't see any Americans anywhere, you know! I was about ready to take off and I see these two MPs and I said, “What are you doing here?” They said “Well, sir, we're were waiting for the 13th Armored Division. They told us to get here and maintain traffic control so that the advance doesn't get stopped and so on and so forth” (laughs). They're a million miles away from anywhere. I said, “ Well, have you seen any Germans around or anything?” They said, “Yes,” they said, “Down on, about a kilometer down the road, we saw two German MPs from the Felgendarmerie.” I said, “What do you suppose they're doing there?” One of them was a Midwestern boy and he had a good sense of humor. He was a corporal and he said, “Well, Lieutenants I suppose they're waiting to direct traffic for the 13th Armored Division.” (laugh) I said, “You guys didn't go down there or anything did you?” They said “No, we saw 'em through their binoculars and that they weren't doing anything and we weren't going to stir up any hornet's nests! (laughs) We didn't know who else might be there, you

know.” So the column comes along pretty soon and then another one did, started to come across just like they were put there to control. So, like a stupid idiot, I sort of kind of joined the front part, you know, go down, and here are these two German MPs with their little signs on a stick with the little bull’s eye, like the German police had and (laughs) they’re waving [Approx. 10 sec. gap] – be a sort of a harbinger of things to come. As you know General Patton got into a great deal of troubles with some of the statements he made vis a vis the German Army, you know, and we should really, that– their entreaties to join them and go against Russia and so on and so forth were probably valid and then he had a very pragmatic point of view of the occupation and it bothered some people immensely that some of the German MP units were being used after, you know, this was the war ended for traffic control and things like that. Actually they were and they were very efficient and they knew the country and I suppose that there were ardent Nazis among them, but they certainly were not manifesting this and they were not about ready to sabotage the occupation or anything else. That was very true of the German police also. I remember the first time we saw many German police was probably as we moved into the Rhineland. There were still some there. They were trying their best, they were in uniform still, trying their best to carry out their duties. I don’t ever recall seeing any of them that were armed. I think that they had figured it was prudent to leave their arms at the police station. But they were doing their best to maintain order and they would curiously enough, if one of our units was going through, they would be there sort of prepared (laughs) to have traffic not cut through and it was strange. Nobody really much knew what to do with them. Some people thought they ought to really be rounded up. Lot of ‘em were, lot of ‘em were rounded up and sent with the PW’s.

Mark: This brings up the issue of the image of the German in the American soldier’s mind. What were some of the perceptions of the Germans? You mentioned General Patton and his views. Those weren’t shared by everyone obviously.

Martin: Well, we had something called the Troop Information and Education Program which started sometime probably in ’42. That’s just a guess on my part because I didn’t enter the Army until July of ’43, but it was going then. There was a troop education topic that came out every month of some sort. Every company sized unit and beyond had, well, every company size, an additional duty of Troop Information and Education Officer and I suppose, because I had been an International Relations major in college or something that always fell to me. I enjoyed doing it, - so maybe I just volunteered. I could have. I was stupid that way. I’d volunteer for all kinds of stuff.

Mark: Never volunteer for anything. That’s the first thing I heard.

Martin: Yeah – oh, but I got into some really good stuff by volunteering.(laughs) Not really bad ones. I remember, this is by way of coming to an answer to your

question, I remember a lot of those talks which were distributed as sort of a prepared type thing and you were supposed to have some kind of a discussion and most of the soldier's reports (laughs) they didn't discuss much. Some of the topics were lively. It all depended on how you led them. There was a lot of sort of indoctrination about the Germans, a lot of which was I guess you should say overdone. It was true of the Nazis but not of all Germans at any time. There were sort of connections established to early events in German history that this consistently, this Nazi way of doing things was a consistent pattern of German behavior and they failed to realize that schizophrenia is much more dangerous (laughs) than that type of thing. Which, of course, is exactly what you had with the German psyche, you know, the societal psyche. It was a sort of schizophrenia and but they had all this indoctrination and you would have thought that, you know, to be a little slangy about it, that the Germans had horns and tails, all of them and somehow or other we were going to see this the first one we saw and of course, this was not the impression that the American soldiers got when they came in contact with Germans, military or civilian. All the military people were not all Prussians. For one thing, they didn't all have a monocle. (laughs) That's kind of a silly way of putting it but you can go on in extension. The American soldier, I think in general, had a great deal of respect for his German enemy as a well trained, well disciplined soldier. They abhorred the, what they knew of the same things that the Nazi party had done and those who were exposed in any way to the results of the treatment of prisoners or the concentration camps or whatever were really appalled. I think the spirit really was more than one of hating the Germans was more of winning the war, so to speak, I think generally. That could be colored by my own views too, you know.

Mark: Yeah, well that's all we can do in an interview like this is your own recollections anyway. The Russians, now there was such a quick turnaround you would think, looking at the surface anyway, of Americans' image of the Russians. I'm interested in your recollections of that.

Martin: Let's see. My first contact with any Russians at all was in Washington (laughs) at the hands of the aforementioned WRN. There were a couple of their people with their mission in Washington, young officers who were very sociable, should I say western-seeming in a way. I mean they spoke good English, which was unusual for Russians. Most Russians even the ones in the mission there who spoke pretty serviceable English had terrible accents. As people that in my childhood and youth had known Germans and Russians both who had, or Eastern Europeans, Poles too, they had these horrible accents they never got rid of to their dying days. Some of them who spoke beautiful English as far as grammar, vocabulary, etc. But at any rate that was my first contact and I didn't really know, especially one captain who was an extremely sociable and a rather fun guy, I didn't know what to make of all this and then we began, the next Russians that I recall seeing, I suppose that most of us were exposed to were these ones that had been impressed as laborers. They

were over (??) prisoners of war. Some of those people really were the untermensch as the Germans would have put it. They were very uncultured and they seemed to not real bright. They were people that alternately I suppose you'd sort of you fear and maybe even deplore. That sounds awful in a way but they really were – they were almost subhuman. Now the conditions under which they had been living could have had something to do with this too. There is no doubt of it. Then the next Russians we saw were the ones who came, now not all the Russian prisoners were this way, I mean, prisoners of the Germans. There were some that seemed to be sort of ordinary sorts of people – that you would have liked very much, especially if you could have spoken a common language. It was very difficult. Sometimes I think we conversed more in German, broken German in the case of many of us, than we did in English. I don't remember many of them speaking English at all. Which is sort of surprising in a way, isn't it? At any rate, later on they sent these missions to process their prisoners to return them to the Soviet Union and that was very much of an eye opener. They were mean to the point of brutal to those prisoners.

Mark: To the prisoners.

Martin: To their own people, to their own people. We couldn't understand this. This was just terrible, in marked contrast to the other nations that were, that may have done the same thing, often times much sooner. I remember one that just it's an indelible impression. A Soviet woman doctor, medical doctor, who was sort of built like a tugboat. She was a big woman, not so tall but very square and seemingly muscular, etc. wearing a uniform of a skirt and leather boots, thereby hangs a tail. She would kick some of these prisoners. Here's a doctor who's ostensibly supposed to be sent there to see which ones needed further treatment. Our people had been doing the best they could for these people which is a lot better than the Russians did for them, obviously. That was an eye opener. Some of the other people sort of followed suit. I mean they had sent some noncommissioned officers and they hit these guys if they didn't get the answers they wanted or all sorts of things. It was very grim. As a matter of fact, some of our senior officers went to some of the senior people, Russians with these delegations, etc., with interpreters, you know some of our military intelligence guys and said "We don't understand this. We can speak together as allies and as soldiers and this is strange treatment. We think you'd want to do something." This would do some good. Things would apparently settle down, you know when the Americans are around, "Don't do these things." for a while. Word would come down.

Mark: I'd like to talk about weapons a little bit if I could.

Martin: Okay.

Mark: Ours and theirs.

Martin: Okay.

Mark: I suppose we can start with theirs, just arbitrarily. Which were more effective and which were –

Martin: What do you want? Compare and contrast? – combat.

Mark: Yeah, like the 88's, for example. This is something that American soldiers mentioned a lot. So I'm interested in your personal reactions.

Martin: Start at the top?

Mark: Sure.

Martin: The German field artillery weapons for example, were adequate guns. Their assault guns were larger caliber than ours and they were very effective as a result. The German field artillery was not as effective as our field artillery for two reasons: (1) our guns, I think, were slightly superior in the rate at which they could fire and our fire control was without precedent in the world. We were able to mass fires in a way that had never, ever been done by anybody before and these methods were developed largely by what were then younger officers who were contemporaries of my fathers, for the most part had not participated in World War I and had been brought up a horse-drawn field artillery and the old French 75 but they had the minds that conceived these things and they thought these methods of fire control that required a great deal of mathematics and everything were absolutely insane. That the thing to do was to come up with means by which to control artillery and especially to mass fires with flexibility and speed that could be done by the average American citizen drafted off the streets of America. That was their objective. Pretty forward looking. They developed these systems which were taught at Ft. Sill and required of, for example, the forward observer only had to tell what he saw, where the rounds were dropping, where the fire was desired, etc. He did not have to go through a lot of calculations. Then you had something called the fire direction center where you had, what you did was you took your bright draftees and put them in there. First choice were guys who had had some engineering because they could run a slipstick and that was what they used. They used fans that you overlaid and you could look and see and then used slide rules specifically designed to calculate the fire data. And again, at the battery position, when my father was the junior officer, the Battery Executive Officer used to have to compute all this fire data, practically while they're firing. But, what they did was the Fire Direction Center came up with all the data and they telephoned down to the batteries the data which only had to be split out for the guns. So, our field artillery, as a result was vastly superior. Now there was one other development. That was the Posit fuse that, it was a development like radar, I mean it was way ahead

of its time. It was electronic and you set it for how far you wanted it to burst over the target. So you could fire a burst on target. Prior to that you'd had to set it strictly for time mechanically with a wrench and you hoped it went off at the right time and place, which oftentimes it did not, by the way. But, with this system as the round got over the target, the enemy, it burst and this went – the fragments, the shard went down into the foxholes.

Mark: Came out, too, I suppose.

Martin: Down and out, yeah, absolutely. It was kind of a vertical rather than horizontal shotgun effect if you want to put it that way. Except that it did not have little balls. The little balls stuff is truly shrapnel by the way and you can get many points in one-upmanship by knowing that those fragments that came out of the shells as we know them today and mostly in World War II are shards, not shrapnel as they are often described. Shrapnel are little balls. No one was a better witness to this than my father who acquired one in his arm and another one in his leg in North Africa from Italian artillery working with the Germans. I still have one that was split by his ulna by the way. It looks like a split shot. It's about that big. The antiaircraft weapons, the Germans had the 88 which the American ordinance people when they analyzed the first captured one said, could not be fired safely – the barrel would split and peel back. As one of my friends put it, it was a little bit like the Air Force said about the airplanes, you know, the bee can't fly but he doesn't know this so he does it anyway. (laughs) Aerodynamically, it is impossible. Well, this was pretty much the story of the 88 which was one of the finest weapons that was ever developed in any time and place.

Mark: Now it was designed as an antiaircraft weapon.

Martin: Primarily.

Mark: But it was used as an infantry weapon too.

Martin: It was purposely designed so that it could be fired – it was a flat trajectory weapon but it could be fired for ground support or ground defense. It was very good at ground defense – good antitank gun. Super antitank gun! We had one equivalent weapon in the 90 millimeter gun which our tank destroyers had. The problem with the tank destroyer was it wasn't a tank, although people utilized them that way. The reason it wasn't a tank was it had an open turret and it had thinner armor and the Germans with their tanks with very heavy armament could make holes in those things like pins. The tank destroyers had another very fine weapon and that was the 76 millimeter gun which had replaced the 75 millimeter antiaircraft gun. It too, was developed as an antiaircraft gun. But it was a tremendous antitank gun, just as the 88 was, but smaller in caliber. We had in our inventory, a 57 millimeter antitank gun towed. We had those in the Armored Infantry. It was a platoon in each

rifle company and in Europe they were never employed. We trained with them but they had quit using them, they were so ineffective. They weren't even issued. The Germans had an assortment of things like that. They had some 57s, some 75s, so on and so forth. They used still the 75s code as check as a defensive weapon the latter part of the war usually manned by more or less pick up crews, really, not too effective. The Germans had a 76 millimeter on their tanks that was good. While we're on tanks, just one thing to compare systems that is a really interesting thing. The Germans had a half-track for their Panzer grenadiers their armored infantry as we had a half-track. Again, our half-track was totally open on top. Totally vulnerable to any kind of overhead fire. The German half-track had a covering, an armored covering on it which is a tremendous advantage. We first developed that sort of thing in our Army in the 50's with the old M59 Armored Personnel Carrier which was later replaced by the M113, which is, well by the M75 and then the M113 which is very famous in Vietnam and everywhere else. They're still in use in a lot of places in the world. It's a good vehicle. It's like the old 2 ½ ton truck. Incidentally --

Mark: Like the C47 airplanes.

Martin: That's right. The C47, the 2 ½ ton truck, the jeep, were some of the real heroes of the war and we had uniformity where the Germans had all this assortment of stuff which was an absolute maintenance nightmare. Do you want to go down the scale on weapons a little bit?

Mark: Yeah.

Martin: I can give you some other commentary.

Mark: Sure why not.

Martin: Maybe the next thing we come to is machine guns. The Germans had two machine guns. They had the MG36 and they had the MG47. The 36 had a rate of fire of about 250 rounds a minute I think, which was greater than any of ours had at that. But the MG42 – it was the 42, was the 36 and 42, the 42 had a cyclical rate of 750 rounds a minute. Sounded like a zipper. Now that it eats up a lot of ammunition and makes for a logistical problem, but it eats up a lot of people too. When they're, you know, there's a group of people advancing, you can really rip them up with that. It was a fine machine gun. It was fun to fire, I might say. We used to like to adopt them but there was one problem with this and that is your own people could think you were German.

Mark: They identified the sound.

Martin: That's right. Oh, absolutely. It was a very distinctive sound. It was like the German Nebelwerfer which was originally – it was a mortar that was originally developed; well, – actually it was a rocket. It was originally

developed to project smoke. They adapted it for high explosive use. The screaming meemies. They'd drive people nuts as they descended. They really whistled as the V1's did also, the bomb. Those I can't say much about. I've read some of the Air Force analysis and so on but I didn't have much experience with them. Oh, I've seen them fly overhead [End of Side A, Tape 4. Ca. 30 min.] [Approx. 2 sec. of missing dialogue] quite a lot as a matter of fact. The machine guns were very interesting. We had submachine guns. The submachine guns the Germans had a marvelous little machine pistol they called it the Maschinenpistole and it's a Schmeisser and it had a 38 caliber bullet. Very small bullet. We had one medic who had 27 of those things in him and he was walking around quite healthily after a couple of weeks in the hospital even, you know, just that little. It was an excellent weapon and in great contrast to the Tommy gun which not too many of our people had and the "Grease Gun", the M3, you probably got them in a collection here.

Mark: I'm sure.

Martin: I think there's one on display up there.

Mark: I'm pretty sure there is.

Martin: It's the most nauseating looking thing you ever saw. It does look like a grease gun (laughs) and it's heavy. The bolt's very heavy. It goes forward and they both fire a 45 round. That perhaps brings us to pistols. We had until the last few years, (laughs) not maybe not more than ten years ago, the old Model 1911 45 Colt automatic which in the hands of many men might as well be thrown as fired. I don't know, some people shot them rather well. My father was very good and I wasn't bad at all with one.

Mark: What was the problem with this, too heavy?

Martin: It's the recoil. It's just you have to learn to live with the recoil. You don't fight it, you know? It's got that heavy grain bullet. You hit anything with it and you may not kill them but you'll spin them around literally. It was absolutely fantastic. Very slow muzzle velocity. The Germans had generally 38 caliber pistols and they had a number of them. We could maybe sometime review a few of those but they had a good pistol. German radios were *far* inferior to ours.

Mark: I was going to ask about communications next.

Martin: Beautiful radios. Their communications at the higher level, say division and corps and so on were very good because they were able to compensate for the fragility of the radios but in their tanks, for example, and their half-tracks they didn't hold up. Ours were like a lot of Russian stuff. They were really in many ways – rather crude but they worked (laughs). That's really, I guess, an

honest statement. They were not very sophisticated. We did have larger sets, amplitude modulator sets, AM sets that at the higher levels were sort of like German's at the higher levels – They were pretty good. The Germans had very fine telephones, they had excellent field wire, very thin. We later adopted the same kind of thing, a plastic coated wire. They had good switchboards. They had superb cable. We adopted the idea. The kind that you could go along and you come to the end of the reel and you just twist it like this. That's all you had to do and go on and lay another quarter of a mile or whatever. But, the overall effect was that the German communications from on high down to say, division level and all were maybe a little further than that. As long as there was a telephone were good. But, the moving vehicles they weren't as good as ours and they depended on messengers a lot in the armor units and so on. What we didn't cover is we didn't cover – oh, and incidentally, we did have the SCR-300, you know the handy talkie and they didn't have anything equivalent to that at all. We had those down to platoon level. We didn't say anything at all about rifles. The Germans had an assortment of rifles. Generally, they were 7.65 millimeters or 9 millimeters. The German rifle carried a five-shot literally clip, the Mauser but most of their infantryman, many of their infantrymen, no, probably half of them were armed with machine pistols or with a machine gun, believe it or not. We had the, for rifles, we had Grand that carried eight rounds. It was a super rifle. We also had some old Springfields that had been adapted for sniping, the A4. Uh, they were all right, but the Grand was better because if you missed you could fire again. We also had the Browning automatic rifle which was a World War I veteran, but a fine piece. All ours were 30 caliber's, had a heavier grain bullet than the Germans did. We had a variety of ammunition. We had tracer, ball and armor piercing. That was very light armor. Maybe we ought to comment on a couple of other items since we got on materiel and weapons. Should we?

Mark: Yeah. Do you have something in mind?

Martin: Yeah. The Germans had good armored cars. We had the M8 armored car with a 37 millimeter gun on it and we used to make a very vulgar joke that on those high crowned streets, which you remember, of cobblestones if some horses and cows came along and watered a little bit, the darn thing would slip into the gutter. Its traction was not good at all, and a 37 millimeter gun was a pea shooter. It was a shame to send soldiers out to do a job in that thing. It looked great on parades and so on and so forth, and during the occupation they were very effective because they impressed the Germans only because they were fast. We had still in Europe some of the old M5 series-like tanks in the reconnaissance units with a 37 millimeter gun. Had no business whatsoever on the modern battlefield. It was replaced by the M24 which had a 75 millimeter on it that came from aircraft. It was produced originally for the B25 bomber. It was a stupid thing to put in a tank. We had the M4 tank which had an 75 millimeter that was somewhat more effective. The big thing

about the M4 tank is we had oodles is the best way that could be described. I mean we had no trouble replacing them at all. They just manufactured all sorts of them in several models, no sense going into the differences here except that the diesels never went overseas. Any Army diesel stuff stayed in the States because the explanation was that the Navy needed the diesel fuel. Why we couldn't produce more diesel, which fractionates at an earlier stage, I have no idea, but that was the explanation. So everything we had was gasoline powered, even the caterpillars the engineers had. Let's see. We hit all those.

Mark: I was going to ask what was the most useless. For example, you talk to an infantryman the gas mask, the bayonet are often cited as being useless in combat. Can you think of anything in your experiences or would you agree or disagree with those statements?

Martin: Well, you see the reason the gas mask was useless was not that it was ineffective. It was a good gas mask. There wasn't anything wrong with it but the conventions against the use of gas held up and gas was not used. If gas had been used, everybody would have been awful sorry they'd thrown them away.

Mark: Many guys did apparently.

Martin: That apparently went on, especially, you know you've got to think of the plight of the poor walking infantryman, especially. You can't blame him for throwing stuff away. One of the most useless things, except it was all they had was the enlisted man's overcoat. You probably have one in the collection here. It's a very heavy, almost felt and that thing absorbs water, needless to say. It gets so heavy that -- and it's long and unlike the French one - you know the French had overcoats way, way early in the century that you picked the skirt up to here and buttoned it up at the knees. Some of our people adopted this idea, adapted to their overcoats because it kept your knees free for walking. That was a really useless item. The other thing that was really useless and it was a shame, we had a lot of problems with trench foot, immersion foot, and the reason was those stupid combat boots with the inside out leather. The British as financially poor as they were put good boots, they called them boots, they were actually an ankle shoe, like our old GI shoes, on their soldiers and they didn't have near the trouble. The Germans comparing, now, in those jackboots had an awful problem. They had a tremendous amount of problem with foot disease. Trench foot, frozen feet, etc. Worse than we did and ours was bad enough. That was kind of a useless item but people didn't throw them away. One of the most sought after items was galoshes during the winter. The standard thing was that whenever you had any casualties, you stripped the galoshes off of them. They didn't need them anymore. They were either on a litter with blankets covering them if they were wounded, or they were dead. So, you know, and the same with certain of the actions with ammunition which got low sometimes. One of the, you know, the

funny things you remember. One of the finest logistical devices was the 5-gallon can. Absolutely wonderful. And, the Germans had an even better one than we did – the jerry can which had its own pouring spout. We had a thing we had to unscrew it. Then you had a little bendable nozzle thing you put in there and you lose that and you were kind of in trouble. The British and the Germans had the same kind of jerry cans. They must have copied from each other.

Mark: Could well have been.

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: So on a typical combat mission, what sorts of things were you wearing, what sorts of things were you supplied with?

Martin: Well, you know everybody had their individual weapons which were like I was in an armored infantry outfit. Some of the officers had a 45 pistol the machine gunners had a 45 pistol and then I guess battalion commanders and maybe the S-3 executive officers had 45 pistols, by TOE. That's the Table of Organization and Equipment. Most of the rest of the officers, had carbines, the old M1 Carbines. Then most of the enlisted men were armed with a rifle. Some of them had carbines, too and some had submachine guns. The half-track drivers had submachine guns, for example, and the assault gun. We had long-johns (laughs) the old John L. Sullivan tight-fitting ones unlike the ski ones and wool undershirt to go along with them. The soldiers didn't care for those much but Martin's 1st Rule was "You cannot shiver or complain if you don't have your long-johns on." It was effective. I became sort of infamous for this.(laughs) I really held them to it, too. But it was taking care of your men. You know you keep the leg circulation warm enough they're less likely to get trench foot even if their feet get wet and their socks are wet.

Mark: [unintelligible]

Martin: That's right. It's purification, you know and that was another thing I was always a bear on was people taking care of their feet. We had those damn combat boots, they were supposed to put dubbin on which was an awful substance, made out of sheep fat or something, I don't know, it was awful. Then you had wool pants and a wool shirt – this is officers and enlisted men. Then you had a field jacket. Originally they had those parson's jackets, the little short one. They weren't so good. Field jacket wasn't bad at all. They didn't have a liner until after the war. Then they had a sweater that – gee they have a name for them – fatigues they call them now, I mean in the, you know, Land's End catalog, that type. It's a – buttons here --

Mark: There is a name for that, too.

- Martin: They call 'em "fatigue", a fatigue sweater.
- Mark: Theirs is a name for that, too.
- Martin: Is there? Also?
- Mark: I think so. I slip on these things.
- Martin: But that's- it was an ugly looking thing. You couldn't button – if you had one of those on you had to fold the collar down in order to button the collar up and if you were in the 3rd Army and you were an officer you had to wear a necktie. Have you ever heard that story?
- Mark: I have.
- Martin: That's true.
- Mark: General Patton.
- Martin: Yeah, that's true.
- Mark: I was leading into sort of the "Willie and Joe" look kind of thing. In your experience as an officer, what you thought of that sort of thing.
- Martin: Oh, I thought it was deplorable. (laughs) There's not much excuse for that unless things get very, very extreme. That's one of the things you have to do. The officers and NCOs first off, had to set the example, and secondly, they have to do it. I mean people have to wash and they should include their feet and they should do the best they can with dry socks, etc., etc., etc. I mean it's a real health measure. You can't have people running around in a beard until they retire.(laughs) Although actually, I don't suppose beards – if they had a decent beard – but they couldn't keep it up --, you know, they wouldn't be able to wash it and trim it and all this sort of stuff so you have to make an issue of shaving when at all possible and you have provisions to get their hair cut. We usually and most of the units had --
- Mark: How did you handle that sort of thing?
- Martin: Had soldier barbers. There was almost always in every outfit, there were draftees who were barbers. Or they were kids who came from the farm and had been used to cutting each other's hair. It wasn't the most fanciest job but There was a barber kit that was issued to every company. He had the old hand clippers in it and they did the job. I used to give people haircuts too because I had trimmed dogs for dog shows. See, it's a translatable skill. When you can do a nice job on a Schnauzer you can certainly cut somebody's hair, I'll tell ya.

- Mark: You can do a GI.
- Martin: You sure can. So you, you know, you just, you kept up appearances. It's real important. I think the people realized it. You make them brush their teeth. You don't have to do this with everybody, but I mean, you set these expectations. If you have a good medic, a good platoon medic, and I don't ever know of any that weren't, you send them around to inspect all the feet. That's a big thing. You'll hear a lot of emphasis on feet. I don't care whether you're in a mounted outfit or what.
- Mark: And I hear that actually quite often. So "Willie and Joe" did not exist in your company. It was as much as impossible.
- Martin: I never saw –oh, no. I never saw any "Willie and Joe's". No, I'm sure they existed some places. I've heard of them, but --
- Mark: Not in the 13th Army?
- Martin: I don't remember seeing them in any of the units as a matter of fact. You know, we'd come across units on roads and so on and so forth in Europe. We always kind of had an idea, maybe because of "Willie and Joe", but I think other things we've heard too that some of the troops in Italy were a little loose. We didn't think too highly of this. But, I know that's not true, for example, of the 3rd Division. They were in North Africa, they were in Sicily, they were in Italy and they came in on the southern invasion of France and worked their way up north. That was a fine outfit. It was always a good outfit. They always looked good. The First Division, the Big Red one had pride, they always have had.
- Mark: That's what Colonel Votaw tells me.
- Martin: You bet. My father and I both were in the 1st Division, not during the war but at different times quite widely separated and I was in the 1st Division later on in 1948 and '49 I wore the Fourragere he'd had which was the old French ones and one of the old patches. There were lots of very, very fine outfits. I mean they had pride. Maybe some of the bums that came in didn't (laughs) but they made men out of them, you know, I mean it. Those old NCOs and those people.
- Mark: In terms of supplies, getting supplies, not getting supplies whatever the case may be, if you could sort of comment on how the logistical system worked in your experience.
- Martin: Well, it was a tremendous challenge, needless to say, for the logistics people.

Mark: I suppose they're obvious but why don't you tell me a little bit about some of the challenges, moving for example, I'm sure would be --

Martin: Well, yeah, that's one and everything has to be moved. Trying to keep people supplied is a challenge and so on and so forth. I wasn't in the logistical business, not then. I was a Company Supply Officer but that's the furthest I got during World War II in the logistical business. Generally speaking, we got pretty much everything we needed, I mean, did you ever eat ham for eight days though? (laughs) I mean, that sort of thing happened. That happened when we first got to France. That was the only meat they issued us was ham. This was a combination of A and B rations. A were fresh things, B were canned things to be prepared in a company mess hall and then C rations were these little cans where you got a can of crackers and some soluble coffee and stuff and the other can was some strange thing like, oh, there was a corn beef hash or ham thing and there was ham and lima beans and oh, there was a rice and vegetables which was pretty good, most of us liked. There was a lot of trading. Two of this (laughs) for one another and so on and so forth.

Mark: Kind of like third grade lunches.

Martin: (laughs) Yeah, that's right. Exactly. Then there were D rations which was a chocolate bar and most people didn't like them. I thought they were great. (laughs) I ate all of them. I was considered extremely perverse. But that was an emergency ration. You were supposed to carry those in your pocket but they'd issue them every now and then just to get rid of them I think. The big thing in an armored division, the two big things in an armored division, one of them is a big thing in any division. In an armored division, the big thing is gasoline. There's the funny saying, "What do you do whenever possible?" We'd gas up. That's what you do. Anybody's got any gas you put it in your vehicle. The other big thing is artillery ammunition. That's a big thing and it would be in an infantry division also.

Mark: I get the impression they came in ample supply.

Martin: Well, it did and it didn't. When the American Army had gotten up around the city of -- we would call it "Metz" in the German style. The French would call it "Mes". The 7th Armored Division's reconnaissance people were in the city in November. Yeah, this was November. It was late October or November, and they could have rolled on, the whole 7th Armored Division, but they literally ran out of gas. They had also just prior to that an artillery ammunition supply problem and in the Battle of the Bulge they had problems with both -- 7th Armored did and I'm sure the others did too. Some of the real heroes of the Battle of the Bulge were the Black truck drivers.

Mark: Red Ball Express.

Martin: Well, most of them – most of the Red Ball Express, that term usually applied, of course they moved stuff up the main supply routes and they operated semi-trailers for a large extent and big tank trucks, but the ones that brought the stuff up to the front were the 2.5 ton trucks with 5-gallon cans for gas and then of course rations and ammunition went on the others. Routinely, they loaded the 2.5 ton trucks once overweight to 5 tons. We did later on in Germany during the cold war times. We had them loaded all the time furthermore. Jacked up. We'd knock the jacks right out and go. Sometimes they overloaded them more than that. You know the heaviest thing in the world you can carry is pistol ammunition. Forty-five caliber ammunition, that little box. You load a couple of layers of that thing and that stuff and your truck was pretty well loaded. You could see the springs go down. Nobody can believe it. They come look in the truck, you know [unintelligible] everything in it, but those are the two items of supply that, you know, they get exhausted the fastest. If you're moving the gas goes fast and the artillery ammunition if you're fighting and tank ammunition also.

Mark: About life when you're not in combat. When you had some free time.

Martin: Sleep.(laughs) Very popular.

Mark: Describe your sleeping conditions. Did you roll a blanket out on the ground? Did you have tents occasionally?

Martin: Everybody had, every soldier had a shelter half, half of a tent, half of a pup tent which became during World War II double ended which was pretty nice 'cause you could close it up and every officer had two shelter halves. You were twice as luxurious. (laughs) You have a couple of blankets. Most of the officers had sleeping bags. Some of the soldiers had them too. Generally, in Europe, we were like, you know, in France, we were in friendly country, we were billeted on the populace so to speak, so people slept at least in a barn and sometimes the, well, the French were very patriotic and very kind and they'd invite all the soldiers - they were supposed to be in the barn. There was supposed to be twelve of them in the barn and they'd invite them into these little houses. "Come in here, it's warm". They had a fireplace. And then, of course, in Germany, in great contrast to the Pacific I'm sure, we just looked around and found something that looked comfy and moved in, (laughs) kicked the people out. The reason we kicked them out was not to be cruel, but again, there was this distrust, we didn't know what was going to happen. In some cases, it might have been well-placed. Who knows?

Mark: Was there any sort of leave time? You sometimes hear about the infamous trip to Paris or something like that. Did you get time off the line at all, did you get rotated in...

Martin: Oh, yeah. Oh, sure. It's not continuous. I suppose one of the longest periods for people was in the Battle of the Bulge. That was pretty intense for pretty long.

Mark: In terms of continuous combat.

Martin: Yeah, and also, well, I guess in Normandy in the Beaucages country too. They attempt to rotate. They would actually rotate divisions and so on and you had these movement phases, the armored divisions particularly. They move you from one place to the other and you're not in combat actually. You just get on the road and go. Those are very tiring, those moves. But, you'd go into assembly areas and get a chance to rest some. They would have rest stops in the day time even. Sometimes they'd be in the day time. You had to sleep in the day. If you couldn't sleep in the day you were in bad shape because you'd march at night.

Mark: So, did you personally ever get to Paris or anything?

Martin: Oh, no. The only ones of those sorts of leaves that – they had some but I swear, you know in our outfit, of course we got over there a little late and we didn't have anybody during the war, while the war was on till May that ever went on one of those leaves. Then they began to, they started some after VE Day and I suppose it must have been at least mid-May or so when they started them. I know that some of our people were slated to go on some of those things. As a matter of fact I recall some of them did go and I got to Paris when I was on the advance detachment when we were a division that was to be redeployed to the Pacific, and in June of 1945, the Division was to come home in the first part of July and go to Camp Cooke, California and in June we had an advanced detachment that went which was to go on 30 days rather than later they got 45 days Rest and Recuperation leave, and we were after that to go to Camp Cooke, California, the new a training location, where the equipment was for us and so on and so forth and sign for the equipment and get everything ready and set up, the mess halls and so on and so forth to receive the troops coming in and I was the, each battalion had one officer and I was that officer. There was myself and the Battalion Supply Sergeant and we had about five cooks, no I think it was one of the other supply people, one of the clerks. I think that was about it. We went to Le Havre to get on a ship. We were in the staging area at camp there, this whole division advanced detachment, there were people from the Division staff, some of the senior officers and so on and the Lieutenant in the AG section and I were sent with a Sergeant and a jeep and trailer to Paris to get the Class 6 liquor supply (laughs) to which we were entitled as a unit. We took the supply requisitions and everything and they gave us three days to do this. It was, of course, nice of them. I got selected for that somehow or other. The G3 was, the Colonel, was the one, I think he was the senior officer as a matter of fact. He selected me. We had an interesting time. I thought it was kind of fun. I ran into some

interesting characters. One of them was a young woman who was one of the women's army from the Brits who was running the NAAFI Depot and she was fun and really nice. We went – of all crazy things – a lot of people I think headed [End of Side B, Tape 4. Ca. 30 min.] for some more lurid place (laughs) in Paris but she and I went to the opera two nights – would you believe? She got tickets one night and I got tickets from the USO the next night. Then the other thing one day I was wandering around and here there was a North African small, mini-exposition in Paris – I mean this is in June of 1945. There was a very impressive looking Foreign Legion Sergeant who was one of the people there. I guess the reason that he was there was he was a Canadian and he spoke several languages and he was a good choice. Very nice guy. He was interesting to talk to. I spent a couple of hours with him, I guess, and that was the only time I got to Paris then. I went later in the occupation time.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. I'm sure. We've got five- ten minutes yet and as we've been talking for the past two times now, you've mentioned that you were in contact with your father who was also an Army officer on the Western front in World War II. So I'm interested in sort of the genesis of this –

Martin: Well –

Mark: This contact.

Martin: Well, I guess there are two phases to that. One was we figured out later that we had been twelve miles apart during the Ruhr pocket at one time. Our two armored divisions toward the end there were right here. During the latter phase, at about two-thirds of the Ruhr pocket I guess. But, we didn't see each other or anything. Then in May of 1945 after VE Day, my father came down from Halle where his division artillery was and he was the Military Governor of Halle in addition to being the Commander of the Division artillery. And, he came down to see me. One of his classmates was our Division Commander in the 13th Armored Division, a fellow by the name of Al Casner and so my dad and his driver came down and we were in a sort of a chateau about which I'll tell you more later, (laughs) some interesting, there's an interesting sequel to the thing including my appearing as, a being called upon to give testimony in a federal case.

Mark: I want to get to Hitler's watercolors too.

Martin: That's related. That's all part of that one.

Mark: I'm making a note so I don't forget for the next time in case we don't get to it today.

Martin: That was how I happened to see Dachau when we were there at that chateau. There were several field, or evacuation hospitals at Camp Bowie, Texas when we were there and I was very fond of one of the nurses in one of them but she was up in Gera. She came down to see me too, bless her heart, but at any rate, I got the job of going to "Munich," you know, in quotes. Actually, it was to Dachau where there were two of these hospitals that had been at Bowie and we knew some of the nurses and I just knew the ones in sort of a general from those hospitals – but anyway they thought I would be a good salesman for coming down and you know, invite them down for a weekend or something like this and we had lots of bedrooms in this chateau. It was a real nice situation. We could have a little dance. There was a gramophone (laughs) and so on and so forth and I went and these hospitals were not at Munich but suburb thereof, Dachau, administering to the former inmates you know. This was I think, you know things moved awfully fast in those days, this was only maybe a week or two weeks after the hostilities ceased and I was sent to make initial representations anyway. We indeed got some of them to come. It made a wonderful kind of rest thing for some of these young women and we had a little swimming pool, things like this you know, some horses. It was really nice. That's how I got there.

Mark: Now, with your father. I mean as the war is going on, he was in North Africa –

Martin: That's right.

Mark: And ended up --

Martin: He was wounded came back here, well, he came back to this country, and I saw him then, of course.

Mark: How often were you in contact with him? Did you talk about the war or what did you talk about? It's an unusual situation to have.

Martin: I guess we talked about some things about the war. I think I asked a lot of questions. When he came back from North Africa, I was still a student here and my roommate and I went to Ft. Knox. He was assigned to Ft. Knox first before he went to 7th Armored Division on the desert and we went there for Easter vacation. John and I both talked with him about some of the things. My father was a good teacher, but he wasn't preachy or teachy. You had to listen carefully, but he was good. So I learned quite a lot then. And then, before I went to Ft. Knox to OCS, I was up – when I first came in the Army, I was at Camp Grant you know. I got my issue of stuff there as a reservist and I went to Ft. McCoy and I, was, it was then Camp McCoy, and I was, of all things, a traffic section leader in the MP Company, the post [unintelligible]. Just for a while. I was slated to go OCS and I was sent to Ft. Benning go to OCS on a train. As a matter of fact, I was the train commander of two cars as

a buck sergeant and I wasn't supposed to be at Ft. Benning, Before I pointed this out to anybody, there was a lieutenant there at the siding who said, "Sergeant Martin, we know you're supposed to go to Ft. Knox and so you'll just be here a few days and we'll ship you on up there." The interesting thing is I had no idea, I knew my father was on the desert. I had no idea the 7th Armored Division was being moved to Ft. Benning. We had these trains side-by-side and I saw these guys with 7th Armor garment patches and I talked with some of them and they said, yeah, they were. So I was there for about a week - ten days. I guess I was there about ten days and so I saw my father and mother fairly frequently then.

- Mark: This seems like a silly question, but I'm going to ask it anyway. Do you salute your father, as a higher ranking officer?
- Martin: Oh, of course! Yeah, I mean, you know --
- Mark: Well, I mean, you know --
- Martin: Yeah, I don't know why not. (laughs)
- Mark: Doesn't it strike you as a little odd?
- Martin: No. Not at all.
- Mark: Just curious.
- Martin: No. Didn't strike me as odd at all. I used to say "Sir" to all his friends (laughs) when I was a kid and so on and so forth and I, when I was in OCS, I used to see some officers at Ft. Knox that I had known as a kid and so on and so naturally that's a, I was an officer candidate, you know, oh, of course, I always saluted and said "Good morning, Sir." I was and of course just like you know, if I was a lieutenant they were Majors, Lieutenant Colonels, Captains, whatever.
- Mark: I'm just curious where the line is in that situation.
- Martin: It's not considered particularly *you* know.
- Mark: I think we've got about thirty seconds of tape left, so we might as well just stop here.
- Martin: You should have a commercial (laughs).
- Mark: "Be back after these messages."
- Martin: (laughs) Yes.

[Approx. 1 min. gap in tape]

Mark: Today's date is November 20, 1995. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum resuming our interview with Col. O. W. (Sonny) Martin of Madison and we left off last time as World War II was ending and I had a note here to ask you about Hitler's watercolors and I suppose that just might be a good place to start up our discussion.

Martin: All right. First, may I backtrack just a little bit

Mark: Oh, sure.

Martin: to give you one anecdote

Mark: Absolutely.

Martin: Which is not going to be a great contribution to history but nonetheless it was kind of funny. In the Ruhr pocket one night we sort of stopped moving forward early. It was toward the end and we were sort of choked off and we billeted ourselves in an apartment building and we were up on about, I was up on about the second floor. It was four stories high walkup. In the courtyard, which was a small park in a way, unbeknownst to most of the soldiers, a 8" Howitzer battalion had moved in. It looked like a battery and a half which was kind of funny – some of their guns in other words, and the soldiers were taking advantage of the hot water and so on and so forth and they fired one of the 8" Howitzers. Got a fire emission and what a noise it was, as you can imagine – cracked a few windows, none of them fell out. Here we were in this luxurious apartment, people had even left their silverware there and everything. Here the funny part was I was cooking on the second floor, cooking for a whole batch of us. I liked to cook even then, and all these nude men came streaming down the stairs and I stood there laughing 'cause I knew what it was and it wasn't incoming artillery. It was just a vignette of the war. They were quite angry at me I might add. One even being moved to say "Damn you, Lieutenant!" (laughs) So, okay, we've gotten now to I guess we must have gotten down to --

Mark: We were talking about the chateau.

Martin: Yeah. Okay. That reminds me, incidentally of something because while we were there I was the Battalion Adjutant and one of the big things I had, one of my big duties was to process recommendations for awards, some of which, of course, had not been put in, obviously, while people were engaged in combat and so on and so forth and our battalion, by the way, there were three members of our battalion that got the Distinguished Service Cross which was the most that any battalion in the Division got. C Company Captain, Captain

Dayton got one and also in C Company there was a BAR man by the name of DiBenedetto, a Private First Class, who got one posthumously and there was a lad from the A Company I had been in who is now an attorney in Chicago, semi-retired, by the name of Robert Francis Xavier Murphy. Robert F. X. Murphy, I'll never forget that. The interesting thing was he was really very brave and did some very brave actions taking great risks and taking the fire away from his companions and in the course of events he ran a German through with a bayonet and immediately became sick to the stomach, sort of another vignette of combat. I did not see this. I heard about it from very reliable sources. The DiBenedetto case was an interesting one to me because here we were in this chateau toward the end of the war. We settled down in a little town called Altotting which is the site of many pilgrimages in Germany right on the Inn River and the Battalion Commander was a very astute fellow and he said to me, "Sonny, this thing is going to fold, there is just no more room for any more us". The 12th Armored Division was right across the river from us and so on and so forth and the roads east were all crowded, really literally, I mean. So he said, this little German inn, gasthaus that we were in said "This isn't going to do. Take the Sergeant Major and go find something better." This is one of the responsibilities of the Adjutant is billeting and the Sergeant Major was a very interesting fellow by the name of Richard Kiekly (??) who is still alive and well in California who was an art student in Munich. His parents were from Bavaria at any rate and possibly Munich. He spoke German very fluently and he had been an art student in Munich when the war began in 1939 and he came home. He was, by our standards, one of the older people but he wasn't very old. I think he was approaching 30. I think he was 28 or 29, but he was a very dignified fellow and so we grabbed a map and got in a jeep and went looking around and we ran into this chateau type thing and it looked ideal. We set up with the Battalion Headquarters and the Headquarters detachment there. The rest of the Headquarters Company, various weapons platoons and so on were in Altotting in other billets, better than the little one we'd been in by the way. It was really a very nice place, really very good. It belonged to a Count Von Toerring – Jettenbach who was married to the Princess Elizabeth of Greece whose sister, the Princess Marina was the Duchess of Kent in England and they had photos in little frames and so on and so forth that said, "To Toto and Elizabeth from Marina" and whatever his name was that – the Duke of Kent, I can't remember what his name was and from "Elizabeth and Bertie", which was the King and Queen of England, who became the king and queen of England, George the VI. It was very nice. Really quite nice. We had a small swimming pool and so forth. I think I mentioned to you last week we had had some of the nurses from the evac hospitals in Munich that were at Dachau. In the DiBenedetto case, it was interesting to me and I always wondered if things similar had happened and maybe the outcome hadn't been as good, but this lad obviously had done some very courageous things and they put him in for the award of the Bronze Star medal which as you know is at the bottom of the hierarchy of all awards for valor. I took a look at it and Sergeant Major Kiekly (??) took a look at it and

we thought well, we could dress it up a little bit and it would probably go but we better get some more statements or some better statements from some of the officers and NCOs that had put him in so we, I called Capt. Dayton, the Company Commander, who himself got a DSC as I mentioned, and I said this to him and he said “Well, I couldn’t see anything wrong with it or I wouldn’t have sent it up.” I said, “Well, Sir, we have some experience with the Division Awards Board and our motives are to help you.” “All right, damn it,” he said. He’s a big gruff fellow, fine guy, good officer. So they came up with a delegation the next day and I’ve never seen such a fighting mad bunch of people. The idea being that that damned Adjutant (laughs) wouldn’t put the award in for DiBenedetto. Well, it wasn’t that at all. But, nonetheless we sat down with these people bit by bit and I had a clerk who had been in the Air Corps as a clerk and how he got to us I’m really not sure. He was one of those who was sent to the front as a rifleman but he had been a male secretary, he was a little older too, to one of the executives in one of the large corporations in New York, I can’t remember which one now. I think the reason maybe he was sent to us was he had a bit of an elbow problem. (laughs)

Mark: The drinking problem.

Martin: The drinking problem. But, it didn’t really interfere with his duties, I must say. I’ve seen the man with the most God-awful hangover and where he got the booze I’ll never know. But, it didn’t interfere with his duties. He took shorthand a mile a minute, typed three miles a minute, had a bright mind, corrected people’s grammar, I mean the whole smear. So we took down a lot of these statements. Well, he took them down in shorthand and blitzed them up and then we had the people sign them. We began to look at this thing more and more and more and the interesting thing was that Sergeant Major Kieley (??) said about the second or third witness came in, he said, “You know I’m going to sketch some of these things, Lieutenant, so we can get some – it’s hard to understand you know, the spatial relationships and so on – where DiBenedetto really was on this little hill, etc.” So he made this series of sketches which he showed to the eye witnesses and they’d say “No, it was a little bit over here. No there were some bushes right here, type of thing. Little map and everything else.” It was fantastic. He did those up into watercolors and we sent the recommendation in and we had gotten to looking at it and I talked to the Battalion Commander and I said “I think this is DSC material.” He said “I agree with you.” He was an attorney before he came into the Army and we sent it in recommending the Distinguished Service Cross and by golly, it sure went that time. That lad is buried at Margraten along with one of the other people from our battalion. The Dutch cemetery, which is wonderful because the Dutch themselves take a great interest in it to this day. On Sundays they go there and so on and so forth. They didn’t know very many of the people that are buried there but they still take flowers. It’s amazing. The Dutch, in my opinion, as a nation, are the most appreciative people of what the allies did to liberate Holland – and the other provinces – of any nation that

I've ever run into in Western Europe – by far and away. There are Frenchmen that are like that, but France as a whole is not. But, The Netherlands you get – even some of the young, kind of kooky elements that you hear about, and they were nowhere around when all this took place, but it's part of their tradition. It's amazing.

Mark: That's interesting.

Martin: But in that sort of chateau, which incidentally, I was the headquarters commandant so to speak, and when we took it over, I demanded and got all the keys to the place. I had a key to everything. In fact, I ran into a couple of cupboards that I didn't have any keys for and demanded them from the old housekeeper who never did like me. I can tell you a little bit about subsequently, but at any rate, but even worse was the forester who was a big Nazi, (laughs) but he was very loyal to the Count Toerring and the Count Toerring's total great civic achievements, or military achievements were he was a Sergeant in the Mountain Forces and he hurt his knee very badly and they discharged him in about 1937 or something. His connections with the war were remote except in one of the rooms, in the ballroom, was this collection of negatives and photographs and there were a few books, some of which were fascinating to the soldiers because they came from the Kraft durch Freude movement which was this Aryan movement of building the body through joy and they did all these kinds of athletics and so on and so forth, you know, the Czech?? so called type things and they had these books of all these nudes (laughs) extolling the virtues of the human body. The men enjoyed some of those. We pulled some out of the room and gave them to them. But all this collection of negatives and photos there were the collection of Heinrich Hoffmann who was Hitler's personal photographer and they – we had – we reported those to the G2, the intelligence people of our division and they sent one of the attached lieutenants from a prisoner of war interrogation attachment, whose name was Ralph Nitz and he came from Milwaukee and three or four years ago he was very much alive and well. He came down and picked these things up for the Third Army and off they went and they went to the National Archives and they were in the Naval Gun Factory in Alexandria, the old buildings of that for years and years and years and years and I'm not sure that they've gone back to Germany yet. I can send you, rather than taking up lots of time here, I can send you a letter that I wrote to Carl Malone who was the Battalion Commander at that time, because I knew he'd be interested in the thing legally, surrounding the events and the testimony that I gave to the District Attorney, the Federal Court in Houston when they were trying to determine the ownership of these things. It was a very interesting case. The genesis of the case and then I guess I'll leave the rest to the written record, the genesis of the case was that there was a gentleman by the name of Price who owns a company that makes pumps for oil fields and he took an interest in Hitler's art, Hitler's watercolors, and in the course of the investigations that he did, it was said that there were four of those that were at

Schloss Toerring in the same place as the Hoffmann archives. So he wanted to get those of course, he was willing to buy them and they were ones that had been given to Hoffman and his daughter Henrietta who was Baldur Von Shirach's wife by the way, talk about Nazi affiliations, had given this information and so on and so forth and she said, "You know, Mr. Price," or words to this effect, "the Americans seized father's and grandfather's collections and many of the pictures had absolutely nothing to do with Nazism or anything else" and "we, the family, my brother and I would like to have these back". He said "Well, I will go about getting them back" and so he put a case in the Federal Court to get them and that's – my role in this thing was that I was the key witness as to when the United States had taken possession of these and vis-a-vis the treaty with Germany afterwards. This was an important point. Had they been taken over later than we took them over, after the first of June in other words, they would have been covered by that treaty and we, the United States, would have had to restore them. As it was, we could hold onto them as captured war booty. The reason they got there was that Count Toerring was given a choice of taking refugees, which, needless to say he didn't find very pleasing, (laughs) or storing this stuff in his lovely castle, baroque, along with a lot of uniforms and so on and so forth, which were in the attic, that had belonged to the Reich's Arbeit Dienst, the labor outfit that you've seen the pictures of instead of parading with rifles, with shovels. Now, what else about the castle? Subsequently, I wrote a letter about something to the Count and in his reply, for the first time was stated his great appreciation to me personally, it's not a very modest story, for the fact that there had been less damage in the chateau while we were there than there would have been with a weekend of guests. (laughs) I remember the only thing that I can really remember we damaged and we had German PWs working for us in our mess. We had a couple of really good cooks as a matter of fact and they loved it because it was much better than going to the big compound at Regensburg.

Mark: I bet.

Martin: We had them as orderlies that shined our shoes and everything you know. But the Count always said that and there was a unit that came there subsequently and they had caused some damage. The only damage we caused was eight glasses which we used in toasting the victory on VE Day evening and threw in the fireplace in the traditional way. Carefully selected by the Adjutant as being those of less value in his esteem. The Count said they were junk. (laughs) They really weren't. They were nice glasses. But at any rate, we got to be pretty good friends. We corresponded mostly and we went there in 1948 when I was Aide to the Assistant Division Commander of the First Division at that time and he sat as the president of a military commission that tried eight Caech spies and we had dinner with the Count – in fact, no it was '49, I'm sorry [End of Side A, Tape 5. ca. 30 min.] because my wife was very pregnant then. How could I forget. We always like to tell people that our daughter

Pamela dropped as they do, in Hitler's box, (laughs) which was literally true! My poor wife was squirming around and we, I couldn't understand what in the world was going on, being a first-time father and all this sort of stuff and I was somewhat less than fully tolerant and the General got the picture perfectly and at the intermission, Mrs. McKee got me aside, the General's wife, and gave me a very good lecture! (laughs) That I not only could be kindly but I could look kindly and stop scowling! Ah, yes, but at any rate, we had dinner with the Count a couple of times and so on and so forth and then we visited Win Hoering the Schloss in '54, I guess it was, on our way to Austria and had lunch with him. I've never met the Countess. She was at another one of their properties which was about twenty miles away with their young son and daughter. I've never met the daughter but the young son and I correspond now. He was twelve at that time. I was twenty-one. We visited he and his wife at Schloss Win Hoering, oh, Toerring five six years ago. They were really fine people. This was a nice situation. I've always been very proud of the fact that we didn't damage the place and we didn't have anything like the Kronberg jewels case and so on.

Mark: I'm interested in how that's spelled Schloss?

Martin: It's Schloss Toerring and it's T-O-umlaut- T-O-E-R-R-I-N-G and it's at Win Hoering which is on some National Geographic maps and must have all the five houses plus the Schloss.

Mark: Win Hoering?

Martin: Yes, it's W-I-N H-O-E, it's an unmlauted "o" – R-I-N-G. It's interesting, incidentally that Toerrings frequently spell their name not with an umlaut, but T O E . They are an old, old Bavarian family who were very much part of the Wittelsbach entourage, prime ministers, all sorts of things. Semi-royal as it were, but not a royal family but a very, very, an old family. I was about to say "edel". (laughs) I've had this happen to me before, get confused in German and English. But that's sort of the story of the castle.

Mark: And the watercolors.

Martin: And the watercolors. I will give you, as I say, I'm going to make a note right now.

Mark: I'd be interested to see that, actually.

Martin: Well, yeah and it wouldn't take a lot of time on your tape and have to be transcribed. I worked it out very carefully. Incidentally, I have a book, the catalog actually, of a show of Hoffman's materials that was done in Munich about five years ago and it's pretty typical of today's Germany. It has no truck for the Nazis and so on and so forth. The show was not a great success apparently, according to the young Count who wrote me. He was the one who

sent it to me, and it folded prematurely. Okay. Now, anything else on that that comes to mind at that point?

Mark: Well, I'm interested in – I think we had discussed VE Day already, how it came to VJ Day. You were somewhere in Germany. Perhaps Czechoslovakia.

Martin: No, no, I was in the United States.

Mark: By that time already?

Martin: Yes. The agency of that is that our division and very rightly so, was selected, it was one of the younger divisions in Europe and it was selected for redeployment through the United States to be reequipped in the United States and retrained and some of the high point people would get out and be replaced to go to the invasion of Japan or to the Pacific war which would have been the invasion of Japan. Subsequently, we learned having seen the plans or basis of the plans, that we were supposed to go into Honshu on D+16 which would have been something else, wouldn't it? So this we knew and we had – there was an advance detachment to go home and have thirty days R&R and then go to Camp Cooke and prepare to receive the troops coming in. I was the officer that was selected from our battalion. There was one officer and six enlisted men. I had the battalion supply sergeant, supply clerk and I think it was , well, would have been 'cause I know there were six men. We went home, we left Germany, or left Win Hoering, at the end of June, quite near the end of June. We came home on the Wakefield. I think last time I mentioned going to Paris. We came home on the Wakefield and, which was a U.S.S. Wakefield. It was a Navy transport, attack transport with a Coast Guard crew except the Executive Officer and the Chaplain were Navy guys. I remember, one memory of that voyage other than it was very, very nice, we even had cabin stewards which we had not had on the war time type of things and so on and so forth. The officers did. On the 4th of July, they decided to have a real fireworks and they fired all the antiaircraft guns (laughs) and it was quite a show, at night, you know. It was as good as fireworks. We came into Boston and went to Camp Miles Standish. I did, and then I went to Washington for R&R. My mother was there. My father was still overseas. He didn't get home until November. I spent my thirty days, went to – well, while I was there they dropped the bomb.

Mark: So you were in Washington with your mother when you heard the news.

Martin: I was in Washington with my mother when they dropped the bomb, yep. Then we went back to Ft. Meade, Maryland, which was still called Camp Meade then, by the way and went on a troop train to, which took forever, to Camp Cooke, California and while we were on that troop train, we were going, I'm reasonably certain it was through Tucumcari, New Mexico, I think, pretty sure, they had extras on the street and we stopped at the railroad station

there and they must have had a rail yard there because they did some things with the train, breaking it up and going different places and stuff. That was when I learned of it.

Mark: I'd like to talk about this a little bit. It's been the 50th anniversary year and there's been a lot of controversy

Martin: It has.

Mark: About the way the war ended in an atomic bomb and all these sorts of things and I always like to ask the veterans their thoughts on the matter, what they thought then and how they reflect upon it today. So when you first learned of the atomic bombing, I assume you had no knowledge of it.

Martin: Oh, no. Absolutely none. I had, you know, no connection with that sort of thing at all.

Mark: So it was just like a big bomb.

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: I mean the radiation and that sort of thing hadn't – you weren't aware of that sort of thing.

Martin: Well, anything that was in the papers we were aware of and that was it. I don't suppose we were. I don't think they said too much about that the day of. I don't believe - I think there was something about radiation casualties and the great casualties there had been.

Mark: When you learned of it what was the reaction of those around you and your own, was it one of jubilation? Was it one of – I don't know.

Martin: Yes, (laughs) that's about the way I remember it! I don't have stark memories. I can remember VJ or not VJ Day, but I can remember Pearl Harbor day real well, I can tell you all kinds of things that happened that day. I don't really remember VJ Day except that my mother and I went to some kind of a gathering and it was mostly older people. There were a few young people there but it was like a cocktail party or something, but not really that festive a party. It was kind of a small gathering and it was almost like, "What do you think of this?", you know. The war wasn't over. I think that was part of it. We didn't know the war was over. I remember one gentleman who was I think a fairly senior officer, he might have even been a general officer, a friend of the family type thing. It's kind of vague, saying something like "This really means the end of the war." Some of the ladies were concerned about their sons I suppose. My mother, though, was very smart. She was concerned but she never said anything like that. That was just about my memory of it,

and I just sort of remember going on about our business of – it wasn't too long until I was supposed to go back to Ft. Meade or Camp Meade and get on a troop train and go west to join the unit. As I say, the war wasn't really over then. It was en route. I left Washington fully prepared to go fight in the Pacific. That was my reaction and I think it was of everybody on the train. Then on the troop train when we got the news that the Japanese had surrendered, I think probably – I don't remember jubilation so much like you see these scenes of the sailor kissing the nurse and all these sorts of things. We were on this stinky troop train (laughs) in a less than fully attractive part of the country. This doesn't in any way reflect any kind of general reaction, but I think we were just kind of relieved. And, we were hoping that the railroad didn't goof up anymore and we got to Camp Cooke (laughs), get off that dammed train. Isn't that strange? It's kind of typical of soldiers though, in a way, mean, not regulars or anything else, but they get sort of philosophical after a while.

Mark: As you look back, some veterans will tell you that they feel that the bomb saved their lives. This is one of the things that you hear on the news occasionally. Is that a sentiment that you share?

Martin: Oh, sure. Well, I mean, not saved - saved lots of peoples lives. It could have saved mine. I know some people I think have a very direct and personal feeling that they really would have had the course if they - no I don't feel that way. I didn't at the time. As I said I think we all had a feeling of relief. We'd been in combat and we knew what it was like and we didn't particularly relish seeing any more of our friends blown up in little pieces or lying as one of mine did on a litter on the back of a jeep with a sucking chest wound that probably nowadays they could do better with although in those days we did have those surgical detachments up fairly close up front and, you know, enough of that is enough. I think people who had followed the war even in the Stars and Stripes had an idea that Japan had had it and just refused to admit it by that time. I think again, it was kind of a feeling of relief that we didn't have to go over there and fight in those islands and everything and especially for armor it would have been really tough. Like Korea was.

Mark: 'Cause it's mountains.

Martin: Yeah. Yeah, and as a result a poor communications network. I think that was pretty much the reaction and then, of course, everything after that in a way was sort of anticlimax.

Mark: I was just going to ask, now what happened, the war is suddenly over and you're getting ready to go to the Pacific and the war suddenly ends. How did things change?

Martin: We went to Camp Cooke. The troop train got to Camp Cooke with the advanced detachment and we set up shop there, as it were. My responsibilities and those of the supply sergeant primarily, Sergeant Hose(??) was a fine man. I've totally lost track of him, was to sign for all this property and the barracks and all this stuff. There wasn't very many people to do this, were there, (laughs) his clerk and me and him. But, the saving grace was that all this stuff had been laid out, all the weapons were in the motor pool buildings, they were all counted, inventoried by serial number, they were all repaired if they needed it, but most of them were new. Everything was there. I've never seen such a well put together set of supplies. In 31 years in the Army, I never saw anything like this and guess who was in charge? A German Captain. He had about 30 PWs, German PW's mostly Afrika Korps guys that had been in the United States a long time.

Mark: Long time, yeah.

Martin: A lot of them could speak English. The Japanese weren't their friends.(laughs) They would have been glad to put it together and go with us, just like in Europe, they'd wanted us to go against the Russians. Everybody get together and reorganize some of their units and let's go! It was just incredible. These weapons all had, you know, the firing pins were in them. – It wasn't any of this business of their being demilitarized or anything. It was beautiful equipment. We knew we were being fattened for the kill until the end came because we had M2 carbines, semi-automatic one. None of us had ever seen one. All the tanks were the M483 Easy 8 tank which had the vertical volute suspension which was far, far better than the old horizontal suspension, volute spring Suspension, which blew bogies all the time as we mentioned earlier, had the 76 millimeter high-speed gun on which had been developed for the antitank people, all the tanks had. We didn't have tanks in the Armored Infantry battalions but we could see them and instead of things that the bolts rattled in like a lot of BAR's we had in Europe, I think must have been World War I, honest to goodness. The bolt rattled in 'em (laughs). They were alright. The barrels were okay but the bolt-actions on 'em were worn. There was no doubt it but you could hear it. But they all seemed to be newly manufactured at Springfield Arsenal. The M1 rifles were the same way. The half-tracks were the M5s and M9s that I mentioned earlier that had not been sent to Europe. We had the old M2s and M3s over there. As I say it was a revelation and the jeeps were the latest model which was pretty much the same but with modifications. Best jeep that was ever made. They never made another one that could touch it.

Mark: So what happened then after the war ended?

Martin: After the war ended then 30 days later, after we got out there, this horde came in. The Division came in. A train at a time and we would go down and meet the people, day or night, there with convoys of trucks and take them to the

barracks and we had meals prepared for them. That's why we had the cooks come with us and they were busy beavers, those four cooks for a while until some more cooks came in. Then everybody began counting their points and listening to all the news about what points were getting out when. There were a few of us who were attuned to the idea of staying in the Army, but not very many. By this time I had given up the idea of going back to college and becoming a – not going back to college but the pair of going back to college and becoming a foreign service officer. I gave that up.

Mark: And so this time you had decided on a career in the Army.

Martin: I decided to apply for a regular Army commission if I could get one.

Mark: When did this decision occur or can you pinpoint it at all? Was it some time during the war? Was it --

Martin: Yeah, it was during the war. It was in Europe some place, I'm sure. I sort of decided that, and then it gelled a little bit more and this time with all these people getting out and it sounds funny to say so but it seemed to me from the experiences I'd had with international relations and one thing and another, the schooling I'd had, that we had a problem. There was a big defense problem. As I think I mentioned to you earlier, I never felt totally comfortable with the Soviet Union.

Mark: You had mentioned.

Martin: The Communist system was repugnant to me as, almost, as the Nazi system. Not quite, because, I don't know, there was something more disappointing about the Nazi thing, disillusioning and so on and so forth and also I guess it was closer to us probably and then those of us who had been in Europe had seen the results. But then having seen how the Russians treated their own people and so on and so forth, it sort of reinforced your vision that everything wasn't really good. We'd heard a little bit about gulags and such things. At that time, I don't think we'd heard anything about the treatment of some of the American prisoners – I don't think we had. It wasn't too long afterwards we began to hear some of this. A lot of it was sort of anecdotal. It did not come in official publications so much and there wasn't much in the press, but the word was sure around with the troops, as it were. Also, it wasn't a troop information and education for which we propaganda effort on our part, either. It was this sort of an underground.

Mark: So you and a couple of others had decided to stay in but most were getting out

Martin: Most were getting out.

- Mark: And counting points. As a young officer, you had to keep these guys busy somehow.
- Martin: That's right.
- Mark: Was it a challenge and what did you do to meet it?
- Martin: I must say I was in the 13th Armored Division and we got there at Camp Cooke and we were scheduled for inactivation and indeed were inactivated on the 15th of November. We had what I considered to be a real good outfit and we didn't have a lot of problems with our people. There were – the division had been activated at Camp Beale, California in 1942 and it was sort of referred to informally as California's Own. The State really received the division in just that way. They had all kinds of -- they had entertainments of Hollywood and Santa Barbara and this guy Murray that I told you about was one of the heroes and I think most of our people, well we had these real high type guys, an awful lot of them were, and I think a very well disciplined outfit. May I add a funny?
- Mark: Yeah, absolutely.
- Martin: During the war in Germany, we had 50 caliber machine guns as you know and we had them on everything. They were on tanks, they were on half-tracks, they were on trucks and there was an issue muzzle cover for these that was made out of canvas. It was a stupid little thing you put on and it had a snapper. Well, it was easily lost and it'd get a little stretched and it would blow off and it didn't keep the gun barrel dry or clean which was the purpose of the exercise. The American soldier having the ingenuity that he did and a free flowing supply of German condoms, which looked like they were balloons – they were so coarse and they were grainy furthermore. It is really kind funny - decided or experimented with these and decided that these were the perfect thing for a muzzle cover. If they didn't have enough captured German ones, which all the German soldiers seemed to have, they would use some of the American ones which were freely issued for obvious reasons. Although I don't think they were as frequently used as some people thought, (laughs) but at any rate, the soldiers would put these on the 50 caliber gun barrel and sometimes just to be funny they'd leave part of it sort of drooling down and it would blow in the breeze you see. I wish that I had a copy of the order that came out from Division saying that when condoms were used as muzzle covers for 50 caliber machine guns, which was a good solution to the problem of keeping dirt and moisture out of the barrel, that they would be put on tightly and not allowed to dangle. (laughs) The words were actually used.
- Mark: That's a classic.

Marvin: Oh, dear me. Well, anyway -- It was a classic. It's also an illustration, sort of, of a division that was a good division. Everybody got a big bang out of this and there was much laughter and soldiers would put one on the wrong way and ask you "Hey, Lieutenant, is this okay?" It was really stupid amusement, you know, but the minute that order came out there wasn't any problem other than these little witties at all in our division and they still kept on using 'em. I think our guys did real well. They had things they had to do. They had to get a lot of this equipment ready to turn in, which wasn't too hard and that led to some mirth about how come they don't get the PWs over here to re-Cosmoline (laughs) all these rifles and all this stuff instead of sending them out to work in the vineyards and what not. There were some funny stories about that. These -- most of the guards for the PWs were returnees from the Pacific and a lot of them had been returned because they had malaria and their interest in the world in general was even less than some of the high point people's and there are all kinds of stories about the PWs would load onto a 2.5 ton truck with this guard with a rifle or a shotgun with an MP escort company and they would go out to work in the vineyards or the melon fields or whatever and the guards would go to sleep under a bush someplace (laughs) and came the end of the day one of the German sergeants who is nominally in charge of the PWs would come over and wake him up and hand him his shotgun (laughs) and say it's time to go. There were legions of stories like that.

Mark: Where is Camp Cooke exactly? It's not in existence anymore is it?

Martin: It's very close to Santa Maria and yes, it's in existence, but its Vandenberg Air Force Base now.

Mark: Okay.

Martin: With all the missiles.

Mark: No more question, I know exactly where that is.

Martin: It was subsumed into Vandenburg Air Force Base when that was formed. My other PW story is when we were in Camp Bowie, Texas we had a lot of Afrikakorps prisoners there and they had a funeral for one of their members who died, legitimately, he had some medical reason and they had the funeral and it was six of these guys that got away and they were wearing their full Afrikakorps uniforms and somehow or other they were able to get themselves to Ft. Worth and they stayed there for about six or seven days and they went to the USO and they would get tickets -- they all spoke English, or at least the spokesmen all did, pretty well I guess, and you know people with accents in America were not that unusual still in those days, even German accents and they went to all these USO entertainments and all this kind of stuff and free dinners at the Café. So finally they got -- well, they slept at the USO I guess

and they sort of got tired of this and they knew that the end was coming and they turned themselves in to the MPs and came back. (laughs) Don't think that didn't cause a stink! Oh, dear, but back to Camp Cooke, I then when, I was the last person literally in the 59th Armored Infantry Battalion and I signed all the final morning reports for all the units, one by one as they were inactivated. I went then into the 20th Armored Division and I was a Battalion S4, Armored Infantry Battalion, the S4 being the Logistics Staff Officer and which I - I really didn't have all that much to do. They were too in the process of turning stuff in and so on and so forth and sort of inactivating and the people were going to go, those who stayed in the Army, who didn't have enough points, and one thing and another were going to go to the 2nd Armored Division at Camp Hood. It was then; it's Fort Hood now. It was a much different unit.

Mark: How's that?

Martin: Well, of course it had bits and pieces of these two units and some others had come in, low pointers from some other units and things just didn't get done the way they should really. There was some good people who were going to get out two days from now, just good Americans, they just worked their tails off, but there were a lot of goof-offs. I don't remember any bad disciplinary problems. I wasn't a unit commander so I wouldn't have had them, but I might have had some bordering on it and some of these logistical things, but I found, for example, that some of the company commanders really didn't care much for what was going on and you'd send to the Battalion Supply Sergeant who was another one who did his best, but he wasn't so qualified, would go to the Sergeant Major and want to get a detail to do something and it would come short man and go to the Company Commander and "What do you expect?" was the kind of reaction you got sometimes. So I found that taking the law into one's own hands was very necessary. (laughs) Not in a tyrannical way or anything, but I'd talk to these soldiers and say, "Look, we've got this to do and if we don't do it somebody else is going to have to do it and that just isn't right. Let's get with it." We got along all right, but it wasn't a real pleasant experience. [End of Side B, Tape 5, ca. 30 min.] I was more than happy to leave. The only pleasant part about it was that I had met my wife to be, my present wife who was an Army nurse, and we in free time could do various things. I had an old wreck of a car I bought from one of my fellow officers and we'd go to Santa Barbara occasionally and things like this. The schedule wasn't too taxing. Her schedule was more than mine!

Mark: She was still in the Army.

Martin: She was still in the Army. She was a nurse and had to work shifts.

Mark: So it's at this point in these interviews that I usually ask the veterans about GI Bill and those sorts of things. You stayed in the Army so I suppose I should

start by sort of getting a handle on how difficult it was to stay in the Army as a career officer if you wanted to. I'm familiar with the post-Civil War problems and even after World War I there weren't any slots left. World War II may have been a little different in that the armed forces were larger, in the post war era, at least later on, but in 1946-47 or so, I'm not quite sure how things worked. How much of a challenge was it to stay in the Army and what did you have to do to--

Martin: The first integration, the first granting of regular Army commissions came in '47. I do believe that's right. Yeah. They had something that was called a Statement of Interest in a regular Army commission and you could put in one of those. The various people I knew were too honest to put in. (laughs) Can't cook. There must have been some others because there were some officers from the 13th Armored who stayed. But, even my Battalion Commander got out. He got out before we were inactivated. [unintelligible] see him once.

Mark: Was he in service before World War II?

Martin: No, no. He was pretty young. On VE Day he was 27 I believe that's right. He was twenty-seven. Yeah, that's right, I think. He's seventy-eight now. I was 21. There were a few regular Army officers, of course. West Pointers and very few others. There were a few that had been integrated so to speak in the Thomason Act in the '30's. There wasn't a vast interest in it. But, at any rate, came the integration program of 1947, there were a tremendous number proportionately of infantry officers who applied. I later learned that if I had applied for the Quartermaster Corps for example, which surprises one, or something of this kind, I probably would have been integrated in the first integration, but I wasn't. You could reapply and I did and I got a regular Army commission in the Infantry in 1948 and I transferred to Armor in 1950 when they sort of transmogrified the old Cavalry Branch into Armor and there was a sort of prevailing thing that those of us who had gone to the Armored OCS and had served with armored units, even if they were armored infantry units, were surely welcome if not more and I transferred without any difficulty at all. A few people were turned down but I guess that they had no armor background, just sort of thought they'd like to do it or something, I don't know.

Mark: Just out of curiosity, was it during this time that you were in the 1st Infantry Division?

Martin: I was in the 1st Infantry Division, yes, in 1948 and '49.

Mark: I'm interested in the morale within the Army as it is getting smaller and smaller in the late 1940s. Was there any concern at the time the military was getting too small, too fast? The prevailing thought today in military circles for example, I don't want to reread today's headlines into the past, but I'm

interested in people's, especially career Army persons such as yourself, the sort of thinking that was going on at the time.

Martin: Well, you know, in 1946, I guess maybe we could generalize a bit from the personal, I don't know, but in 1946 along with officers who were going to stay in, they were either in the status I was, they'd put in a letter or were regulars but the integration hadn't started. We went back to – some of us went back to Germany for the occupation and we had in Germany at that time, two major units, one was the United States Constabulary which was essentially a occupation police force working alongside the Military Police and the German police. There were German police back in business then. The Denazification Program was going great guns, etc., but from a military point of view, there was the Constabulary which was a highly disciplined force, much of it through the sheer personality of the commander of it and I've said a little bit about the Constabulary in that paper I gave you today. General Harmon was an extremely dynamic man, tough soldier; tough combat soldier had commanded both the 1st and 2nd Armored Divisions in World War II and the 2nd in North Africa and Northern Europe. The other unit was the 1st Infantry Division which was certainly in our view at any rate, those of us in the Constabulary, a kind of a ragtag and bobtail outfit, except for the battalion that was in Berlin. It was just a battalion at that time. It was a squadron and a constabulary there also and there were some units that had good commanders, but both these elements were filled with mostly draftees. We had some regular soldiers and some regular officers, but the officers were all volunteers. They volunteered to stay in for one reason or another and a great many of the soldiers were drafted. I'd have to guess at a percentage, but I would imagine it was upwards of 60.

Mark: What were the implications of that?

Martin: Well, the draft boards weren't real interested in creaming off America's best to send to the Army I don't think – or to the service, especially to the Army maybe. We got some interesting specimens of humanity. (laughing) The screening processes notwithstanding.

Mark: Which is different than the war time period? Do you think you got better people during the war?

Martin: I think it was a question of motivation – a lot of it. During the war time period there was this tremendous impulse to get ready for combat or to be in combat. It was tremendous impulse not to let your buddy down and so on and so forth. Now we had a lot of soldiers who had shipped over as the Navy says, who had been draftees who for some reason or another enlisted in the Army. We had some fine NCOs that did that. They found something that intrigued them I guess. So they were the leaven and the intelligent soldiers we got. Incidentally, the people in the 16th Infantry who guarded the war crimes trials were very good too, by the way. They were in the 1st Division, but they

were sharp soldiers. One of them appeared in the Madison paper here on the weekend. He's not a Madison guy, he's from out east somewhere. They had an article about his guarding Goering in the Sunday paper.

Mark: I didn't see it.

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: Have to look at it.

Martin: Yeah. It's Section F or something. It was in the back part of the paper Front page, though. Picture of Goering and all, fat Herman Incidentally, the Constabulary Commander had his train and I have a no smoking sign, smoking/no smoking one of the reversible ones from it. At any rate, the soldiers in the constabulary were well disciplined. The discipline was tough. Excuses were not accepted. Nonsense wasn't put up with. Commanders up to certainly Lieutenant. Colonel, squadron commanders could be relieved like that. General Harmon's visits were not welcomed with open arms or minds. (laughs) It was a little as though a god had come on earth to make a judgment. But as a result, the units, they were sharp. They looked good. They behaved themselves, there were disciplinary problems, yes, but not like there were in the others. I'd always remembered there was one soldier; he was kind of the typical professional soldier that you hear about and don't see many of, frankly. It was a guy by the name of Lewis at the Constabulary School in the Garden Demonstration Troop. Whenever one was Officer of the Day and had to select the Orderly of the Guard, there was hardly any way to pass Lewis up. But he always smelled loudly of AquaVelva after-shave lotion which he drank. (laughs) He was notorious for this. Swigging this stuff. What a sharp--

Mark: Was he supposed to be alcoholic or something?

Martin: Oh, he was definitely an alcoholic! Aqua Velva? Oh, good heavens yes! I don't know, it was 50-60 percent alcohol. You know, it was pretty good proof. More than some of the brews, I guess.

Mark: I've never worn it before. I --

Martin: Oh, I never did either. I couldn't stand the stuff, especially after Lewis, but he was always sharp as a tack and smelled beautiful. Standing out there on the coldest of days! I'll never forget it, and you had to select him as Orderly, he was the best turned out soldier. He knew anything you asked him and he was a perennial private or Pfc. He'd get to be a Pfc. and then he'd do something terribly bizarre, go off AWOL or something,

Mark: Get busted.

- Martin: Get busted, come back, but he was the sort of guy you would love to have around. He would have been a good combat soldier and I'm sure he was. As a matter of fact he was a World War II veteran. I think he had a Silver Star if I'm not mistaken. He'd been in some unit like the 3rd Division or something, you know, really been with 'em the whole – [Approx. 10 sec. gap in tape]
- Mark: Get busted.
- Martin: Get busted. Go off ___ something. He was the sort of guy you really like to have around.
- Mark: He was a good combat soldier.
- Martin: [unintelligible] about. The drawdown as they were downsizing. Umm, I think what I could say was that even at the Constabulary times we had, think, thinking officers, certainly and I'm sure a number of the men had some real concerns about the Soviet, that bear sitting across this somewhat artificial border of the occupation, with unknown intentions. I think we shared this with the Brits. Maybe they had to see them more than we did, and the French certainly did. Certainly the officers did. Most of the French were aristocrats and they were not sympathizers with the socialist element etc., etc, etc. the ones we saw and I think our reaction was "Ya know, we'll give it a toss but how in the world with the equivalent of two divisions of strength, one of 'em spread all over the place as a police force, will this be a success?" There'd been a lot of drawdown. For example, in the 1st Division there was no tank battalion, which the Table of Organization and Equipment at that time had been revised, after the war. They had a lot of, you know, usually attached tank battalions; well, it had been revised to have a tank battalion. 1st Division at that time didn't have one. They got one in 1948. Umm, I don't suppose we thought about this (laughs) too much --
- Mark: (laughs)
- Martin: (laughs) I think it was the choice not to think about it too much. It was a little hairy to say the least. Uhh, and the ah, the French and the Brits weren't in' that much better shape. Actually, most of us had the impression that the British army of the Rhine was probably the best, the best force that was over there and the biggest, ya know, at that time.
- Mark: Yeah.
- Martin: They were church mouse poor and they still were very restrictive in their rations. I'll never forget we had a maneuver and we had a German, [unintelligible] an English brigade. It was kind of a combined affair and the British soldiers had been so excited over the rations that we issued them and everything and they would get oranges and they were going to

save 'em and take them home to England and finally our people told 'em "Don't eat 'em. We'll send you some. You know, we'll send some with ya to send back to England or we'll ship 'em or whatever, you know." The American quartermasters, incredible. (laughs) Well, easily they could cut back on some of their rations theater wide to the Americans and everything and this force went home with everything it could wish. But, you know, they hadn't had these things. They didn't have --. This took place in the fall and somebody roused up a whole batch of the candy for Thanksgiving etc., etc., etc, ya know, and it didn't short the American soldiers any, good heavens. We had too much. But they -- we had a -- I think starting in '48 we began to have a real feeling of, for preparedness. The constabulary was transformed into a couple of armored cavalry regiments, later into three, and things began to take on a different outlook. By '49 when I went home, things were really looking up, and by the time I went back to Germany again in 1952 we had the most professional military force with which I ever served and as professional a one as I ever saw anywhere.

Mark: In the early '50's?

Martin: The early '50's. '52 to '55. I was there and we still had draftees.

Mark: Now, where were you in Germany at this time?

Martin: Which time?

Mark: The second time, or the first time, actually. I don't think we ever started from the last time.

Martin: Oh, okay, the first time when I was in the Constabulary, I was in the Constabulary headquarters at Bamberg for six months - I mean, no, for yeah, it was a little more than that, about seven months or so until the headquarters was inactivated and they took all the combat arms, engineer line officers out of the headquarters. When they consolidated with 3rd Army they had a, you know, big batch of people down there and sent us to various constabulary units. I went to the school as an instructor. I sort of made a mark, and was in the geopolitics department particularly, and I had a somewhat strange experience of three years of college, was an international relations major here of teaching alongside everybody else in the department, all the other officers had bachelors, Masters and we had one Ph D. who was a civilian professor from the University of California and I was the -- well, the department consolidated and I was the geopolitics section head for a while. (laughs) It was kind of fun, but we had a, we had a good group. Nobody worried about such things and so that was at Sonthofen in the Allgau in the Alps and then I went to the 1st Division which was spread around, but I spent some of the time at

Rothenburg the maneuver area. My wife was down near Bad Tolz and then the 1st Division got an assistant division commander and I was one of the ones interviewed to be an aide and got the job. I was the senior aide, and we lived in Nuremberg, which is where our daughter was born. And then, that's where I left to come home, in 1952 I went back to Germany and was assigned to the 14th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fulda and stayed in Fulda with the first squadron there of the first battalion. And I stayed there three years.

Mark: Umm. How had Germany changed since the postwar years? You had been there during the destructive World War II years. By the mid 1950's already, this is I mean "Der Wirtschaftswunder," as they say, had begun. I'm interested in the changes you observed.

Martin: That happened in 1948. Uhh, that happened in 1948 and of course it's a marvelous story, as you well know. Ludwig Erhard had approached General Clay who was a very dear friend of my father's. They had been instructors at the Military Academy together, and approached General Clay who was the Military Governor and some of these ideas of hardening up the currency and so on and so forth and Clay had asked these people "How are you going to do this?" and he said, "On the faith of the German people". (laughs) General Clay had some reservations about this and said "I've got to think about this." Clay made the mistake of going on leave (laughs) and old Erhard put it into effect. (laughs) He was a character. Of course, it started in Bavaria but, Bavaria then the rest of them, so the whole occupation zone over night in 1948. That was the beginning of the Wirtschaftswunder when they declared that you get one new mark for ten of the old ones, and ten of the old ones weren't worth anything. It was a cigarette economy. If you wanted to get anything done you had to have cigarettes. I mean, you know, you could even be a big black marketeer on cigarettes but those of us who just needed to maybe have some repairs to our clothes or something the post engineers couldn't do, nothing lavish. Or almost all kinds of things, if you didn't have any cigarettes, you didn't get, and your people, you know, the domestic people that we had, the janitors and we all had maids were paid in those forty marks, you know, but the reason they worked for us was to get the meals and hopefully some cigarettes once in a while, you know, and we tried to, most of us, I think, tried to take care of them and their families and so on, but I remember in 1948 it was overnight. We were in Munich and it was just absolutely overnight when they, stores began to have things. I don't know where they came from. Umm, and at first we couldn't patronize these things. We couldn't buy anything. It was just for Germans and then, ah, they had some sort of, like in the Soviet Union, some hard currency stores (laughs) as it were, and they had some kind of coupon books and they gave that up rapidly by the time we came home in '49, you know, we'd been able to buy things.

Mark: I was curious as to when the fraternization rules started to be relaxed and when the Germans stopped becoming enemies and became allies.

Martin: I don't know when fraternization rules ended. You see, the reason I don't remember, probably is that it wasn't like the guilt *umtauschen* or something that happened overnight, you know and you'd immediately noticed it. It was one of these things that was creeping. It, of course, it was probably always fraternization from time the troops crossed the border but it was not overt.

Mark: Yeah, that's what other guys were telling me.

Martin: There were, a lot of the people too that wouldn't participate in it for very, you know, moral reasons, in one case, I mean sexual mores, there were others that just for moral reasons the Germans were bad people, or you couldn't tell that a lot of 'em were and you couldn't tell which were which and not to be trusted, and they wanted no part of it. But then you had this gradual realization, I suppose that they didn't all have horns or VD, which was a big problem. The venereal disease problem was absolutely something. Incidentally, during the early part of the occupation '46, probably started in '45, '46, '47 about in there, it ceased but Armed Forces Radio had commercials, "She may look clean but --." (laughs) and then they had a, sort of a "da da dada," you know, a forbidding musical tune, and they had some others, but that one I particularly remember. And these were, became or were, very offensive to a number of the wives, dependents as they were called.

Mark: I'm sure.

Martin: Yes. So these were phased out, let us say, in about 1947, but that of course was a big problem and from a pragmatic point of view, there were a great many commanders who thought it was much better for some soldier to have a permanent girlfriend or semipermanent for the duration of time he was there etc. who was not playing around and not playing the field and neither was he and we didn't have the VD problem. So the zest for the antifraternization sort of died out in the command structure too, I think. I think that, you know, fairly early on there were some of the senior people who saw it that way. I mean, you're not going to have these guys; they're not monastics you know. That was the biggest problem we had, I think was what the relatives of what Mauldin called the garret troopers. You remember the cartoons that he had that really took it out on the rear echelon soldiers, for going around and beating people up and all this sort of stuff? Well, we had a certain amount of that with young soldiers coming to the occupation who were not veterans like Malden said in his book the war veterans, in many cases were not at all in love with the

Germans or whatever but they didn't go around beating people up and things like this. But we did have a few problems with some of the younger ones and they had to be gathered up and gotten in hand. The NCOs in the Army were very good at that time. They were very, very good, starting in the constabulary. A lot of them took to NCOing like ducks to water, even though some of them were draftees.

Mark: Now that problem, civil relations, I guess is what you'd call it. As time went on did that sort of alleviate itself?

Martin: Oh, yeah. Well, you got to the point where somewhere or other about the time I went back to Germany or just before, I suppose maybe in 1951 before I went back in that time, somewhere in there, they --, well, now I've got to backtrack. In 1947, '48 they had a big program called GYA, the German Youth Administration. You know the Americans were pretty smart about some things, pretty stupid about some others (laughs), but by vis-à-vis Germany, I can't speak for Japan, but one of the phenomena of the prisoner of war experience in America of the German prisoners of war was the fact that we kept them bountifully supplied with American publications, uncensored, and did our best to sort of let them see, without propaganda, what America was all about. And, of course, a lot of them, especially in places like Wisconsin here that worked on these farms and everything were practically members of the family in many cases and we had a lot of experiences with doctors and dentists, dentists especially, who had these German PW's as dental assistants and they trained 'em. A lot of them went back to be dentists. Some of them were what was called a *dentist*. There were two, used to be two kinds of dentists. In emergency days I think this took on even more. There was a *dentist* who was sort of a high class dental technician but could fill teeth and all that sort of stuff, and then a *zahnarzt* arts, a doctor of teeth.

Mark: Of teeth, yeah.

Martin: Mmm hmm, yeah. And, but both these types of people in the prisoner of war establishment got to work with American dentists and learned a lot and sometimes you could tell their customers from the others (laughs). But this was a good thing. This GYA this German Youth Administration thing we had got real command emphasis, and it was a thing where sports leagues were formed up and we provided the equipment and --

Mark: Playing what, baseball, football or were they playing soccer?

Martin: Soccer, yeah, their own game, for the most part and in basketball it was very, very popular then. I remember my wife coached a girls' team in basketball and they had a lot of fun and she had been a good basketball player and she had played with boys a lot. She came from a small

community and although in high school she was on a girls' team. You know, they would play it on a half court, it was only half as big and there were a lot of stupid rules for girls and she always thought those were stupid. She like to play by boys rules anyway, and so she coached this girl's team and they wanted to play against the boys, fine. So she taught 'em to play by boys' rules and they beat the tar out of 'em, which was kind of interesting. And then she, she's always gotten along well with men, with boys. It's a shame we didn't have one. She was sort of a tomboy herself and you know, very athletic. She still plays tennis and all this kind of stuff, she's pretty trim and they, so she coached some boys along with a sergeant when we were down in Sonthofen and that was a big thing and it worked well. Then of course we had the America House where the Germans could go, which was run by the State Department, actually, Information Service.

Mark: I'm not familiar with the American House.

Martin: It was a USIA, The US Information Agency. In the larger cities they had the America House which was kind of like the Goethe-Institute at the Milwaukee Library in reverse. They had American books and they had lectures and visiting professors and, you know all kinds of stuff to bring America to people's.

[End of Tape 6, Side A Ca. 30 min]

attention, favorable and they had a reading room, which was always popular, because it was heated. In the early, bad parts of the occupation, before things got restored and then, later on, this youth program sort of transformed into something called, it was just sort of an overall policy or principal of German-American relations and part of it of course was keep your people from behaving like hoodlums downtown and then they had these various activities. For example, when I was in Fulda with the 14th Cavalry every Christmas time the American band always had a concert, for welfare, for the Germans, you know, they sold the tickets and collected the money and disposed of it through something like the United Fund, you know. And they had some entertainments, then we had on an informal basis things and then when the Bundesgrenzschutz started up again, they, the federal border police, which were very in the old Prussian mode, were very military type, they still are. They still live in barracks and all this sort of stuff. We had exchanges and in Fulda, with their officers. They had a battalion in Fulda, and then the German army started up, and of course there began to be a lot of exchanges. A lot of the original initial Bundesgrenzschutz officers were Army officers who went into the Army when they came back. But, there was by '51 or '52, certainly '52, I can remember '51 I think it had started there was a conscious effort to have cordial relationships, more or less with the German population and incidents vis a vis Germans came down very had on young soldiers who didn't behave themselves. We were taught --

- Mark: Now some of these hardcore Nazis that you, yourself had come across in later stages of the war as the occupation went on what ever happened to these people, that you know of?
- Martin: Well, that's it. (laughs) You answered the question. (laughs)"That you know of."
- Mark: So they, in a sense went underground, you didn't --
- Martin: Well, I think they just sort of, I don't know, saw the error of their ways or something. I mean they wanted to get along.
- Mark: Yeah.
- Martin: The more identifiable people in Germany then the former Nazis, who in essence took to the closet, (laughs) I think you could say, to use that term of today. I think it served, it was probably a term then too, really in a way, or it was the terms used now but the situation existed. I think that's what they did. They just didn't advertise the fact they'd been Nazis.
- Mark: So they weren't a problem for you in terms of occupation.
- Martin: No, no, you know they'd had all this business about the Wehrwolves were going to rise in Bavaria. There was going to be the finally (??), this Bavarian redoubt and so on and so forth. What a bunch of nonsense, I mean more typical was the German MPs I think I said something about before (laughs) standing on a corner waving a sign. (laughs) Maybe they felt we were going against the Russians, I don't know. But ah, this, no, it was amazing, it was amazing. You'd hear some things once in awhile. There were some sort of anti-American Germans but it never really attached itself to the Nazis. And it was only relatively recently that there were political parties in Germany that went so far as to say that "Well, Hitler had been right about a lot of things, he went wrong on some," you know. You'd hear that occasionally but not very much. They were mostly, the Germans like the Americans were mostly interested in post-war development. I think it was typical of both countries. The economic situation was probably of even more concern in Germany because, of course, they had to rebuild, ah, than it was in this country. But there certainly were parallels in the outlook on life. The Germans are very hard working, industrious people as a whole and it certainly showed.
- Mark: Hmm. Uhm, I supposed we're about to 1950 now in the Korean War that broke out in --
- Martin: No, we've leaped ahead of 1950 because we did two tours in Germany.

- Mark: I want to come back --
- Martin: Okay.
- Mark: And fold the two to keep some sort of chronological --
- Martin: Wonderful place.
- Mark: To keep some sort of chronological consistency. You were back in the States --
- Martin: I was back in the States --
- Mark: When the Korean War broke out?
- Martin: from 1949 to 1952. And when I first came back to the States I was still an infantry officer and I was assigned to Camp Carson, Colorado, subsequently Fort Carson, it has been for years. And ostensibly I was going to go to the mountain training detachment, although I hadn't had any, much mountain experience. It was summertime time and when I got there, or even before I got there I thought I was probably going to the 14th Infantry which was our mountain unit at that time, and when I was interviewed by the post S1, the personnel staff officer, he noticed that I had "equitation excels" on my qualification record and he said, "Can you really ride a horse?" and I said, "Yes, sir." (laughs) And he was married to an Army brat, by the way, one of General Stillwell's daughters, of all things. And so Major Ellis Cox said, he said, "You know we have the 4th Field Artillery Battalion, the pack unit here and in addition to that we have the 35th Quartermaster Pack Company and they just, Captain Bernheimer hasn't been able to keep a lieutenant in there forever and a day and I'd like to send you down to talk with him, sort of an interview to see what two of you think." So I went down to the 35th Quartermaster Pack Company which had authorized two officers, one warrant officer, (sighs) sixty-five men about, and 200 some animals (laughs) and we chatted a bit and he said, "Let's go out for a ride." And so we went back in the supply room, and britches and boots were organizational equipment at that time and so I got a pair of britches, enlisted men's britches and some boots and the rest of me was all right, shirt I guess it was in the summer and we went out riding and he took me over hill and over dale and I didn't come off the horse, which I think surprised him. (laughs) And he said, "I guess you really can ride a horse." He said, "Major Cox said you could." I said, "Yes, sir I --" He said, "How long have you been riding?" I said, "Oh, gosh I guess I was four or five when I first got on a horse, but I got started, to really do something when I was about eight." And said I hadn't ridden for a year or two. And he said, "Well, would you like to be in this unit?" He

said, “Do you know anything about animal management?” I said, “Yes, sir.” And I told him the story about Sergeant Grabowski (laughs) when we went on the range. That appealed to him for some reason or other. And so he said, “Yes, I’m going to ask them to assign you if you’d like to come.” So I did and about six months later he ended up in the hospital and was transferred out. He was pretty sick, and I took over the unit as a Lieutenant and I was promoted to Captain while I was in it. And we trained people for Korea but the reason they didn’t send the pack animals to Korea is that in three days a mule would eat himself up or eat what he can carry up and there isn’t much native forage in Korea, at walls, hardly anything.

Mark: Except, I was gonna ask –

Martin: Incidentally in the paper the other day, there was something, one of the papers, or a magazine on a reunion of the Ranger Companies that went to Korea.

Mark: I didn’t see that.

Martin: I shall never forget those hoodlums as long as I live. They really were. The first bunch of ‘em that came, they came in twosies. We did the pack training for ‘em. We even taught ‘em how to pack a dog. We had a big St. Bernard as mascot and we used to pack him. (laughs) We showed ‘em all kinds of ways you could use all sorts of animals they might find there, you know, to relieve the burden of carrying ammunition really. And the second night that they were there they were in the barracks area right next to ours, they came over and stole some of our men’s riding boots. And had a big raid, where they started to steal ‘em and our guys came out of the woodwork, from everywhere. There were far more of those rangers than there were of our whole strength of our outfit, and the next day I came to work and hanging on the wooden barracks, you know, in those fire escapes, the ends of ‘em. On all the rungs, and the rails and everything else were all these parachutists’ boots. I went in, you know, and I said to the 1st Sergeant, “What in God’s name are all those boots hanging on the railings?” He said, “Sir, last night some of the Rangers came over and tried to take some of our men’s boots and they didn’t get ‘em.” (laughs) I said, “What do our men look like?” He said, “ Oh, they look pretty good.” He said, “You ought to see those other bastards.” (laughs) Well, that set the tone, whenever the Rangers came the word was out, don’t fiddle around with the packers. And our guys were, they weren’t a bunch of hoods. They were a nice bunch of kids. They, we had an enlistment program in the middle west. We could go out and enlist men direct for the unit, which was very unusual as a specially authorized program, and we’d get these boys from farms and ranches, you know the Midwest and the near far west and they were a fine bunch of citizens but boy, they were harder then nails. If you lift several thousand pounds a day, whether or not

there is anything to go anywhere, or not you still have to pack the mules, you know. You lift this stuff up, and all these horseshoe boxes and so on. They were in shape and it was amazing. I was amused when I saw that reunion of the Ranger companies. I didn't recognize anybody. (laughs)

Mark: I want to backtrack a little bit I guess. What, it seems unusual to me that there was such a unit at all and I envision what the rationale was for it.

Martin: The rationale was they kept the 4th Field Artillery Battalion and the 35th Quartermaster Pack Company to have a mobilization base for expansion to keep the skills alive for mountain warfare. And they were, they worked with the mountain training unit there, and they all had an infantry regiment at Carson for that purpose too. The 14th went to Korea and was replaced by a National Guard outfit, the 196th Regimental Combat Team. The -- it was a great idea except that nobody really stopped to think about the forage problem in Korea. My unit had been in Burma during the war and the Pack Master, Sergeant Yanci had been the Pack Master with them, believe it or not, big tall Arkansas guy, a real fine soldier. He was a little older, but he was very effective, and it just didn't pan out, but we did a lot of training and we did a lot of packing for the forest service and for the Air Force survival school was there at that time. That was an interesting bunch of people to work with. They were great people. Wonderful experience and I enjoyed working with them, my men enjoyed working with them. The Rangers were okay after the first bunch. (laughs)

Mark: So when you left in '52, I mean, was the unit disbanded at that time?

Martin: No.

Mark: Or did someone come to replace you?

Martin: No, no it went on for another five years, (sighs) '57 for some strange reason. Um, I was the last Armor officer in it and as a result [unintelligible] I was the last mounted armor officer in the Army. The Act of 1951 said the armor, was the way it was put, shall be the successor to the cavalry. (laughs) And that was, I had that somewhat dubious distinction. I remember one amusing incident; I remember two amusing incidents. One was the traditional New Year's reception in 1952, no, it wasn't at the New Year's, it was another reception, yes it was earlier, it was in September when I got promoted. Exactly, it could be dated, it was the 27th. By this time the Commanding General at Fort Carson, we had a general then, was a classmate of Eisenhower's, by the name of Walter Hess to whom a good friend of mine, who had been one of my father's officers in the war, still a good friend, had a letter from him day before yesterday, had been aides at Fort Bragg in the Field Replacement Training Center before we went back over to Germany. We were going to go with

him to Postdam, as a matter of fact, to the mission there. But his orders were canceled (laughs), and we got sent over anyway. Anyhow, old Walter Hess, we all called him Uncle Walter. (laughs) He was a nice old gent, he was not, you know, he wasn't a barn burner. They had this big reception for General Chamberlain, that's what it was, General Chamberlain, was the Chief of Staff of the 5th Army at that time, in Chicago and he was the author of the renowned book on horsemanship that got the Americans into the forward seat, which the Germans had originally done and I went to the reception, of course, and I was wearing pink britches and boots, Peal boots that had been my father's, beautifully shined needless to say. I shined them. We didn't have orderlies anymore to polish and shine brass and all that sort of thing, and my wife and I went down the line. Uncle Walter Hess said, "General Chamberlain this lad just got promoted today (laughs) and he was my aide at Fort Bragg." he had a booming voice, There was all kinds of people in this line, by units. The only reason we happened to be sort of toward the front part, we were in the special troops. He held me out at arm's length and he said, "There, there, by God is an officer that looks like one." (laughs) He liked the britches and boots, you know. (laughs) Oh, dear me and the other thing was, speaking of the Rangers, there was one particularly obstreperous one, in one of the later companies. We had something that went on the Phillips pack saddle. It was known as a cockalay that was a device that adapted it to put a Stokes Litter on, you know one of these, like they have at the airport for firey rescues and everything. It's a basket, of steel. They use 'em on boats to transfer people from one boat to the other and that everything. So, we had those and if there was anything the mules hated it was that. Because this darn thing would bob over their head. So there was this one we used to demonstrate this and we'd usually use one of the old mules from Fort Riley that you could do anything to, light a fire under him and they would just stay, wonderful, wonderful mules. They were good to train the other mules. We'd sometimes link 'em together and they would, those old mules, they would educate some of the younger ones once in a while in ways that we weren't permitted to do because, kick the bejesus out of 'em, (laughs), as a matter of fact, at least settle 'em down. We had one mare by the name of Mary who was enormous and she was particularly good at that. At any rate, there was this one real wise one, we decided we were going to fix him. The soldiers decided this, us officers had nothing to do with it. And they got a mule that was head shy. And they put this stupid thing on him and somehow or other they managed to get him in front of the stand where all these guys are sitting and the pack master called for volunteers and pointed to this guy.(laughs) And I think people by this time were beginning to have some inkling of what was about to happen and they very carefully loaded him in, and they had blinders on the mule which the ones that weren't very calm you'd put blinders on and pack 'em, usually they could do almost anything and the guy there and the soldiers gonna lead the mule, you know. One of my

packers and they took the blinders off and “Katy bar the door!” (laughs) The mule took off with this guy up there in the litter, took off in a dead run (laughs). It went around and around and around this big field and down the arroyo and up and he’s hanging on for dear life, you know. This ranger, paratrooper ranger could do anything and finally the mule got tired of him. By this time several of the packers got on their riding mules and went out there to round up the mule and the mule got a little tired and the first thing they did, like the clowns in the circus, was they picked the guy out of, one of ‘em did, out of the litter, they weren’t going to just let the mule go some more. Then the mule calmed down, somewhat. And they got off and very prudently took the Stokes Litter off the mule, and totally, and one of ‘em, he had a nice riding mule, one of ‘em came back with the Stokes Litter in front of him, on the neck of his own riding mule, it didn’t bother it and the other one lead the mule back. Oh, there was applause and everything. We didn’t get any more sass out of that guy.

Mark: I bet not.

Martin: Not one wit. There were several more classes for ‘em during the month they were there and we packed for ‘em in the mountains and all this, and no more remarks, no more sass. (laughs) And that’s why we didn’t go to Korea though, because they couldn’t feed the mules and so my branch then, I transferred to Armor then, in ‘50 and my branch is looking around saying, hey, you know here’s our poor refugee out there and he’s got to go to the advanced course. So I was ordered to the advanced course at the armored school at Fort Knox in the class of ’51 – ’52 and when , in February they came down to announce tentative assignments for all of us they read off our names and they got to, I was the first of two Martins and they got to me and they said “Overseas with troops.” Well, that was a euphemism for Korea. (laughs) If you were going to Germany they just said Germany but “overseas with troops” was a euphemism for Korea and I was all set to go Korea and my wife had rationalized all this and so on and so forth and they came down with the semi-final orders in, I don’t know, April or something and they still said, “overseas with troops”. My orders arrived in May, just before the class graduated and I was ordered to replacement depot in Germany, in Bremerhaven. Went over by ship again and was assigned to the 14th Cavalry. That’s how I got there.

Mark: I have a couple of questions about Korea and how it impacted upon the Army. Do you have any particular observations on that? Again, getting an influx of draftees, umm, getting larger.

Martin: Yeah. We got more draftees. They called up some National Guard units. The Army got larger. Things got to a, well, I wasn’t in Korea, you know, in the war zone.

Mark: I understand that.

Martin: In that part, and I would say that the training that was conducted in the States, what I saw, was very good and the units that were sent over were good. I think that the performance of the units in, that had been in the Japanese occupation, I am certainly thoroughly convinced from what I've read and people I've talked to and so on and so forth was nothing like what we had in Germany. They just didn't get over there, their inland occupation ways quickly at all as we had done, certainly by '48 in Germany and the constabulary had immediately. The forces were, you know, real garrison oriented and all this sort of thing and they just, it wasn't the same, as a result I don't think the performance initially when they went to Korea is all that surprising. The-- two of the battalions from the 14th Infantry, the 14th later went, incidentally, to Korea but two of the battalions were sent over to fill out those occupation units that only had two battalions and a regiment. And the first one that went over to the 1st Cavalry, It was kind of interesting The battalion commander of it was a cavalry officer, not an infantryman and they did quite well in marked contrast to some of what was in position over there in the Pacific Theater. And they'd come out of Carson. So they were regular outfits and the conditions in Germany got very bad because of the drawdown of experienced officers and noncommissioned officers and that's how --

Mark: Who were going to Korea.

Martin: Who were going to Korea, yeah. They had been pulled out to fill units and brought back to the United States to activate units and strengthen units that were called up and all this sort of thing, and that's how some of us that were in the advanced course that I was in got to Germany, rather than going to Korea. The requisition had come in, so to speak, and the decision was made by the Chief of Staff of the Army apparently which effected the advanced courses at Benning or the advanced course at Benning also and at Sill to get some experienced, company and battery and troop commanders into Europe before things just get totally out of hand and I went over there to command my third company size unit and that was typical. We had a few young West Pointers who were on their first command that did real well, but there were a lot or there had been, the officer I replaced had done a miserable job, that's how I happen to get that particular unit in Germany in the 14th, I was assigned originally to the just, you know, waiting to get a company, to ES-3 section, as one of the liaison officers. They didn't technically need me there at all. But that's the, kind of what went on. I think if , you know when you have one of these one year rotational outfits, arbitrary rotational, and you just keep rotating people and rotating people I think this can have a very bad effect on a military force. Where you have had World War II, people were drafted for the duration plus and they stayed in the units, some of those

older units, until they were wounded or killed, you know, then they finally --. they Air Force had pretty good, the Air Corps had pretty good, well, it was the Army Air Force by then, had pretty good rotation plan for air crews, but they didn't much for the rest of the folks. You get a certain stability, certainly. There's some happy medium between but Korea began to sort of tear the Army up and it ended in just you know, fortunately in fewer years than Vietnam did. We could see what happened in Vietnam.

Mark: That's interesting that you say that it sort of tore the Army up. Could you be a little more specific perhaps?

Martin: Well, you keep moving people and the units that we, generally in Germany stayed at pretty fair strength percentage wise. The stateside units really, you know, got drawdown and had people barely enough time to greet 'em and kiss 'em good-bye. And the stability wasn't there. We got; for example, I think a good example of this maybe is in Germany. We'd go out, soldiers who came in, uncommissioned officers, with ratings as staff sergeants, 1st class. I remember one master sergeant who his records would indicate, would certainly gather that they were brave leaders in combat. In the 14th Cavalry we got sort of a remarkable number of infantrymen and we didn't have that many infantry slots. We had a rifle squad in each platoon. But these people just couldn't hack it in the German atmosphere. They hadn't been trained and they, you know, the bedrock, the fundamentals of soldiering, which were very much in demand in Germany and they just, and they must have been, in their units, they must have been the best available and I have no reason to believe they were other than brave because, you know, they --- but they just didn't know what to do. Whereas we had privates 1st class there. I remember the 2nd Platoon, the platoon leader had in company A in the 14th Cavalry; he had a driver by the name of Capola who was a real, real professional soldier. You know, he was a, what was he? A T-5, I guess, and, ah, or specialist, I guess he was Specialist -5 at that time. They changed to specialists by then which is one pay hook above a private 1st class and he had been on for a long time. And he trained more platoon leaders than these other guys had ever seen in platoons. (laughs) Capola, you could always put a lieutenant that you thought was good but you didn't want to see him get in trouble with the old man for getting lost and all sorts of crap like this, you know. Put him with Capola. I mean Capola would keep him straight. The Platoon Sergeant, of that platoon wouldn't teach anybody anything. I got rid of him and I got a good one in there. But, I was lucky, you know, pulled a few strings. Personnel officer was a good friend of mine, warrant officer, and, but the PFC platoon leader's driver, he couldn't read a map or find his way in the dark. I mean there just wasn't anything he could do. He could shoot everything we had, he had marksmanship badges hanging on it like this, and he didn't want to be anything but a PFC or specialist he was, spec. 5. I had a guy in my platoon

in World War II like that. He's still living in Iowa, a farm boy he was then. He's a retired farmer now. He could of easily been one of the best platoon sergeants in the outfit, he didn't want to be anything but a PFC and he never goofed up. Fortunately, there was enough candor, he'd just tell people, "No, I don't want to be an NCO. And yet we had,
[End of Tape 6, Side B ca. 30 min.]

I had one, one buck sergeant that was really, not all that good and I had another one that wasn't super and Bower would have been a good replacement for them. (laughs) You have people like that.

Mark: I wanted to get back to Fulton Fulda.

Martin: Fulda.

Mark: Now, when I was in Germany, in the '80's there was the infamous Fulda Gap. This was supposed to be where the Soviets were supposed to - the striking point where the Soviet's were supposed to dangerous

Marvin: It's the ridge line, that's why it's the most, with an autobahn running down it, right across the border.

Mark: Was that realized at that time as well?

Marvin: You better believe it. You bet

Mark: So the 14th Cav was the front line and you knew at the time.

Martin: Yes, yes.

Mark: And the cold war had --

Martin: The 1st, the 1st and 3rd Squadrons were right in the Fulda gap, the 2nd Squadron was down on the northern part of Bavaria, its headquarters in Bad Kissingen but they linked with this, but they came up to the Bavarian border, the border of Bavaria and Hesse and we to the north of us, when I was there, '52 to '55, where it was in the area of the British Army of the Rhine, however the unit was next to us, on the border was the 5th French Hussars. That's interesting, you know, they were actually working under the British.

Mark: I'm interested in readiness for the Soviets in terms of facing off with them in the cold war. What sorts of preparations were there? How ready were you? What sort of intelligence did you have of their operations and what was your perception of the Soviets? Did you really think they were going to come across the border, especially during the Korean War, or not?

Martin: Well, I wasn't there during the Korean War. It was at that time that, they, you know, they finished the conversion really or polished up the conversion of the former Constabulary units into armored cavalry regiments. We still wore the Constabulary patch and yellow scarves, by the way, only we continued to wear yellow scarves. When I went to the 14th in the fall of '52 we wore the Constabulary patches until, I think it was early December we switched over to the 7th Army patch and so we were, you know 7th Army troops but we were assigned to 5th Corps. As to the state of readiness it was, it could only be described as superb. We had our equipment priority. We were pretty well kept up to strength on people. Our, the, some indication of the way things were, every vehicle had its camouflage net strapped onto it, every vehicle had rations for the crew for three days, every vehicle had its basic load of ammunition, to include a jeep which would have a box of pistol ammunition and rifle ammunition and so on and so forth. All the tanks had their rounds loaded in 'em in the ready racks, in the turrets, all the time in, the motor pool. The small arms and the machine guns, the machine guns were all locked up in arms rooms of the motor pool. The small arms were in the arms room in the supply room at the barracks. The basic load of ammunition for the unit, the replenishment ammunition for combat was all loaded on to trucks. We had an over strength of trucks and these trucks were in an ammunition dump, guarded twenty-four hours a day, needless to say. Well illuminated at night. The trucks were, all carried 100% overload on 'em, the ammunition was so heavy and they were all jacked up, but they had kick away jacks. Take a sledgehammer and knock these - they were put in that way on purpose, knock 'em out right from under. In fact, we did. We had an alert once a month. All the troops in Europe did, all the combat troops, in which you move to a position near, similar to your actual position. They weren't totally fake by any means, they would have been, you know, the only good range for the tank guns and everything. I speak of tanks because the armored cavalry you see, was organized with, a line troop had three platoons in it plus the headquarters with the logistic function and a line platoon had a scout section with two scout squads, which at that time were in jeeps. Later they got the infamous M1114 and now they have the Bradley. You had a rifle squad, which was in one of the early armored personnel carriers. We were the first ones to get the armored personnel carriers. First it was the M-59, which was a heap of junk and it was under powered and fortunately the M-75 came in which was a, it was unbelievable. Why the thing didn't take off is beyond me. It had --

Mark: Because it was so light?

Martin: It was fairly light but it had the same tank engine that the M-41 tank had. After we got the 41's. When I went there we had the M-24's, the World War II one, I think I mentioned to you. We had the old aircraft 75 mm which used to concern me because you might as well throw rocks at 'em

to shoot that ugly Soviet tank. There was another time when we had an equipment disparity and there were a lot of us who really didn't want medium tanks but we had 'em for the gun. We had a medium tank company, also, in each battalion, later squadron and then you had a heavy mortar squadron with a 4.2 inch mortar. That's one mean weapon, that's a real killer. Being an artilleryman's son I much preferred the means of deployment, whenever it was possible, putting them in battery, all three of them together and have one, you know, one fire control and, but, in these border positions you couldn't do that because they were spread out and in a way you couldn't do that. But everything was there and ready and we had to, oh, we had gasoline on trucks too, already to go. So we were, you know, ready at the drop of a hat. We were given an hour to get out of the caserne and on the road, so to speak, and I don't know anytime that we didn't more than beat that, more than beat it. There were some great things going on. I remember one time, my wife and I were talking about this the other night. The Regimental Commander, a Colonel by the name of Raymond Curtis, many of whose classmates had become general officers. There was the, for example, the division commander of the 2nd armored division at Bad Kreuzhach was a classmate of his, he wanted to be a general in the worst way. He was a pretty good soldier. He had been a rider on the last Olympic team that we sent over in '36. He was kind of an eccentric guy in some ways and my categorization of Colonel, later General Kurtis and I was, would be if there was ever a regimental commander and a troop commander that fought with each other, it was the two of us. (laughs) With the squadron commander in the middle (laughs), but at any rate we had a great admiration and respect for each other I must say. We had one of these, he would have these Friday night parades, which consisted of the, our squadron and the regimental headquarters troop, and the service troop that was in Fulda, not much of it and the attached engineer company and ordnance company and these were, you know, real gala occasions. He would invite German-American relations. He would invite important Germans, you know, to come (laughs) and then he would have these guests, these general officers and various other people that might be of some influence on his future career and these people would come, and I remember they had one of those and we had a particularly wowser of a party and the party was just going very well. After the parade, the cocktails, when, damned if we didn't have one of those alerts and the officers' club was right next to the siren and we made, I think the NCOs were also having a big party and I can't remember (laughs) what the occasion was. Maybe the weather was right and we, all us officers went bailing out of the windows (laughs), which were only four feet off ground, or something like that, you know, practically French doors and ran up to the caserne through the gate there, the people gate, and we got out in marvelous time, and as was often the case, but even more that time, I know in my troop we picked up every single one of the men that was on pass in Fulda. Those people had a network that you wouldn't

believe. Soldiers are smart; nobody should ever forget that soldiers are smart. As my friend George Barrow (??), a fellow troop commander, who left shortly after I took over A troop said, when we were getting ready for one of those parades one day, and he said, "Sonny, look at those guys. 180 troopers and any one of 'em could ruin you." (laughs) Ahh, I never felt that way about soldiers. There were times I didn't like soldiers, particularly individual ones, but I always loved them (laughs). You know I was brought up with soldiers. I really love them and here all these guys are just passing in front of me, sitting on a corner we went through fold and here are all these guys in their best dress pass uniform and they're standing on a corner. They didn't even slow up to pick 'em up, they'd slow down a half track, you know from the rifle squad and one of the jeeps and pull 'em aboard and off we'd go off to the alert position. (laughs)

Mark: We're down to about five minutes again.

Martin: Okay.

Mark: So in this last couple of minutes I am interested in how realistic the threat of the Russians was. I mean, did you really think they were going to come across? And what did you know about their capabilities?

Martin: We were prepared for it. We had, I think, very realistic assessment of their capabilities.

Mark: Which was what?

Martin: High. High. We knew their equipment for one thing. Some of us had had some chance to analyze some of their equipment that was captured in Korea, for example. They were a lot of flaws with the Russian tanks but they had a big gun and they were simple and they were reliable. The one weak spot was those two drums of fuel on the back fenders that you've seen always in the pictures. They're supposed to be jettisonable but they didn't jettison them much and we knew where the vulnerable spots were on the sides and so on and so forth and after we got our M-41 tanks with the high velocity 76 mounted on them, that was one of the finest tanks that was ever produced in the world, by the way and we had good medium tanks in the tank companies. We had a lot of confidence in our people, in our equipment and in our training, but we knew we were in the hot spot and we had no illusions about the fact, you know, we didn't expect them to come overnight but that they might come. We just didn't, even those, of us I think, I think I still subscribed to *Foreign Affairs* in those days. And even those of us who tried to keep up on world affairs and everything it was hard to fathom what was going on. We had pretty much confidence in our intelligence but we didn't depend on it, you know mentally. I think perhaps our biggest concern was that, for our families, but they had a

pretty good system of getting them out of there. That was another thing, we had to have, you know, a packed bag and food and spare gasoline in five gallon cans. We all had for our families and they had this evacuation plan that seemed pretty realistic and somebody always wanted to rehearse these plans and the best they ever did was sort of in segments and they never did rehearse that whole plan. We rehearsed the war plans, again using alternate positions and so on and so forth, and we had a lot maneuvers that were so based on those and we all knew where we were going to fall back to. We had a lot of confidence, you know, this is a big thing, only from a former serving soldier would you get this but the trickiest maneuver in war is to pass through your own lines going backwards. Going forward is bad enough, as far as coordination and everything is concerned but going backwards is really a tricky, tricky operation that you don't get raked over by your own people, but we practiced this a lot and we had signals that we carried, flares and of course we had the radio frequencies for the people and we rehearsed that, talking to 'em to know where we were and were coming to and so on and we had a lot of confidence in that, too. We had a lot of confidence in the 4th Infantry Division that was behind us and the others on the flanks and so on. Even the French, we thought they were great. They were real soldiers up there in that outfit and they had no love for, the officers especially, I never talked to very many common French soldiers but the officers as I mentioned were all aristocrats. They would love to have at Communists and the Brits, the Brits, they were good soldiers. I think we had a lot of confidence. We sure hoped that the plans to reinforce the theater, we knew we had enough supplies and when we had to go back, when I was the S-4, for example, of that squadron later on, one of my duties was to go every six months and check our gas supplies. I went back one time, they had changed ours. We took over another area or they redesignated another area, and I went back and kicked holes in gas cans and had gas going on the ground and I want you to know that I've not always been the calmest man as it is, but I had some real things to say there and also (laughs) when I went back home to the unit and got the regimental commander wasn't another one, after Kurtis. He was very calm, a very fine gentlemen and he got very aroused about this. There was a great deal of smoke [pause in tape Approx 10 sec.]

Mark: Okay, it's December 1, 1995. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum resuming the interview with Col. Sonny Martin of Madison, a veteran of the Army. (both laugh) Okay, you've got some stories you wanted to relay.

Martin: Well, I had a couple of things I happened to remember that are a little bit illustrative of what I guess probably one might call the "Old Army" but in a way, they touch upon a couple of things we were talking about earlier. Going back to Ft. Ethan Allen Vermont in about 1929, '30, '31,

somewhere along in there, my father had as a 1st sergeant, a gentleman by the name of Bauchamp. It was spelled B-A-U-C-H-A-M-P who enlisted originally in the Army in the 1st Division in World War I and continuously served in the 1st Division as an enlisted man and later as a warrant officer. He was known as “Mr. 1st Division” by the time of the occupation by the way. One day they were going to have a mounted review at Ft. Ethan Allen and the troops were marching there, too and I was going to go to see it naturally, and I wore as most kids that age did then, I was really dressed up too, I had on shorts and knee socks and either a shirt or perhaps like a blazer and one of my socks had slipped down. 1st Sergeant, then 1st Sergeant Bauchamp, was riding at the back of the battery where the 1st Sergeant rides and he saw me and said, “Sonny, you go home, pull up your socks, and then come back and watch the review.” (laughs) I had to walk all the way home. I don’t know how far it was but it seemed like it was sort of far to me. I was quite young, then, but, there is a sequel to the story. In 1948, when the Constabulary was breaking up, the Constabulary School was inactivated or to be inactivated about in June and I left in May to go to the 1st Division. I was in the 1st Division Headquarters Company. It was kind of a mess, frankly. The then Company Commander had a delayed combat fatigue reaction and he was —I had only been there a week or so and I was the Executive Officer, I was the next senior one, senior Lieutenant and he was evacuated to the general hospital in Munich and so on and so forth. He later recovered by the way and was a classmate of mine at Leavenworth at the Command and General Staff College, but we didn’t see any more of him and one of the things I was doing was trying to check on the property which was in an awful mess and I thought I’d better get some good advice here so I went to see old Chief Bauchamp who was in the G4 section, the Logistics Section, and described my problems and he said, “Well, he said, It sounds to me like you have a case for the Inspector General”. (laughs), Real gruff like. I said, “I suppose so.” He said, “I’m going to get my friend Bloom to come down and see you.” He was the warrant officer in the Inspector General’s section. He caught me in the tent area, we were at Grafenwoehr then and he said, he was another gruff one too, everyone was scared to death of him, he said, “You have all the books laid out neatly on the table, “I remember he said “neatly”, and” I will be there at 8:00 o’clock on such and such a morning and you have a pot of coffee there.” He was the kind of a guy you practically said, “Yes, Sir” although I was a fairly senior 1st Lieutenant. So he duly arrived and we had, for example, M8 armored cars which had been issued to that unit during World War II and had long since been turned in or abandoned or something and this stuff was still in the property books. Presumably I was supposed to be accountable for it in some way, at least as property found on post and I asked some question and he said, “Lieutenant, I’ll do the talking.” (laughs) So he looked through the books. He said “This is the worst set of property books I’ve ever seen”, and this was in the middle of summer in Grafenwoehr and here’s this Sibley stove

there to warm the tent when it gets cold, you know, and sometimes the nights even were cold there, and he said turned to this one soldier, and he said "Get a good fire going in that thing." So he did, and so he stood there and he said, "Inspectors General are supposed to write in anything that they audit or inspect or anything else in green." So he took out this green pen and he started doing things like this and he opened the door (laughs) and threw all these books in there and we burned up all the books.

Mark: I guess that solves the problem in some way.

Martin: He said, "Now what you need obviously, is a set of property books and I expect you have some notion of how to initiate them and if you don't, talk to Chief Bauchamp." So, I thought, well, you know, that's a hint. So I went to Bauchamp and he said, "I've got a couple of good sergeants here" and so on and so forth and he sent this team down and they set up what was probably the nicest set of property books in the United States Army from *scratch* and from some vouchers we had. The rest of the vouchers were destroyed. You know, blood is thicker than water. He really took care of me. But he would growl at me about things. A little while later I became the Aide de Camp to the Assistant Division Commander. They hadn't had one for a long time and a Brig. Gen. McKee was to arrive and they interviewed various lieutenants and selected people as nominees and then they were interviewed by the General and I was selected as the senior aide, but at any rate, we were on an inspection trip with Gen. Huebner who was the theater commander actually, of the ground troops. General Clay was the overall one." Old Hueb" had been in the 1st Division in World War I. He was a real character, fine officer, fine officer, old timer. Very formal. Had a great bite but a heart of gold. We were visiting the 7th Field Artillery in Ansbach Germany and we went in the dayroom of Battery A and there were pictures of the Battery in various times and there was this one up there and old Gen. Huebner walked over and he looked at it and "Battery Commander was a Lieutenant Martin," he said, "You look a little bit like him but she said you're a bigger man, I think." At that point, Mr. Bauchamp was there and he said, "Yes, Sir, that was Sonny Martin's dad and a fine officer," and he goes, you know, on to this business. Huebner turns to me and he said, "Well, if you're half as good as he was you'll do alright." (laughs) That was kind of the sort of fellow he was. Another funny thing happened at another one of those inspections. We were at the 18th Infantry and there was a young guy commanding and he was a contemporary of mine commanding a company by the name of McChristian who later became a Major General, a very fine one. He was leading the inspectors as you are supposed to do and this big inspection party is trailing along and here they came to this one door and he just went right on by that. General Huebner said, reached out his hand. He said, "Wait a minute. What's in there?" (laughs) McChristian said, "Sir, there is a lot of stuff that we hoped the General wouldn't see." He said,

“Alright” and went on. (laughs) Never demanded to look at it. Never opened the door. Nothing. (laughs) That’s the way a lot of the people were, you know. If you didn’t tell lies and brushed your teeth and one thing and another, they’d back you up. They’d all lived through these experiences and some of them had forgotten but a lot of them hadn’t. They hadn’t at all. So, that is kind of, you know, some of the sorts of things you ran into.

Mark: Okay. I think as we left off last time, you were here, you were leaving Germany and it was about 1955 or so.

Martin: In ’55?

Mark: ’54? I can’t remember exactly when it was.

Martin: We had been on the border, had we?

Mark: Yeah.

Martin: In the 14th Cavalry, yeah, all right.

Mark: From there you went to Taiwan, is that correct?

Martin: No, no, from there I went to, I think we got into Camp Carson didn’t we? In the, yeah, in the 35th Pack Company

Mark: Right.

Martin: and the people that went to Japan or Korea I mean were pulled out as battalions to fill in the divisions in Japan were so much better trained, so on and so forth. Yes, and then okay, we may be getting there. Then we went to the advanced course at the Armor School, I guess, at Ft. Knox which was an interesting and educational experience, of course. It was sort of like going to college again. One of the phenomena there was we got to know a lot of allied officers, which was good, some of whom remained friends for you know, for life, as it were. From there I went back to Germany. We covered that and from there came home again and I went to 2nd Army Headquarters at Ft. Meade, Maryland to the headquarters there. I was back in the G1, the personnel business again. General Staff Section for that. I was only there about a year. Incidentally, there was a funny thing there. They had these career management branches that were supposed to look after your career needs, career development needs and so on. So I went down to see them in Washington while I was there and asked about things I could do and I said I’d like to go back to troops again and here they were publishing an armor magazine, all these columns and everything about “young men get troop duty, get troop duty.” They told me, “Martin, you’ve had too much troop duty! You

need staff duty.” So there I was in a general staff job and I was there about a year and they had another, seems like I was always in flaps, they had another flap for officers on ROTC duty and I got sent to Providence College in Providence, RI on ROTC duty.

Mark: That was what year, about '56 that would have been?

Martin: That would have been, yeah, it was '56.

Mark: So what was ROTC like at Providence College in the 50's? Was it a mandatory course like it was in many colleges at that time?

Martin: Of course, it was almost the '60's. It was '59 when I went there. Yes. It was mandatory there. It had been a transportation corps unit and we still had a couple of Transportation Corps officers, but it was converted the year before I went there to what was called a General Military Science unit. They no longer had branch peculiar units, or not very many of them. Incidentally, you mentioned your affiliations with the University of Massachusetts. The University of Massachusetts had an Armor Unit at that time and as a matter of fact and so did Norwich. I was a member of the inspection teams that went to those institutions for three years. That's how I happened to remember it. The University of Massachusetts was, by '60, it was '56, '56 to '59 by '59 it was being converted to GMS, General Military Science, too. At Providence [End of Side A, Tape 7 ca 30 min.] College, Providence College is a, at that time was an all male institution and was the only Dominican male college in North America. There were female ones, including the one here.

Mark: Oddly enough, that's my father-in-law's undergraduate alma mater.

Martin: PC?

Mark: Providence College. Yeah.

Martin: Oh, my gracious –

Mark: Although about five years later he graduated, geez, I don't know, '62 something like that.

Martin: Oh, yeah. Just missed him.

Mark: Small world sometimes. Yeah, you just missed him. That's why I'm kind of curious.

Mark: I don't recall he ever mentioned ROTC and I don't know that it was mandatory even that late.

Martin: It converted I think the last year I was there. It became voluntary and we didn't see any great falling off. We got tremendous backing from the college. An amusing thing happened while I was there. You perhaps will certainly recall the name, having been associated with military history, of Col. Trevor Dupree who just died. He was the senior ROTC officer in 1st Army Headquarters at Governor's Island at that time and one of his missions one time he came up to Providence College to inspect and also he was to call upon the Father President, Father Slaven and confess all so to speak that they had sent a number of officers and NCOs there who were not Catholic. About half and half in the ROTC detachment. He broached Father Slaven with this and the PMS, Professor of Military Science; Col. Barnett came back and told us about this. He was amused. Father Slaven said, "Now Colonel," he said, "I have all the priests I need to teach theology and related religious subjects" and he says "You just send me good soldiers for the ROTC (laughs) detachment." He said, "The only thing we ask of them is that they attend the Red mass at the opening of the school year, in uniform, and of course, and so on, and the colors are there", and so on and so forth. He said "That's the only obligation that has even any religious attachment. We do invite them to the Christmas party and they all seem to come." (laughs) He was a grand man.

Mark: So in terms of the students though, what was the goal of the ROTC at the time? Why was it mandatory?

Martin: It was mandatory because the college made it so.

Mark: Yeah.

Martin: They viewed it as a character training program, which was certainly reminiscent of when I had been at Immaculata High School. I have a marvelous little thing I love to tell Catholic priests, that I was born in one of their hospitals, graduated from one of their high schools and served three years as an ROTC instructor on the faculty of one of their colleges and I'm still an Episcopalian.

Mark: Couldn't quite make the leap, huh?

Martin: That much amuses them. (laughs) Incidentally, at Providence College at that time, the English professor was a, well actually was an Episcopalian priest. He was never defrocked. Well, he sort of was because he actually converted to Catholicism but he was not a religious person, not religious, at that time he was a lay person, but he was very much esteemed.

Mark: So in your job there did you actually have contact with the students? Were you teaching the courses or you were just administering the program?

Martin: No, I taught and I also did a lot of the administration. I was the Detachment Adjutant. The most interesting job I had in a way was I had no more than

gotten there really and they had a little formation for awarding the little badges to the distinguished military students who were Juniors and who would if they didn't goof up in their senior year would get a regular Army commission if they accepted it, and I never remember any there that turned it down. They had this little formation for this and the band played and I've never heard a sorrier bunch of strolling musicians in my life and they looked about the same. The interesting part about it was that the band was, it was told to me, that it was also the college band and so on and so forth and I, just like you get to be the mess officer complaining about food, I said something about the band in rather direct terms and so they had a ROTC officer in charge of the band. The actual musical director was one of the priests who was a really fine guy. He was a veteran by the way, from the Air Force in World War II, had seen quite a lot of service. That was before he went to seminary of course. So I got assigned as the Officer in Charge. The officer who had been the officer in charge was a Transportation Corps major, I was a newly promoted Major myself then, who was later released in one of the riffs (??) and became a noncommissioned officer again. I don't know how he got to be a noncommissioned officer to tell you the truth, but at any rate, we had lots of fun with that band. We got that band shaped up and we got the three years I was there we went to the NIT with the team.

Mark: Is that right?

Martin: Yeah, and we paraded in the St. Patrick's Day parade in New York, the band did, you know, I didn't parade with them. I went down with them. They were good. They were a lot of fine musicians. They came from a musical tradition. We had a few lads in the band who were ringers, some of the priest seminarians. They didn't take ROTC, they were excused. Then we had one guy, I never know why he was in the band, a kid by the name of Dufeny and I was working with him one day and we had him in the right front position so in essence he was the guide and the band kept sort of wandering off (laughs) and I said, yelled, you know I said "Damn it Dufeny, march in a straight line". His answer was "Yes, Sir". Well, some of the boys came around and told me, they said "You know, he's blind in one eye and he can't see. (laughs) We should really move him to where he orients on somebody with his left eye instead of not looking off to his right." But they were really a great bunch of lads and it was a very enjoyable assignment. I liked it very much. One of the interesting things I used to do there was one of the political science professors who was a former concentration camp inmate from Poland, by the way, used to invite me to come over and give little short lectures on various things in Europe and so on and so forth that I had seen since he had, one thing or another, you know. Kind of eye witness accounts or impressions of some of the things. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience, really great.

Mark: You spent about a year or two you said there?

- Martin: Three.
- Mark: Wasn't two?
- Martin: Three. No, it was three years.
- Mark: And then you went to Taiwan?
- Martin: That's right. From there I went to Taiwan.
- Mark: Because I was interested if you were in Taiwan during one of the Straits crises.
- Martin: Well, I guess you could, yeah, you could say, oh sure –
- Mark: Well there was a constant (unintelligible) –
- Martin: I was gonna say the word "crisis" (laughs) is one that I wouldn't employ very much in connection with what was going on. We had the every other day firings back and forth between Amoy Province, Amoy City, and Jinmen, which is, what is it that it's called in English? Ah, it's terrible. I can't think. We always called in Kinmen. It's Jinmen in Chinese.
- Mark: So in the actual Republic of China –
- Martin: And then there was Matsu.
- Mark: Yeah, Quemoy and Matsu. Were the two islands that were held –
- Martin: Yeah, Quemoy is it, yeah, and that's Jinmen.
- Mark: So you were, so when you actually went to Taiwan, where exactly were you? Were you on one of the islands in the Straits or were you --
- Martin: No, I was in Taipei, but I used to go out to the islands and as a matter of fact, I wrote the Armor Employment Plan, the one that was the advisory plan that we – the Chinese had sort of fiddled around with it and in essence, they asked us to do it, which was amazing and so we did and I think that they had method in their madness because they wanted to get some more concrete and construction money, which they deserved, which they truly deserved. I have, among other things I have, one of my Armed Forces Expeditionary Medals is for there and the other one is for Korea. Not for the Korean War, the DMZ hotting up.
- Mark: Yeah. That was about 1970 or something.

- Martin: Well, it was earlier than that, it was 65-66.
- Mark: As for Taiwan, I'm interested in, again, this is another one of these cold war crises and so I'm interested in the impact on the soldiers and I'm interested also in your rating of the Chinese – We had discussed --
- Martin: The Bubing? The Chinese soldiers? We didn't have very many American soldiers, we had a few. For the most part NCOs but all our drivers for example, American sedans, American Army equipment. All the drivers were all Chinese and they were very good. A lot of them had been in the same job for some years, and they could --
- Mark: Were they old KMT veterans?
- Martin: Some had come from the mainland. Most of the drivers were oh, 35ish we'll say, something like that, but most of them were mainland Chinese and we had every reason to believe that they listened very carefully to everything and duly reported on a daily basis what they had heard. They were just new. They had excellent intelligence services and they gathered every bit of information and you just accepted this. If you wanted to talk to anybody and you didn't want this to happen, then you made reasonably certain your automobile didn't have a lot of that is, your private car didn't have a lot of strange wires or something on it and you went out and ran the motor. (laughs)
- Mark: So you feared that the Communist Chinese had spies that were listening to what you were saying, is that --
- Martin: No, not very much. It was --
- Mark: It was the Republic of China.
- Martin: Our allies. Sure.
- Mark: Why would they go to such lengths? They were our allies.
- Martin: They wanted to know what was going on. They knew we had our state secrets, you know, things we wouldn't tell them, how much money and all this, but we had a situation while I was there that's illustrative. Some directive, a very detailed directive came out and we really wanted to be able to tell our Chinese allies what was in it. It had to do with the planning for the next couple of years and we wanted them to know that we weren't the guys that were holding things up but this indeed had come from Washington by a sync back in Hawaii but we were forbidden to do so, so our Chief of Staff who was a Colonel, marvelous fellow by the name of George Ruhland who later became a Major General, said with a perfectly straight face to the Headquarters Commandant, "I want you to arrange for the General

Headquarters Conference Room. We're going to get all the advisors on the island possibly except maybe a few of the offshore men will just have some team representatives come in. We've got to brief people on this new program and I want you to arrange to get the General Headquarters conference room and have our counter-intelligence people screen that place and have the Chinese provide perimeter security. They wouldn't have access." The magic day came three or four days hence and the CIC had come. They even had a detachment come down from Okinawa and they went through the place like a – with a fine toothed comb and they found some bugs in it which the Chinese said had been placed to bug some of their own people, probably had, I don't know. But at any rate, the day came and here the Chinese MPs, about three feet apart made a ring around there. You had to have all your credentials to get through there and everything and then through our own MPs, we had just a very few there who were guarding the doors and so on and so forth. The briefing was over at 10:00 o'clock in the morning or something like that. That afternoon, some of our counterparts came to us and wondered about some of the details. They didn't ask directly, but they said "What is going to happen about such and such and such in the future? You know we should be planning." Which is exactly what we wanted them to do. (laughs) So much for the sanitary auditorium. Totally secure. Our people, our CIC people really went through there with a fine toothed comb.

Mark: In terms of the Communist Chinese, they were shelling those islands, as you mentioned.

Martin: Um hm. The offshore island.

Mark: It was a strange ritual where they would shell every other day, or something like that. Is that true?

Martin: Every other day. Yeah, every other day.

Mark: I've read that, but it's hard to believe that that's actually what happened. What was the reason so far as you could tell?

Martin: The inscrutable Orient. Both sides were making their point. On the one side, well, both sides were making the point "It's ours." The mainland Chinese were making the point, you people are a bunch of rebels, revolutionaries and of course the duly constituted government of the Republic of China was on Taiwan and kept telling them that "We ain't dead yet and we're coming back!" "Fon grum daloo"(??) "We go back to the mainland." Then it got, while I was there, I guess three quarters of a year or so they began not firing high explosives anymore, but firing propaganda shells. They'd fire these things over and all this paper would blossom all over. It was fun to watch it by the way, from the observation posts on Quemoy. They had these big telescopes, like the kind you put a quarter in only better. Most of them were

German. You'd watch the shells burst and this paper would go all over and the only time they used high explosive shells from then on was when the mainland people would throw one in every now and then and boy, they got it in spades back again. I was out there one time when the ROC people, the Republic of China people, fired counter-battery at them. It didn't last long – it didn't have to.

Mark: As we discussed last time you had sort of respect for the Soviet forces and they were a formidable force. Did you have the same sort of feelings toward the Communist Chinese? Did you take them as seriously as the Soviets and what about this going back to the mainland? How realistic was that from what you could tell?

Martin: Totally un, totally un. The Chinese soldiers were very good but by the time I was there, of course, most of them were Taiwanese and they didn't particularly want to go back to the mainland. They'd never been there. (laughs) They were from Taiwan and they'd suffered grievously at the hands of the Japanese. They hated the Japanese with an absolute passion – ill disguised at all levels. The better educated people and so of them weren't quite as rabid, but if you brought the subject up with the ordinary man in the street, man, you got it in spades. I think our estimate was that they had capabilities and one of the greatest of them, of course, was there was so many, but neither we nor the more expert Navy people nor the Republic of China Navy people, many of them spoke English by the way, some German, a lot of the military people had had experiences with the German advisory groups and one of the Chiang Kai-shek sons, the "G-Mo's" sons, the younger son, Wei-kuo, who was an armor officer and a damned good one too, was married to a young woman who was half German and he had been educated in Germany and he spoke fluent German. He spoke pretty good English but he liked to talk in German much more. He would corner me sometimes, (laughs) for some reason or other, I guess we were both Armor officers. I was just a Major then, and he was a Major General or Brigadier General. I think he was promoted while I was there I believe. But, the Navy didn't have much respect for the Navy and we really didn't believe that the Communists would make an invasion. We didn't see how in the world they would and they were reputed not to have any good parachute forces either, which the Republic of China had. They had good parachutists. They used to parachute their special forces people into the mainland and recover them which reminds me of something that was kind of interesting. The – we looked all over for radios to support them with and the best model to make a long story short, the best model that we ever came up with was Japanese You've got to look at the time. It was a real revelation to some of us. It was still at a time when we regarded in many respects, Japanese stuff was still being made of bamboo or was a copy of something in the western world, etc., etc. But these special forces radios that they produced and exactly why is kind of fun too because the Japanese government self-defense forces hadn't been reactivated or activated at that

time. Japan had no Army. These were by far and away the best. A little small set like a half of a whiskey box would transmit reliably 250 miles. Beautiful, beautiful set, and that's what we finally procured. They were procured not through the military program but something else. Some other aid funds and they really worked.

Mark: So at Taiwan how long did you spend there?

Martin: Two years.

Mark: The space between –

Martin: '59 – '61.

Mark: So, the space between Taiwan and Korea you, I assume, went back to the United States.

Martin: Oh, heavens yes. I didn't go to Korea until 1965, yeah. But Taiwan was a very, very interesting thing. I have tremendous respect, as did one of my mother's brothers who taught at Yale in China right after World War I for the Chinese people. I think they are marvelous. I think the Chinese are – they're not totally inscrutable, they're partially so. There is no doubt of it. Even I think if you speak Chinese, but they're very honest people. They really are, the businessmen especially. My father's good friend and classmate, General Wedemeyer said that it was quite a surprise to be in a country, this was during World War II of course, where coming from a country where the military had the highest aspirations for probity and ethical conduct and so on and so forth, particularly in it's military academies in a society where business was a little less concerned with such things, to go to another society where it was reversed. Businessmen were 100% reliable on anything they'd tell you. Even the humblest of them, he said. He left the rest of the equation blank but you can draw your own conclusions. (laughs) I think there was a certain amount of that. It was interesting to see the disparity in leadership ability and so on. We had two armored divisions in the Chinese Army, the Republic of China's Army at that time, the First Armored Division was one of the weaker MAG supported units, actually. The Second Armored Division was a really good outfit. If we could have reequipped them with equivalent American equipment, they could have handled it and well. It was a very well led, well administered, etc. organization. The difference in the food that was fed to the soldiers in the two divisions was interesting and we always suspected where the food wasn't too good, it wasn't because the cooks weren't good, it was because someone was sort of cagey waying (??) onto the ration money and not buying the stuff. Incidentally, that was one of the things I used to love to do, what the Chinese liked to do, or what normally they'd do, they had a round table like this and they'd have these, well they'd have a dinner in your honor in the middle of the day. Well, you couldn't get anymore work done, you

know, with all this food and “Golly On” (??) toasts and everything, I couldn’t stand that. I didn’t go over there to do that sort of thing on duty. I let it be known through my liaison officer who was an Armor Major, who was a graduate of USC, spoke perfect English, and a bright, bright lad, that I really liked Chinese food and so on, one thing I didn’t like was sea slugs, and incidentally they never appeared again even when I was in a party with more senior officers – they never served sea slugs at any other thing I was at. My boss said “What did you do to them, Sonny?” I said “I just mentioned to Major Woo that I didn’t like them” He said he didn’t like them either.(laughs) But, I would always request when we were going to go out to inspect something or somewhere, to have lunch with the troops in the field. If they were going on a field exercise, you know, we’d have lunch with the troops. I think the troops ate pretty well in those days because the food was always good, I must say. I must say, though, it wasn’t lavish, but it was always good. It was always very good. I always thought that the common, ordinary soldier was sort of glad I came to visit (laughs). Sort of strange, isn’t it?

Mark: So after China then you came back to the U.S. Tell me a little bit about that. Did you go back on staff duty or were you with troops?

Martin: No, I came back and went to the Command and General Staff College and from there I went to the Pentagon. Yeah.

Mark: That’s about 1960 or so then, huh?

Martin: That was in –

Mark: The Kennedy administration.

Martin: Yeah. Let’s see, Taiwan was ’59 to ’61 and in ’62 I reported to the Pentagon. I was there when Kennedy was assassinated and I can’t remember when that was, which year.

Mark: ’63.

Martin: ’63, wasn’t it. Yeah. Our office was on the, I was on inside of the E-Ring, the outside of the e-ring with windows is for the elite. Even a courtyard is better and more prestigious than that, a courtyard view, but

Mark: So at the Pentagon what was your function?

Martin: I was in what was known then as the Office of Reserve Components. It was a general staff section which subsequently, well, it had come from the old G3 people, the old Operations people and it stayed, I don’t know, it was independent for oh, seven, eight, nine years or something like that and then it wandered back to Operations again in one of the many reorganizations. You know if you can’t solve the problem you have a staff study or reorganize or

both. Our mission in life was to handle those things that a General Staff Section would do, overall policy for the Reserve and National Guard which means that you have to have a good set of antennae for political considerations and a lot of things when you're in that business.

Mark: What sort of things did your antenna pick up? I'm thinking for example, this was perhaps a little early for you but National Guard and Reserves during the Vietnam period. Some people saw as a draft dodge. Was that something that you were aware of at the time?

Martin: Oh, sure.

Mark: Something you had to deal with at the time?

Martin: There wasn't much of any way of dealing with it because you had to keep them up to – you know, you couldn't say, "Shut off recruiting" or something of that kind. Incidentally, I was not in the personnel part. I was in the training part but the – yeah, we were really aware of that. They had that six months program you know you go on active duty for six months and then you serve out your Reserve obligation which was two more years I think quite active in the Reserve or National Guard and then another four years, so a six year obligation altogether, but it was – lots of people joined to avoid getting drafted. The Vietnam War was not a particularly patriotic war, not especially.

Mark: There have been so few studies done on this. I suspect a lot of people don't really want to discuss it. What's always interested to me about that is how some of the old guard in the National Guard accepted the sudden bunch of recruits that would come in, but again you weren't in Personnel so you probably didn't have inkling.

Martin: Well, they must have accepted them all right because we got into this obliquely with the training business. They naturally, wanted to stay up to strength. If your unit didn't stay up to strength it got discontinued. That was one of the things that happened. That was one of the things that happened so they were very actively involved in recruiting and this six months program did two things for them. It was a good program. [End of Side B, Tape 7. ca. 30 min.] It trained them. It gave the recruit really good initial training, basic training and advanced individual training so when let's just take an infantry soldier for example, reported to a company in Eau Claire he more than knew what he was doing. Sometimes he was better trained than some of the others that had been there and so it was popular with the officers and NCOs that had been around a while. Of course, you had a lot of very junior NCOs too. They had these state OCSs which they still do for the National Guard. The Reserve got most of its people from the ROTC program and during those times what they were getting was most of the ROTC graduates then were not called up for six months, they were called up for two years and they were coming out as

relatively experienced junior officers. So the units tried their best to, both the National Guard and Reserves, to recruit these guys because they were pretty good officers.

Mark: Where there other ways that you noticed that the Pentagon started to change as we started to gear up for Vietnam if that's even the right term to use, as Vietnam crept up on us. Did you notice any change?

Martin: That's right. That's a better term. There wasn't really any gearing up for Vietnam. It was a creeping up. It just, it just sort of did creep up. There's no doubt of it.

Mark: Was it talked about at the water cooler and this sort of thing?

Martin: There was a great deal of concern about the way it was being run, goin' about.

Mark: In what sense?

Martin: I think probably thinking professional soldiers, for example, thought that we should mobilize the – in part, anyway for our needs, the National Guard and Reserves. The longer it went on the more this became apparent. There are a number of aspects to this. One thing is that when you do that you've gotten to a lot of the people of America. You've involved a lot of families and so on and so forth who vote one way or another and one of the problems of the Vietnam War was that it was not the people's war. Even with the draft. It wasn't really the same and I think not mobilizing the Guard and Reserve created a lot of questions in people's minds. Here we have these organizations to carry out the military missions of the United States and we haven't even called on them in any large measure, at any rate. I think it was one of the problems, and of course it was viewed as a political thing by the Administration that they couldn't afford to do it. I think, incidentally, that anything that anyone wants to write or put into history about the evil nature of Mr. McNamara (laughs) is fully deserved. The man was a crook!

Mark: I suppose you saw him around –

Martin: I did, physically, I saw him.

Mark: In the Pentagon.

Martin: I have actually gone into his office. I wrote stuff for him and he had no respect for the truth. He was very bright and he could be very wrong. The worst thing he did was he would write these things and make these statistical presentations and he had enormous numbers of footnotes. It was a joke in one respect but in another respect it wasn't a joking matter at all, which absolutely controverted what was said up above. Down in the fine print in footnote 43 or

something. It was like some of the data that we had in Nuclear Weapons Employment School, by the way. It said “This data is accurate to within + or – 200%. “ Actually, (unintelligible) we used and various other staff, and they would hold us to being within 100 yds on dropping a weapon and so on and so forth and even a 155 millimeter hausse shell between the circular area probable was much greater than what they held us to just in firing the damned thing. (laughs) I was always amused at stuff like that. Some people used to get righteously upset about it, but I used to sort of think it was funny.

Mark: There’s been a lot of people expressing their opinions about McNamara recently. I’m interested in the Army officers’ view of him in the Pentagon at the time. It was unfavorable even back then?

Martin: It was to a lot of us, yeah.

Mark: And Johnson himself?

Martin: You know, that’s funny. Johnson was a very appealing personality. Not that people were unaware of the man’s faults in many respects, he was a consummate politician and you had to interpret what he said. I think most of us had the opinion that he wouldn’t deliberately lie to you but, you know, watch out. Keep your billfold pocket buttoned! But he was an amazingly likeable man where Mr. McNamara was not. I think a lot of us thought that President Johnson had good instincts, but he wasn’t perhaps the most intelligent guy in the world, but his instincts were pretty good when it came to people and politics and things like that but as Commander in Chief he was very loyal to the services, by the way, extremely, but had a degree of ineptitude, he didn’t really understand really what was going on and the worst part about Johnson was that he and/or his advisors and we always thought a lot of his advisors had a lot to do with it, adopted what you might call the Guns and Butter Policy. I think that’s probably the best way to put it. It bankrupted the country financially, morally. It was really bad. I think that, -- you know I left the Pentagon in 1964 to go to the 2nd Armored Division at Ft. Hood, Texas. By this time was a Lieutenant Colonel, had been for a couple of years and I know it was very revealing to me when I got to a troop unit to see even then the fabric was being torn apart.

Mark: Of the Army?

Martin: The Army, yeah.

Mark: In what sense?

Martin: Whenever you have the personnel turbulence that the rotation policy introduced, you’re going to have trouble. That was one of the great beauties in Hawaii, not for the individual so much but as far as for the units and so on

in World War II. The Air Force had had rotation policies based on the number of missions and so on and so forth. In essence, the Army didn't have any. You were in for the duration of the war plus six months and you went to a unit and you stayed with that unit, at least overseas that was true. People moved in the States and during the period of expansion they moved, but there wasn't quite as much personnel turbulence and it was handled in a different way. There was a cohesiveness in the units. People knew who the players were and they knew what the name of the game was and they knew what you had to do to get along right in that unit and what you owed the unit and there were unit loyalties. Soldiers in the First Division believed, in "No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great, duty first." I mean, that wasn't something to laugh at. In the Vietnam War, it started in Korea with the theater rotation policies there. Although it didn't have the effect that Vietnam did because it didn't last as long for one thing. In fact, I think that was a very big one thing and there were still perhaps a number of veterans sprinkled through the society who didn't get called back to the services and so on who still had this very patriotic outlook on life and so did a lot of Americans, a lot of the homefront people still had this patriotic outlook. Vietnam came and I suppose it started out with a certain residual of that sort but it was quickly dispelled by the things that went on and the young people particularly, never convinced that it was a primary mission for the United States or whatever.

Mark: Do you mean the soldiers themselves or do you mean America, the U.S. in general?

Martin: The American youth in general and they were the soldiers. Most of your military people, probably, I don't know, 75 - 80% of them were pretty young people and when you have a drafted Army, a very high percentage of draftees who are only in for a couple of years and they're young. The thing that, - also there were a number of things that really screwed up Vietnam. One of them was the deferment policies. Deferring the college and university students particularly, and to an extent, deferring those who got married all of a sudden and so on and so forth, was very bad because the net result of it was that you ended up in the services with the least effective Americans and in many respects the most dispirited too because they felt they were being discriminated against and you really can't have that, If you have that it leads to troubles. The thing that I thought was remarkably unpleasant when I went back to a troop unit in '64 was the deterioration of the noncommissioned officers.

Mark: In what sense? There weren't as many of them or what?

Martin: Well, no, they were there, but they weren't the same noncommissioned officers that we'd known not too long before that in say, 1955 when I came home from Germany, for example, and for several years after. We were getting a very professional Army and the noncommissioned officers were

good and they were capable of running things, and they trained the Lieutenants, the platoon sergeants trained the platoon leaders. If you were a Captain commanding a unit you could tell some young Lieutenant, "Now, you know you ought to chat a little bit with Sergeant So and So about this and listen carefully to what he says. You go ask him and he'll be flattered that you asked him." (laughs) " And it worked. But it had gotten to where the officers were doing just all sorts of things the noncommissioned officers should have been doing.

Mark: And this is before the big push into Vietnam?

Martin: This is '64. It sort of started about then, obviously '64 – '65, for example, just as an example out of a hat, we had very good new trucks in my squadron which were multifuel trucks and we had to, on two days notice, one or two days, gather all those up and ship them out of Ft. Hood and they were replaced with a far inferior Korean War, really model that had been rehabbed, but you're right, that's sort of when the expansion started and it went from bad to worse.

Mark: As these NCOs went to Vietnam, I would imagine. I mean you need NCOs in the field, and someone's gotta replace 'em.

Martin: We had some who came back from there. I had an Air Cavalry unit in addition to my ground troops and I had some pilots that had been in Vietnam, one of whom was an absolute mad man. A couple of them were very good. They were real solid citizens and so on and so forth. The Officer Corps didn't go, other than a few Lieutenant Calleys allies and so on and so forth, really didn't go to pot the way the Noncommissioned Officer Corps did. That was the horrible thing and that's what really needed rebuilding subsequent to the Vietnam War. Really --

Mark: What do you suppose accounted for this? How did this happen?

Martin: I don't know. I'm not sure. I think I know some things not to do, but I couldn't say that the opposite of them, I suspect strongly but I couldn't really say that would be necessarily what did it but I just really don't know. But, we had young lieutenants, right out of ROTC for example, doing things that old sergeants should have been doing and they were doing them incompetently as a result. It wasn't because they were interfering with the sergeants. They were doing these things by default. This wasn't true of all units and I worked very hard on this in the unit I was in, 2nd Squadron of the 1st Cavalry, which subsequently went to Vietnam by the way. My successor, bless his heart, who got to be a brigadier general., said that he could really see my tracks. I felt very flattered. But I went back to doing some of the same basic things that we'd done all along. Not so much tactically, you had to adopt to aircraft for

example and things like this. That was no problem, but try to get down to some of the essentials and hold the NCOs responsible for certain things.

Mark: Like what essentials were missing? I've never commanded troops, I have to rely on your knowledge and experience.

Martin: Let me give you a very strange example. One index that I used as a Company or Troop Commander, that level, company, battery, or troop – I never had a battery, was that everybody in the unit, starting with myself, wore the ribbons and badges to include marksmanship badges to which they were entitled. This was not universally done, as an individual thing. One way you could tell was when you went to a unit particularly and it wasn't being done, you put the word out, and it's sort of an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace as the catechism says. (laughs) You could just walk down for inspection. So then we find Private Smith doesn't have anything on and you say, "Are you qualified on a weapon?" "Yes, Sir", he says rather proudly, "I'm an expert on a rifle," he'll say. "I see." Then you go and you get to the end and you sort of move a little bit beyond the flank of the platoon before you go down and check the next squad and you get the platoon sergeant but the squad leader is still standing in rank and you can say, "Obviously, Sergeant Smoltz didn't put out the word and/or didn't check to see that everybody complied. I expect you to take care of this Sergeant." I used to lay it on them, not on the Lieutenant platoon leader. Of course, later, I spoke to the platoon leaders! (laughs)

Mark: So get the sergeants in order.

Martin: Get 'em in gear – they're letting you down. You may not know what to do but if you know what to do and if you heard me say it ought to be done, you hold their feet to the fire privately. Never criticize them in front of their men. Build them up in front of their men. When they do a good job, if it's the only thing they did right, say so publicly. Well, it was some of these techniques, and [Approx. 10 sec. gap in tape] it's not more work than it's worth. It's just what you have to do, and you reduce someone a grade or two, you know, or put them in to be reduced. I was never much of a believer in running people in courts martial unless they did something really heinous, but using Article 15 in administrative ways to reduce people, and on the other side of the coin, rewarding people, that's very important and this wasn't being done. The maintenance of the vehicles was bad. They'd just come back from a field exercise in the desert where they had run the pants off the vehicles. That could be understood, but not just leave 'em that way. You take care of the horse before you take care of yourself. The old Cavalry philosophy. But we did some of those things and the unit was looking pretty good. I was appalled that a couple of the first sergeants of the troops I thought were not at all what they should have been. They were not at all what I would have expected from a platoon sergeant or maybe even a squad leader in Germany.

Mark: I want to cover a couple of more topics. First let's briefly discuss your experiences in Korea and then I want to describe military life during the '50's, '60's and into the '70's in particular the racial integration in the military your own experience now having raised Army brats. So, the Korea - your experience in Korea first, you mentioned you got an expeditionary medal for that and I know there were various flare-ups in the DMZ during the '60's and you apparently were in one of them at least.

Martin: Well, I was there when we had some of them, I wasn't actually in any of the fire fights or anything. I was in the Inspector General's Section in the 8th Army UN Command and, as a matter of fact, and I headed the investigations in a systems division which was a place that people go to complain about things so when something is going on and the commanding General wants to know what's really there they send the Inspector Generals. Then we also had two other parts to it, too. We had the inspection team which was rather large and they went to units to do really a management analysis is what they do, with a military slant to it of course. Then we had a nuclear weapons section that ran these tests for the nuclear weapons units which they were very strict and the tests were very frequent to see if they were complying with the procedures for good reasons. We had nuclear weapons detachments with the Korean Army units as a matter of fact, the 155 millimeter and 8" Howitzer outfits. They had the nuclear warheads. The Koreans had the artillery, they could fire. Then of course when I was there we had two American divisions.

Mark: I guess what I'm interested in is how real of a threat of a new outbreak of full-scale war do you think there was during that period?

Martin: I think the perceptions of the Americans there varied as to whether the North Koreans would actually come across that border or not in the foreseeable future. I happen to be one of those that believed that it could happen. The North Koreans had a very large Army and from what we knew from intelligence sources seemed to be pretty proficient one. It was not as well equipped as the South Koreans, and we had every reason to believe that it did not have nuclear weapons. The South Korean Army was very good. It was excellent. While I was there we sent two divisions, the Capital Division and the White Horse Division to Vietnam and they (unintelligible). Our people had a lot of problems with things being stolen and with having their compounds infiltrated by –in Vietnam – by the Vietcong or the North Vietnamese. The Koreans had next to no trouble with either one of those things. They increased the casualty rate no end for the other side.

Mark: I've heard a lot of people speak very well of the South Korean soldiers.

Martin: They're tough. They are really tough! Their discipline is very tough and it's rather physical. They're a tough people. They probably will soften up with the

increase in the manufacturing of nice automobiles and rice cookers and Lord knows what all else, but they really are, they're very, you know, they're hard and they're ingenious and they're hard working and they're very volatile. Someone has called them the Irish of the Orient and not without reason: Again, the Koreans, I love. I think Koreans are marvelous, I think they are great to do business with so to speak. Any kind of business. They're all very honest except for the Suki (??) boys or the, you know, they have some real hoods over there. They have a real native Mafia but the average Korean is very honest and their soldiers are very good and we didn't think that the Korean Army, including its reserves by the way, they had reserve units, would not be able to handle the North Koreans until we could get some additional American help there. There were some of us who really felt that unless the North Koreans had much more quality than was reflected in their numbers, maybe they were like the Chinese, the South Koreans probably could handle them by themselves. There were those who felt that way about them – even some of the intelligence people. They're great – that's all I can say, they're absolutely great! There are lots of problems, with – you know we talk about racism which is, I guess, the new word for prejudice, which used to be the word, we change words, they're the same thing, you know looking at different people as inferior and maybe finding a few inferior types and generalizing from the particular. There were a lot of Korean women who were “in business”, (laughs) but all Korean women were not prostitutes, but not even a very large percentage. It was perhaps a little more evident than here. Here, there's no money involved but some of the same things go on. (laughs) The Koreans are just wonderful people and I was there I think at a very interesting time when they were beginning to industrialize and do all kinds of interesting things like improve the railroads and working on the highway system and so on and so forth. It was interesting. Incidentally, the American Army in Korea struck me as being much better than what I had seen in the States just before.

Mark: Really? Why do you think that was the case?

Martin: Oh, I suppose because they were removed. They were a little bit more remote from all the political discussions, and the rioting in the streets and God knows what all else. They were sort of far away from it and they did a lot of field work over there and things like this. They were kept busy.

Mark: Now all this moving around that you do in the service, I thought it would be interesting to ask you about the challenges of raising your own children, having your own family in the Army. You had grown up as an Army brat; you went on to raise Army brats so I thought it would be interesting to get your perspectives on that.

Martin: Well, we had one. Just one, just our daughter. I don't think raising her was much different than raising your kid in Oshkosh would be in a way (laughs). Most of the Army kids were a pretty decent bunch in those days, fortunately.

We didn't have some of the problems that later appeared there as they have elsewhere in society, although not to the marked degree.

Mark: The drugs and that sort of thing.

Martin: Um hum. Although I guess that I was a little taken by some of the mothers who sort of felt that when there were a little disciplinary things and everything and you know, "My kiddy wouldn't do anything like that." They were a lot different than the Spartan mothers that I remember! Not only my own!
(laughs)

Mark: That's the sort of thing I was interested in. The Army you grew up in was a much smaller, closer knit organization. Smaller than what your daughter grew up in. It was filled with draftees and it was a much larger organization.

Martin: Well, of course, the officers kids don't have [End of Side A, Tape 8 ca. 30 min.] really much of anything to do with the soldiers. Very, very little.

Mark: Even in like say the (unintelligible) schools for example.

Martin: Well, they do with the soldiers kids and they're usually noncommissioned officers' kids. The kids are – well, even in first grade are usually the children of service people that have been around a little while anyway.

Mark: E4, or E5, about something like that.

Martin: Um hum. In most places of course, you have a mixture with the civilian population. Our daughter probably, in a way, had a somewhat unusual upbringing. Maybe I could trace this just a little bit for you, not at too great length, but let's say when she was a little kid, really little, we didn't live on a post. We lived in town in Colorado Springs, for example. Then we went to Ft. Knox, we were in a kind of a college atmosphere because I was in the Advanced Course and then we went to Fulda and we lived in Fulda in a requisitioned house. There weren't too many American families in Fulda, most of them lived in a community called Gelnhausen and as a result, Pamela had as many if not more German kid friends. She went to- they had sort of an American kindergarten. It was an American oriented. It was run by some Germans and she went to that for a year, but then she went to German kindergarten and when she was still too young to start American first grade, she was in the German kindergarten and the head of the Cathedral School System, an old gent, who was very French oriented, too by the way, in the Alliance Francaise, a very fine gentleman, one of the really fine guys, came to us and he said, "You know, your child should not be in kindergarten. She should be in first grade and if you are willing, I will arrange to have her start in first grade at the beginning of the year, not school year, but year, in January. He said, "She is thoroughly fluent in German and English and the

local dialect and we would really like to have her do that,” and he said “There will be no cost to you.” So she was a scholarship student as a first-grader.(laughs) At any rate, she started in the Damschule and there she had no American associates. There were no other American kids that went through it. They were all German. They were I’d say, probably, middle, middle class on up due to the area it drew on and various other considerations. Then we came back to the States and she went to school in the Anne Arundel County School System. She was one of the pioneers in the new math, by the way. Then we moved to Providence, RI and, incidentally, we did not live on the post. We lived very near it at Ft. Meade, Maryland and it was a mixture of about half and half, kids from military families and the local area. We went to Rhode Island and she went to school in the local school system and there were no military kids in her classes. They were all younger children from younger officers or – well, the Colonel didn’t have any kids at home anymore and we had another Lieutenant Colonel who was kind of an old-timer who was a bachelor. So, at any rate, then we went from there to Taiwan and she went to what known as the Taipei American School which was a private school and the diplomatic families’ kids went to it.

Mark: I was going to ask if she went to China with you.

Martin: Yeah, yeah. She was there two years and with us and she enjoyed it very much. She had long, blond braids which absolutely fascinated the Chinese and the Chinese are very polite people, but they just couldn’t overcome the wish to reach out and feel them. They never pulled them or anything, and they were so adept, like pickpockets that she didn’t usually recognize it most of the time although she started to become conscious of it and she’d turn, every now and then in the marketplace. But she’d smile, that was that. They’d smile “Aha”, you know (laughs). She went to school with officers’ kids and diplomats’ kids, a few Chinese children, not too many, but from various key governmental figures. One of the Chinese Admiral’s kids went to school with her for example. He was a Christian and he was married to an Englishwoman so their little girl was an Anglo. She was half and half. Beautiful thing. I would have loved to have seen her when she was grown up. I bet she was a raving beauty. Then we came back to the United States to Washington and she went to school in the Arlington County School System and there were a sprinkling of Army kids, but it was a kind of a normal school, but it was sort of an upscale school system at that. They had some problems once in a while with kids but not many. Mostly government people and business people and so on. Then we went to Ft. Hood, Texas and she went to school in Killeen, but there again, I don’t know what the mix was but there was probably about half Army kids, I guess, all sectors, plus the locals. Then we went back to Washington and we were there, she finished junior high and high school there in the Fairfax County School System which was another one of these northern Virginia Suburban School Systems that was pretty upscale. They had all kinds of neat stuff like the music teacher who did the band’s husband still appears in

some of these brass ensembles as a tubist, John Marsellis and Olivia was one of the horn players in the chamber ensembles who'd play in Washington among others at the Library of Congress, the one that taught the kids band. You get a lot along with a package like that. This was typical of the teachers. It was a precollege school system and then she came to the University here. So, she had --

Mark: So from what you could tell, then as she traveled around did she meet other kids that she knew from different stations, like you had done?

Martin: Not as much, not as much. A few. She has a few lifelong friends from those days, especially the northern Virginia days. She had a more civilian upbringing in some ways than I --

Mark: It sounds like it.

Martin: A lot of the kids did, a lot of these kids did. Because by the time they were preteens and teenagers, their fathers were spending a certain amount of time on staff duty in Washington, or like 5th Army used to be in Chicago, they lived -- and there again there were some quarters on the post at Ft. Sheridan but not nearly enough, so a lot of people lived in the surrounding communities, you know. The kids that really got exposed to Army life were at one of the larger posts like Ft. Knox or Ft. Hood where I was for a year, or something of this kind, but then again, at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, while they meet a lot of Army kids and one thing and another, there are a lot of quarters on the post there or West Point is another one. There they really do get a few more military or military - political associations.

Mark: I can't imagine today, that a sergeant would discipline the child of an officer on a regular Army post. I can't imagine they would have in the '60's either, do you think? As had been your case.

Martin: No, I don't -- oh, I agree with you. I would say that the mothers I'd mentioned had changed. They really had. Sometimes I used to tell stories, Army and they'd just say "They'd better not do anything like that to my child!" (laughs) Once in a while with some of 'em I'd say, "My dear madam, that's why your child acts like he or she does." (laughs) I actually did, isn't that awful? I remember one time there was a friend of mine, an Army brat, we were both, I was commanding the Cavalry Squadron, 2nd Armored Division and he was commanding a tank battalion and we were driving home to our quarters on the post which were on a large loop, the very most junior person lived on it was a Major. I mean, there were a hundred sets of quarters or something, and all the generals lived in this area. It was kind of a snooty area (laughs) and we were driving along the road leading from the main express road in the post into there and there were some kids in the car in front of us and they threw some pop cans out. So, I was driving and moved up and around and motioned them

to pull over. They pulled over. Jerry and I got out. He was a Lieutenant Colonel also. I guess it fell to my lot to – I think he had the initial words and then he sort of nodded to me and I said, “All right. This you don’t do. You don’t throw trash out on the post and you are going to go back all the way to the main road and you are going to pick up all those cans and any other trash that you find.” This one girl who was a, full colonel’s daughter said, “You can’t talk to me like that. I didn’t throw that trash out.” I said, “Listen young lady, I am talking to you that way and you better get with the program.” One of the boys, who subsequently went to West Point by the way, became a very fine officer, said, “Knock it off, let’s go.” (laughs) I mean he was a real leader and they did a pretty reputable police job. It must have taken us twenty minutes standing there watching these kids. Then Jerry said, “I suppose you all learned something.” The boys particularly said, “Yes, Sir.” (laughs) So it could be done.

Mark: Yeah.

Martin: And I was expecting to hear something about this and I asked Jerry if he ever did. Neither one of us ever heard anything about it. These kids had also learned, apparently they came from the sorts of families they learned what most of us Army brats knew, you never went home and told stories like this. That might double-up the punishment. (laughs) Double-jeopardy may have forbidden by the Constitution but it didn’t apply to Ft. Skokie (??)

Mark: We’ve got some more time left. I suppose we should just walk from the Vietnam period to your retirement then. For example, you edited Armor Magazine. How did you end up with that job?

Martin: I got the idea, looking sort of, looking toward the future as it were when I was at Ft. Hood. I thought, I really thought that it would be interesting to be in the public relations program. I well knew that I wasn’t going to get to be a general officer. There was no sense playing around with that game. Some people have this “hope springs eternal” and I figured “No, this isn’t going to happen”. But, I’d like to do something interesting, so I put in for the public affairs specialization program and they were looking for more senior officers. I was just a Lieutenant Colonel, but getting to be a more senior one and so then I didn’t hear anything back from this and I got orders to go to Korea and so then they called me from Armor Branch and said that “You know, been accepted in the Public Affairs program and you’re going to go to Korea and what would you like to do thereafter?” and I said “Well, I suppose that it would be interesting to do something in the public affairs business there in Washington. I said “You know one of the considerations is I’d like to move my family. They were in government quarters so we had to vacate those and put them somewhere where I’m going to be. Why make two moves with our daughter who was a junior in high school. This seems like the better part of reason.” They said “Yeah, we’re sympathetic to that and we’ll get back to you.” So I

went to the Inspector General's two-week course in Washington. Well, before I went there they told me "You're going to get orders to go back to Washington, to one of two places, probably to the Naval Gun Factory to the place that puts out this magazine called Soldiers or this speech writing part, you've been a speech writer as an additional duty in the Pentagon, etc., etc. We know that and so you can pretty much count on an assignment there." So I came back from Korea with orders like that. I was going to go to that unit. I can't remember what they call it. It's sort of irrelevant anyway, but they ground out a lot of stuff of varying quality I might add! (laughs) But, at any rate, I was on leave in Washington. We had bought a townhouse before I went to Korea, in northern Virginia and I got a call one day from Armor Branch and said, and it was from Armor Branch rather than from the public affairs career management guy, which was interesting, but he said he'd been talking to that functionary, and "Would I be interested at all in being the editor of the Armor?" I said, "Well, that sounds intriguing. I said, "Frankly, I think it could use a little sprucing up," and they said "Well, that's the general idea. (laughs) The current editor is going to retire." He was a reserved officer. "So we'll arrange for you to chat with the president of the Armor Association, a general by the name of Brown." I thought "Well, that's going to be fun" because Ted Brown, as he was known, was one of my uncle's closest friends. (laughs) My Artillery Colonel uncle who was then retired. General Brown was a four-star general. He was heading a special board which was studying some aspects of the Vietnam War. It was a very interesting report, by the way, which caused General Westmoreland to have conniptions. At any rate, I duly went out to the Nassir Building where his office was. You know, it was like old home week. He said, "Well, you think about this." I said, "General, I thought about it while we were talking." I said "Looking at the people that are on the Board of the Armor Association, yourself as President, what I perceive to be the needs of Armor Magazine, although I will be counting heavily on the comments of all of the units to help me, I would like to have it." That's how I got assigned. He picked up the phone while I was there and called the Chief of Armor Branch, who was a colonel by the name of Barkley, who later was at Ft. Leavenworth when I was there, just when I went there, a very, very senior Colonel by that time. Old John Barkley, we all called him Uncle John. He was terrific. And he called him up. He said "So," Col. Barkley told him he said, "We'll have to get clearance from the Public Affairs Specialist Program on this." So they did. Apparently, there wasn't much of a problem and I went there, to Armor Magazine and I stayed there four and a half years. I got promoted to Colonel and I was there as a Colonel for about a year and a half. It was a Lieutenant Colonel's job.

Mark: Until about '71 or '72 or something like that.

Martin: I was there until '71, yeah.

Mark: As you read military history about the Army, you often come across the sense that this was the time when the Army had reached its nadir in terms of the experience of Vietnam and from that point on it then started to move up in terms of quality, soldiers, equipment, that sort of thing. Was that your observation?

Martin: Well, it was a very, very, very, very interesting time. This didn't all happen overnight. When I first went to Armor right after New Years, like the 2nd or 3rd of 1967, Vietnam was still very much going on. I published a lot of material from Vietnam. A lot of the people came back from Vietnam, a lot of them I knew and there were other Armor people I got to know and among other things, generally the Armor units over in Vietnam were, for understandable reasons I think, a little – their caliber was somewhat better than the poor old infantry. They always get – the Brits call them the PBI, the Poor Bloody Infantry.(laughs) But, there were a number of young Turks. There were a number of younger Lieutenant Colonels., Majors, in the Pentagon and at West Point that had been in Vietnam and came back and they had some real concerns. These were shared by some senior people but not too damn many at the time.

Mark: Concerns about what? Discipline?

Martin: Yeah, the state of the Army. You know, I mean it just wasn't the kind of Army that they thought we ought to have. This began to appear in strange ways. Some of the most interesting ones of all in a way were book reviews.(laughs) That's a marvelous place to launch off something. It really is. Then there were some articles on things and by the time I left Armor four and a half years later, the intellectual revolution of these younger people for the most part, was well underway.

Mark: What were their major tenets? What constituted this revolution as you describe it?

Martin: Integrity. Ethics. Do away with ticket punching. Look at the whole man or woman. A band of honorable brothers. Not an appropriate milieu for cut-throat competition.

Mark: These are values that have apparently been lacking

Martin: Oh, you bet they have.

Mark: during the Vietnam period.

Martin: Oh, absolutely, absolutely! There were a lot of them that were very concerned about it. There were no voluble protagonists for those other values (laughs) so

there wasn't competition in print. A lot of them didn't want to talk about them.

Mark: So when did this revolution take hold and the Army start its --

Martin: Well, everything good happens when I retire from anywhere or get transferred. (laughs) '74 was a good year. It wasn't a turning point year. I think it really was I think in '74 – the marks were there. We got a different type of senior officer at the service schools. We did at Leavenworth, for example. Very intellectually honest people, outspoken. They did at Carlisle Barracks. One of the things I did as the Editor in Chief of Armor was I was supposed to make this sort of round every quarter or so. I went to the War College and coordinated with my colleague at Parameters, their journal. One of their editors still writes a lot, Lloyd Matthews, a really fine guy. Matt Kaufman, I know him well, was a good friend of his. They had the Assistant Commandant there I remember very much when I went on one of the visits, the Commandant was not there but this was a general by the name of Edward Meyer, "Shy" Meyer. I'd never met him, a Brig. General then, yeah. I had an appointment to spend fifteen minutes as a courtesy call. Went out just to say- he knew who I was and so on and so forth, but I hadn't met him. The Commandant wasn't there. I would have seen both of them and they made it "You know, he's got a very busy schedule" and I says, "Fifteen minutes." Two hours and a half later I got out of there. If there were ever kindred spirits it was the two of us. And he was not an Army brat. We talked about a lot of these things. I thought, "Man, the Army is in good shape having him here." Well, you know, he went on to become, in another, oh quite quickly, five years or so, the Chief of Staff of the Army. He had a lot to do with rebuilding it. There was one of the I thought were one of the real up and coming people was a guy that I ran into at West Point when I was in Armor and then when he was a student at the War College and then later on. Walt Wilmer became a Lieutenant/ General, who incidentally just retired this year from this Institute for Leadership in North Carolina. He was there about ten years after he retired from the Army. One of the things was that when Westmoreland was Chief of Staff he wanted a study done of the effects of the Vietnam War and where we should head in the future and it was one of these student study groups. Walt Wilmer was the Chairman. They made a superb study which I've actually seen. I do not have a copy. They were rare to say the least, which was sent down to Washington and Westmoreland read it and told somebody to file it and that was the last that anybody ever saw of any of the official copies. Fortunately, a couple of the guys that were on the committee, including Wilmer, saved copies and I would be very delighted if it were to be published sometime. It probably should be foreshortened and a few things, but the reason I would be delighted would be it would show that there were some of these people that realized, but they were, at that time, students at the War College. They were Lieutenant / Colonels. They've come along and some of the people following right along behind them. The very

top people in the Army now were lieutenants in Vietnam. But they were the thinking ones and the ones who, a lot of them, to its eternal credit had gone to West Point and they came out of there dyed in the wool and they've never lost, some of their colleagues did, but they've never lost those basic principles. A lot of them were very intellectual guys. The last Chief of Staff, General Sullivan was not a West Pointer. He was a Norwich graduate but, incidentally, he was the brightest graduate of Norwich I ever ran into. A lot of their people I didn't think had enormous mental capacity, (laughs) but Gordon Sullivan was really bright. It was a delight to see this. It never became hopeless but it was discouraging.

Mark: There were bleak days.

Martin: There were bleak days.

Mark: We've got 15-20 minutes, maybe.

Martin: You know, mud is not that kind of discouragement and being shot at and hit even is not that kind of discouragement and seeing your friends killed is something else again. It's one of the risks of the trade, but to see this moral pollution and to see people, you know, the "screw your buddy syndrome" setting in was terrible. And to see the noncommissioned officer corps kind of go to pot – maybe literally in some cases! (laughs) I hadn't thought of that.

Mark: In one or two cases undoubtedly!

Martin: Oh, you bet, and those things are deeply disturbing because they are a danger to the country.

Mark: I suspect it was a difficult time to actually retire. Of course things had started to look up as you indicated.

Martin: They were very positive. Incidentally, the Commandant of the Commander General Staff College wanted to civilianize my position and have me stay there as the Editor of the Military Review, a process which took place with Lloyd Matthews at the War College later on. He was a Colonel and retired and stayed on as a civilian. But I argued against this. I told General Cushman I did not think it was a good idea at all. Recognizing fully [End of Side B, Tape 8. Ca. 30 min.] that some of my successors would be people of varying outlooks maybe and varying degrees of ability, but I want to say and I would like to go on record as saying that most of them were better men than I am, Gunga Din, thank God! They had a better education. They were children of a different age with an even more international outlook than I'd had, which I wasn't brought up with but they had been. I developed one fairly early on, even at the time I was at the University and so on, but I had a geopolitical outlook but these people were even better and very, very articulate. Some of

them, were – there were four or five of them including the guy who just left, who was the editor, whom I did not know. I knew some of them and had more than a bit to do with one of them going out (laughs) and two of them going in. I shouldn't say that. I was-- one of my successors I really felt was in the wrong place (laughs), and you could see it on the page. I didn't write about this. I (unintelligible) about this.

Mark: After you retired you came back to Wisconsin of all places.

Martin: Well, I was born here.

Mark: Yeah. When I think of retirement I think of going to a warm weather place.

Martin: Oh, no, I could see –

Mark: You came back to the freezing cold tundra here and I'm interested in what possessed you to do such a thing.

Martin: One thing, I sort of maintained a philosophical attachment to Wisconsin in a way and I always paid my taxes, which a lot of people said I was nuts, including one of my uncles in Wisconsin. (laughs)

Mark: That wasn't inconsiderable, I'm sure.

Martin: No, that's right. It really –

Mark: I paid State taxes, obviously it was on an Airman's pay, but --

Martin: There were all kinds of places you could escape to including my wife's home state, South Dakota. That was one thing and another thing was I'd always been very much, -- we both sort of liked Madison. I had been here when I was in college and we came back here a few times just on vacations looking around. My wife liked it, what she saw of it and we had a couple of friends here. That didn't have all that much to do with it. But I wanted to do something in the history field and I was not a scholar. I did not have a Ph.D. and so on and so forth and so naturally the thing I was inclined toward was getting something in management, administration type thing. I got wind of this possibility at the Historical Society here and there was another one at the Historical Society in Minnesota and I actually went to both places, applied and all these good things. I was offered a job at each on the same day.

Mark: You chose our fair city here.

Martin: I chose this one. You know this is odd and it sounds kind of self-serving or something. I had a propensity to look around for situations that I thought

needed help (laughs) or doing. I thought this one was the greater institution historically, certainly.

Mark: The State Historical Society here, huh?

Martin: Uh hmm. But I also thought it needed the most help.

Mark: In what sense?

Martin: I thought the one at Minnesota was much better managed, far better and for good and sufficient reasons and I still feel the same way. At that time I think that was definitely true and a lot of it was because of a gentleman they had there who really ran their administrative services, a gent by the name of John Wood. Here they had no administrative services division. They had all these little functions here, there and elsewhere, that were sort of coordinated by the associate director, but that's not really his realm either. Shouldn't be. In fact the first thing I did was to sell the notion of putting together an administrative services division and it worked out well. That's how I came to come here as much as anything. We both liked to cross-country ski real well. I've had to give it up unfortunately, but my wife still does. She was out the other day, bless her heart.

Mark: Good day for it.

Martin: Yes, it was. She said it was gorgeous. The day after the snow, I guess it was, when it was sunny and so on. So, that's kind of how we happened to come here and I've enjoyed it. There are lots of interesting people.

Mark: I guess you can say that about Madison, that's true. In these interviews I normally ask veterans whether or not they've joined veterans organizations after the war, attended reunions and that sort of thing. In your case, did you ever join the Legion? Attend a reunion at some point?

Martin: I belong to the American Legion but I don't belong to a post, I belong to the State post.

Mark: What possessed you to join?

Martin: Oh, you won't ever believe this. There are a few places where the American Legion still has some nice club houses including, I guess, the one in Milwaukee and I think they are about to give up.

Mark: I think it is actually –

Martin: Is it gone now?

Mark: Closed, yeah. The Cudworth.

- Martin: Um-hum. The Cudworth. That was very nice. It was a nice place to go and dine and so on and so forth and you didn't have too many of the drunks there and one thing and another. As far as other veterans organizations are concerned, I belong to the Division Association and there's a sort of an informal group, the rifle company that I was in in that division.
- Mark: What possessed you to join these groups?
- Martin: Oh, I don't know. Some of the people were, I thought, fascinating and they belonged. I suppose I would have joined just to support the Division Association. Ours was the last Armored Division to have an association. When I was the editor of *Armor*, I used to print the reunion notices for all these others and we didn't have one. I thought that was terrible. I think that was mainly it and I've been to some of the reunions of both of those and I also belong to the U.S. Constabulary Association which is veterans of the rather short period as a matter of fact, '47-'48 that exists and I've been to a couple of their things. I'm not a professional veteran. My father wasn't one at all. He never did join the 7th Armored Division Association and they were really after him to do so.
- Mark: It's really interesting because World War I veterans were kind of notorious for being professional veterans.
- Martin: Oh, they exist.
- Mark: They did it whole hog and the World War II veterans were much less apt to do that, at least until they got into their middle age.
- Martin: There are some real professionals though.
- Mark: Oh, sure.
- Martin: I mean they have license plate borders and some states they have special license, well they even do here – you can't read them from ten feet away, (laughs) but they, there's a lot of that sort of stuff. The airborne people I think and then some of the divisions are just more so than others. The 1st Division has always been that way. It probably started with World War I. It's always been a strong association and feelings for it. I don't belong to the Division Association but I feel a lot of loyalties toward the Division and my dad did, too. We were both peacetime participants. I belong to some of the military associations still like the Association of the U.S. Army and I belong to I guess several of the historical things. I'm still a member of the U.S. Commission on Military History. I was one of the founders of the darn thing. And, the Council on Americas Military Past which used to be more post oriented. I was president of that for a couple of terms. I was the first one that ever served

multiple terms as the president as a matter of fact. Let's see. What other things would be? Those are the principal ones I guess. Some of the things have kind of faded. There was an organization known as Scabbard and Blade for Advanced Corps students, a military fraternity for Advanced Corps Students, which was founded at the University of Wisconsin here. Company A of the 1st Regiment was here and the flagpole, if you look carefully at the flagpole

Mark: In front of the Historical Society?

Martin: front of the Historical Society was given by Scabbard and Blade.

Mark: It sounds vaguely familiar. I have perhaps read that and not made a connection.

Martin: That used to be the parade ground, there, by the way.

Mark: Yeah.

Martin: You know the Armory was the Armory and one of the towers they had these racks around for the rifles and sabers and I belonged to Company A of the 1st Regiment of Scabbard and Blade. I still have a key. They had an alumni group for a long time and it just kind of died. As a matter of fact, Scabbard and Blade has just kind of died. And Pershing Rifles which was for the undergraduates, or the freshmen and sophomores. I never belonged to that. That sort of thing I think has sort of gone out. The Association of the U.S. Army to which I belong has companies at a lot of the ROTC units. I don't know if they have one here or not. If they do it's

Mark: I have no idea.

Martin: kind of undercover. (laughs) I have more to do with the Navy ROTC unit than I do with the Army one because they very kindly make available their classrooms to us for Coast Guard Auxiliary boating safety courses. So I get down there - in fact, one of their chiefs was one of our instructors. He's a good navigational instructor, really good.

Mark: You've pretty much exhausted my line of questions. Anything you'd like to add or anything?

Martin: No, not that I can think of. If I think of some things or find some things I'll let you know.

Mark: You know where to find us.

Martin: Yeah. Absolutely.

Mark: It's been an enjoyable eight hours talking with you.

Martin: Gosh, it doesn't seem that long.

Mark: I think that's what it ends up to being.

Martin: Yeah.

Mark: Well, thanks very much for coming in.

Martin: Pretty good.

[End of Interview]