

connect Lake Erie with the Ohio River, but nothing ever happened with it.

Q: But, you did get involved with it?

A: Oh, yes, a little bit.

Q: Okay. Well, I've got two dates, maybe you can help me out here. I have September '36 that you entered Engineer school, and then in your biography I have July '37. I'm not certain which is correct--can you recall when you entered the Engineer school?

A: Well, I was married on the 21st of July 1936, and of course took leave for the honeymoon, and reported into Fort Belvoir in 1936.

Q: Yes, I think that works out right. September '36. Then you graduated in July '37.

A: Yes.

Q: What was the value of your experience at the Engineer school? Did you think you got a worthwhile education?

A: It's a rounding out process--no matter what your work had been in a District, and not too many officers had District experience, I mean in the Corps, at my grade. But, it was a rounding out experience for all of us. I hadn't had any military experience except that time at Fort DuPont, and it brought you up in studies and theory of the responsibilities of, let us say, a major or lieutenant colonel. In other words, you studied the broader aspects of handling battalions and so on and so forth, but also, very deep engineering studies, too. Civil works oriented.

Q: Did you make any acquaintances there with people who you maintained friendships with later on?

A: Oh, yes. Bill Ely was one that was in my class. Oh, if I had the picture I could tell you more of them, but--I was a new bridegroom!

Q: After you graduated from the Engineer school in July of 1937 you became an assistant professor of military science and tactics at Ohio State

University. Were you happy with that assignment?

A: Well, during the time I was there my two children were born. I was a captain at that time, and, incidentally, it's the only time in my military career that I saved money! But, I liked it. It was a great experience. When I went there, I was 31 years old but, it was a great experience having to do with students, I mean young people. And, my first year there I taught the freshman classes and sophomore classes in ROTC. Sometimes those classes would have 200 or 300 people in them, and the courses were stipulated, I mean, the courses that ROTC students took were stipulated, and the students were there taking ROTC for the so many dollars a month they got, really. And, not only that, they had to take it. Nevertheless it was interesting to deal with them, and I enjoyed that first year no end. My second and third years I was put into the junior and senior classes; those who were going for commissions. And that was more fun than anything, because the classes were small, and we were able to become personally involved with the students themselves, and we, of course, had to rate them. They were going for commissions, and they were interested in getting a commission in the Reserves.

That was really very interesting, and I was very fond of it and life in the university, which then had only about 10,000 students. It was not like going to a huge university today, of course. In my last year I was made officer in charge of the military band, and you see, a student in ROTC could get credit if he was in the military band. He didn't have to go out and drill every day and that sort of thing, you know. But, the military band was the football band, and in order for it to receive credit--for the people to get credit for ROTC--there had to be an officer in charge of the band, and I was it, and I used to travel with the band when we went to Minnesota and Lansing, Michigan, and so on and so forth. I enjoyed it.

Q: Do you think more students were joining ROTC at the time because of the clouds of war that were gathering?

A: No. No. As I say, it was required, it was a land grant college, and subsequently during the war I

bumped into two or three of the people who had gotten commissions while I was there instructing. I think the strength of our Army, in case of any dire emergency, is going to be the Reserves, and of course the National Guard, but the Reserves are really the foundation upon which we've got to build. I've heard that it's becoming more popular in the last few years than it was during the time of Vietnam and that might be one thing that will facilitate forming a larger Army when, as, and if it becomes necessary.

Q: In September 1940 you were appointed Executive Officer of the 16th Engineer Battalion at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and the following April '41, you became the Executive Officer of the 22d Armored Engineer Battalion at Camp Pine, New York. I'm wondering if you can tell us about your experiences during this time?

A: Well, one thing was a precursor to that. All of a sudden the clouds of war started to show up a little bit, and the 5th Corps, which was stationed, headquartered, in Columbus, Ohio, was sent on maneuvers in western Wisconsin. And I was ordered, with several other officers, not involved with the ROTC and Ohio State, to go out to LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and make arrangements to open up real estate for those maneuvers, and I spent about, oh, I guess two months doing that before I came back and found myself ordered to Fort Knox. I was anxious to get in the Armored Force because it involved a brand new concept of engineering, and I went there and the then commander of, I guess it was the 24th Engineers, was Bruce Clarke. And Bruce Clarke was, as you well know, one of our outstanding officers. He not only was an Engineer, but he became a great tactical leader during World War II. During that time all the planning that had been done by myself and others, that without a war we would eventually retire as lieutenant colonels, changed rapidly because I went from captain to major very rapidly there at Fort Knox.

I was there about a year when the 4th Armored Division was formed, and it was sent up to Camp Pine, which is now called Fort Drum, I believe, and Bruce Clarke went up there as commander of the battalion, and myself and several other officers,