
Engineer Memoirs
MAJOR GENERAL HUGH J. CASEY

Childhood and West Point Years

Q: Could you tell me about your childhood in Brooklyn?

A: Well, there's not too much, I think, to say about that.

I went through the public schools and got through fairly fast. I was skipped four times, so I was graduated at the age of 11. Then from there I went to Manual Training High School and was graduated there at the age of 15. I won a New York State scholarship and entered Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, taking civil engineering. I was there only during the freshman year, when I took a competitive examination for West Point given by Congressman Daniel J. Griffin, who was chairman of the Military Affairs Committee at that time. And out of 62 competitors I happened to come out first, so I got my appointment to West Point.

Q: What led you to be interested in engineering as a field of study?

A: Just instinct, not that I knew anybody particularly in the field. I just was interested in engineering and building and construction.

Q: What led you to be interested in seeking an appointment to West Point?

A: I had, of course, heard of Army and West Point, being in the New York area; and I was interested in Army football and interested in the military. We didn't have the war in prospect at that time, so it wasn't because of the influence of the war. But I just had a desire to go to the Point since late childhood.

Q: Do you recall anything specifically about what it was like to grow up in Brooklyn? Your friends?

A: Brooklyn at that time was unlike what it is now. We were living out in Bay Ridge, and just a short distance from our house we would go down to the woods and have picnics, play baseball, football, etcetera.

Of course, now where we lived is all developed and the houses are all close together. But it was a different league then from what it is now. I made many friends among the youngsters with whom I played.

Q: What did your father do for a living?

A: He was a plumbing and heating contractor. And quite busy and quite successful. Unfortunately, he died young, but he lived through my graduation from West Point. And I had three brothers and one sister. All three brothers went into law. After I won my appointment to West Point, I felt very thankful to Congressman Griffin, who had given me the appointment. He hadn't given it to me outright, as I had won it by competition. But after I got there, I was rather grateful and I used to send him football tickets, and I wrote to him frequently about my progress and so on. He was quite pleased about that compared to the appointments he had given previously to others from whom he had never heard anything more.

When my brother Martin wanted to go to West Point, I don't think he could have won an appointment in the competitive exam. He wasn't overly brilliant academically. In fact, he had started in public school a year ahead of me, and I had finished a year ahead of him. But Congressman Griffin, I think, was so pleased at the way I had reacted to his appointment that he appointed him directly, so that Martin also went to West Point.

Q: Now how long did he stay in the Army?

A: He served 11 years in the cavalry and coast artillery. But he was subject to terrific migraine headaches, and when he was on duty down in the Canal Zone the migraine headaches became very severe. He was sent to Walter Reed and then to a hospital out on the West Coast, but apparently they

couldn't do anything for him and he was retired for physical disability. After his retirement he took a law course out on the coast and went into law and other related activities and was very, very successful as a lawyer and in general business.

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about your family background as far as when they may have come to this country?

A: On my father's side, his grandparents had come from Ireland and England. His grandfather served in the Civil War on the Union side and was killed at Shiloh. On my mother's side, her parents came over from Ireland and then settled in Pennsylvania.

Q: What was West Point like during the summer of 1915?

A: Of course it was small compared to what it is now. Our class was small [137 graduates]; the Corps of Cadets was small. Everybody got to know almost everyone else, unlike today when you have an entering class alone of almost a thousand.

So we were a tightly knit group. I felt the spirit among the cadets was excellent. I think everybody was pulling toward a common purpose. There were a few incidents that happened that you might be interested in.

Actually, I went in under age. You were supposed to be 17 when you entered West Point, and I was only 16. My birthday was July 24. So I would not be 17 until July 24, whereas we entered on June 15. My congressman was chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, and I naturally thought he knew what it was all about. He said, "YOU have to have another birthday before June 15." So I said, "Well, my brother's birthday is on June 7." He said, "All right, that's your birthday." So I'm one of those who went in illegally, you might say. Actually it would have been possible for me to have gone in with my correct age, and the only thing would be I wouldn't get the \$40 or \$50 a month, which was all you got during that period; then I'd be eligible for the payment at the correct date.

But anyway, I entered with my birthday supposedly as of June 7. Now oddly enough, later on when my brother Martin got his appointment to West

Point, we had two Caseys on the Army list just exactly one year apart. Our family was really clicking.

Q: Who were your best friends during your plebe year?

A: My best friend was Lucius Clay, my roommate and classmate. We first of all went into “Beast Barracks” and they put us through the maneuvers of drawing equipment and whatnot. We were lined up according to height because they were grouping the cadet companies by height. I was in the file immediately behind him. He was in front and I was in back—he turned around, looked at me, and said, “How about being my roommate?” So I said, “Fine.” So we became roommates and deep friends from then on. That gave me an opportunity to know him very intimately. And we remained roommates all the way through graduation.

I might bring out one little incident about Lucius. He wasn’t too hot in the field of discipline and he was getting many demerits. Once he thought it was because the tactical officer who gave him many of his demerits was very much interested in a girl that Lucius also was interested in. And he sort of felt that this tactical officer was giving him more demerits than he should have.

In any case, it was toward the end of our first-class year, approaching graduation, and Lucius had only about, oh, I don’t know, about eight or ten demerits still to go. If you ran over this upper limit, that would mean you’d be deficient in conduct. And if you’re deficient in any one subject, including conduct, you’re turned back to the next class or discharged.

Well, we were very concerned about what to do, so I decided that I’d be the room orderly for the rest of the period, for several months prior to graduation, so that when we had our daily tactical room inspection and they found anything wrong, I’d get the demerits instead of Lucius. That happened over about two months, and I got the demerits. The week before graduation I got a charge for ‘failing to change my name as room orderly’ on such-and-such an inspection. In other words, the tactical officer was letting me know that even though I had been doing this and taking the demerits, he wanted us to know that he had been observing this all the time and stuck me with a couple of extra demerits just for it. In any case, Lucius was graduated.

Up at the Point I was relatively young and light, but I nevertheless tried to go out for athletics. I tried out for basketball, track, football, and wrestling. I did get on the football squad and the team, but I weighed only about 158. As I say, I was just a kid compared to the others. But I still made the squad and was playing halfback. As halfback, I was substitute for Elmer Q. Oliphant. I don't know whether you've heard of him, but Elmer Q. Oliphant was an All-American. He had been All-American at Purdue University and was graduated from there with a degree in civil engineering, a bachelor of science in civil engineering. He then entered West Point in the class ahead of ours but flunked out in plebe math his first year. This indicates, possibly, how some civilian schools handle their football athletes, whereas at West Point you had to meet rigid academic standards. So he was turned back to our class and was assigned to a room just across the hall from me. I was rather good in math and other subjects, so it was my job to help Ollie to try to keep him proficient. This wasn't anything improper, like disclosing what the exams were or anything like that. It was actually tutoring and trying to get him to concentrate on math and other subjects.

I was also substitute for him on the football squad. As long as Ollie was proficient academically, he could play and that meant I was a sub. And if he were not proficient in his studies, then of course he would not be eligible to play and maybe I'd be on the first team. Well, I figured it was much better to have Army win the football games than to hold back on his tutoring, so we kept Oliphant proficient all the time.

During the games, anytime that it was my turn to go in as substitute for Ollie, as he came out and I went in there was a tremendous applause from all those in the stadium. Of course, it wasn't because of my entering the game, but naturally applause for Ollie, for his outstanding performance; but it was nice to hear an ovation as I entered each game.

After my yearling year I was selected to be a cadet corporal, in fact the ranking cadet corporal in the company. This meant that the next year possibly, if everything went well, I would be the cadet captain or other high-ranking cadet officer. I was also in the choir. In 1917, after the outbreak of World War I, the choir was invited down to New York to give three concerts. Travel then was by train. And on the way down there were three other classmates with me who decided, well, maybe our voices wouldn't be missed in the recitals, so we decided it might be a good idea to enjoy the night on the town. So [George B.] Aigeltinger, [Roland] Stenzel,

[Jacob G.] Sucher, and I, when the cadet choir debarked, instead of going with them, we ducked off. Then the next afternoon—this was on a weekend, a Saturday and a Sunday—at six o'clock we showed up at the station for formation and of course back to the Point.

We had thought they wouldn't be calling roll calls, when we were all down there only to sing. But they did have roll calls and we had missed three formations. So we were 'skinned' and had to answer the delinquency reports, and of course all I could do was say the report's correct.

As a result, I was 'busted' from cadet corporal to cadet private; given 66 punishment tours and a flock of demerits, and three months' confinement, which meant that you could not go to dances or other activities outside of your regular academic schedule but [were] restricted to your room through otherwise free time. So as a result, I was not made a cadet officer when the promotions came due. But to make it even worse, this happened shortly before June 1917, and that was the time we normally would have had our summer furloughs authorized at the end of two academic years. But because of the war, it had been decided that our class was not going to get its furlough, but continue on, studying on a compressed schedule.

Well, one morning at reveille, the adjutant rose and announced, "with the exception of cadets [Francis J.] Achatz, Aigeltinger, Stenzel, Sucher, and Casey, furlough is granted to the second class effective after breakfast." So we were going to lose furlough as well. However, about three or four days later they apparently relented and they let us off on furlough; but when we got back we had to go into our three months restricted confinement and finish up our 66 punishment tours. Naturally I was not later made a cadet lieutenant or a cadet captain, and in fact it wasn't until shortly before graduation that they made me a cadet sergeant.

Q: How did you do in your football career?

A: As I said, I was much too young and much too light. I did pretty well in the few games in which I played; I mean, I was able to make some good yardage and so on, but I naturally never approached anything like becoming an All-American. But we did win.

Q: Do you remember, or did you get to know, any of the members of the class of 1916?

A: Yes. We particularly knew those who were on the beast barracks detail. New cadets spent the first three or four weeks in beast barracks before being sent to summer camp with the rest of the corps. In beast barracks they assigned some of the senior class and also a few of the junior members of the previous graduated class. Among those I knew, there was Notley DuHamel, Bill Coffin, Dick Worsham, and several others whose names I can't recall.

But we did know, of course, the class of '16 throughout our plebe year. The class of '15 had graduated as we entered. The class of '17 was graduated in April '17, shortly after the outbreak of the war. And then our class was graduated a year early in June '18.

Q: There wasn't much opportunity then for a plebe to get to know any of the upperclassmen?

A: No, you had no opportunity to know the upperclassmen at that time as there was no recognition between the upper classes and the plebes. The plebe treatment was moderately severe, I think, compared to what it later got to be. For instance, if something went wrong, you'd have to run up and down the three flights of the barracks with some upperclassman barking at you on each landing to have you run up faster, double time. Sometimes they'd give you a laundry bag full of laundry, carrying that running up and down. And then they'd have you stand up and brace for a long period; treatment was fairly rough but never physical.

Q: Do you believe that the move toward a more moderate policy, away from the kind of hazing you received, is wise?

A: Well, it probably doesn't do any harm. However, I think that those cadets who really wanted to see it through could easily stand the punishment that you got in the hazing. I mean, it was rough but it wasn't anything that approached being unbearable. I think that some reasonable change in it is proper, but I hate to see too much of a reduction from the standards that were there when we were there.

For instance, we were not permitted to smoke, we were not permitted to have any money. You didn't have a Christmas leave until the second Christmas you were there. You had no weekend passes. YOU were not permitted, of course, to have a car; you were not even permitted to ride on the post in a car. So if you had escorted somebody to a hop, you'd have to leave her at the hotel, walking there and back.

One time, after we came back from furlough, I thought I had turned in all the money that I had, what little I had, and yet there was one little dime left which I left on the locker shelf. Somehow or other the tactical officer saw it and I was "skinned" for having "money in my possession," just this one dime that was left over. As I said, we were not allowed any money, so as a result, if you had a date up there, you couldn't take her down and buy ice cream, candy, or other things for her. She had to get the refreshments or whatnot and entertain you at the hotel. So it was sort of a "slug" on the dates who came up there, because they had to do the entertaining other than dances and athletic events. But they seemed to like it and always came back and there seemed to be a long waiting list of those who wanted to come.

Incidentally, speaking of cigarettes, I didn't smoke at that time, but Lucius Clay did. We were on the fourth floor as plebes. When the tactical officer came in for evening inspection, we'd hear a loud hock on the door down on the first floor. That was the signal for Lucius to stop smoking and get rid of the cigarette. We'd open the window and get a towel and try to shake the smoke away.

At that time young men used talcum powder after shaving, so we'd spread some talcum powder through the air to try to get rid of the cigarette smoke odor and get back and be studying by the time the tactical officer got up to our floor and to our room. One night our tactical officer came through but didn't say anything. But the next day, I think I was the room orderly, I was skinned for 'odor of cigarette smoke in the room at 8 P.M. inspection.' They were harsh on cigarette smoking and reported even traces of having done so.

Q: Do you remember particularly any of the tactical officers?

A: Well, we had Willie Wilbur, class of 1912. He was professor of athletics and was over in the gymnasium. We used to call him the "little boy tat,"

as we thought he was overly military. His military posture and bearing were always perfect. The corps was small, so he would get to know the names of everybody there. He used to give particular attention to Mr. Casey and Mr. Clay, at least we thought so, because in different formations he'd holler to us about either standing up straight or getting your chest up higher, or chin in or something similar. But later we got to know him very well and all regarded him as an outstandingly fine officer. Later on he won the Medal of Honor over in Europe [North Africa] during World War II with an exceptionally fine record.

We did have another tactical officer, and he was sort of slow mentally. I remember one time they published an order which said the class would be divided into thirds. The first third would have riding at so and so, the second third would go to such and such at a certain time, the third third would go to something else at that time, and the fourth third would go elsewhere. He came up with an order about four thirds, with the first third from cadet A to so and so; then the second third from cadet G to so and so; etcetera. But he still showed four thirds.

Q: Do you remember who that was?

A: No, he was an infantry officer; he was not an engineer, of course. Oh, our Commandant of Cadets, everybody admired him. He was George Simonds, later a general officer--just Major Simonds then. He was just perfection and commanded everybody's respect.

Our superintendent had been [Brigadier] General [Clarence P.] Townsley. He was the father of Clarence Townsley, who was one of our classmates. But after him, when the war broke, they called back to active duty a Colonel [Samuel E.] Tillman. He was very quiet and was called back from retirement, as a former professor of chemistry, to fill the slot.

We had on the instructors' staff Major [Cleveland C.] Gee. He was an engineer. He was soft spoken, very quiet, but he was a very fine instructor. For our French teacher we had Major Geoffrey Keyes--he was also football coach. At that time they didn't have officers who were assigned just as football coach, so the football coach was also one of the instructors. He was an instructor in French. He was a better football coach, I think, than he was a French professor, because he used to say--for instance, when telling us to

go to the blackboard, instead of saying “*allez au...*,” he’d say, “*allez-vous au...*.” He’d put the “vous” in. In other words, he was asking, “are you going, or will you be going, to the blackboard,” instead of giving the instruction to go there, and yet he was a French instructor. During World War II he distinguished himself as an Army corps commander, rising to the rank of lieutenant general.

Our principal French instructor was Mr. Vautier, a true Frenchman. Not only was he head of the French Department, but he was also Master of the Sword, so he taught fencing as well as French. In addition to that, he was our dancing instructor. At that time plebes had to learn dancing, with cadets dancing with cadets. Sometimes you were the male, sometimes you were the female. But indicative of the personnel and the shortages of personnel, they had this Monsieur Vautier as head of the French department, master instructor of the sword, and also our dancing teacher.

We also had a wrestling coach, Tom Jenkins, who had been world heavyweight wrestling champion. Tom Jenkins had one eye that had a sort of, cast so that one eye would look forward and the other eye would look slantwise. He got that when he was wrestling with another world champion, Gotch. He used to tell us, referring to his eye injury, that “any guy what would put another guy’s eye out ain’t no gent.” Tom Jenkins did not use perfect English, but everybody loved him. He was a great big rugged man. He was also teaching boxing. Sometimes he’d have the class of cadets lined up while he was going to demonstrate some punch or counter-punch. So he’d look over and someone would think he was looking at him when it was actually somebody elsewhere. So looking at someone with his slant eyes, he would say, “come forward,” and because the person who was being directed thought he was looking at someone else, he didn’t come out. Well, then he would have to say it again and by that time he felt a little peevish, so when he got the cadet to whom he was actually referring to come out, he was a little angry. So as a result, in giving him the normally mild instruction, why he would give it a little bit harder and somebody would get a harder instruction blow than he otherwise would have received.

Q: Do you remember specifically any of your engineering instructors?

A: I can see them though I can’t recall them now. Though I recall that I was doing fairly well in academics. The first year I was tenth; but the next year

I was number four, and then the next year number two, and the first-class year I was number one in overall academics. I was graduated as a “distinguished graduate”—a designation applied to those who average 92 percent or more on all subjects throughout the entire course.

Q: What was the effect of the declaration of war in April 1917 upon the corps?

A: The entire corps was at lunch in the mess hall and the cadet adjutant, Matt Ridgway, rose and then read the statement that we were at war, whereupon there were rousing cheers. Everybody looked forward to early graduation, because we felt that before long we had to get out and get into it. As a result, and within weeks, they graduated the class of '17 on April 30. We all looked forward to getting out and into the war. Some of us put in sort of a mass request for early graduation or for leave to get out into the service because we visualized this as the one war we were ever going to see. We hadn't had one since the Spanish-American War, and this one, we were sure, was going to be the last war and the last opportunity we'd ever have. So we were all very, very anxious to get into it.

Of course, the authorities indicated that they'd decide when and how and what they should do for our entry into the war. They did release the class of '17 within weeks and the class of '18 a year early, in August of '17. Our class, which was due to graduate in June '19, was graduated June '18. In the interim they compressed our courses so that we did have both the scheduled second-class and first-class year courses. They pushed them up to a rather heavy intensive schedule covering those same subjects.

Q: Was there any slacking off in the disciplinary requirements to make up for the accelerated schedule?

A: No. As I previously indicated, we were concerned that Lucius Clay was facing possible failure in discipline in conduct so that I took over as room orderly to take his possible demerits, because we were afraid that if he did exceed his limit in number of demerits, he actually would be discharged or turned back into the next class. Whether or not they would have done that, I don't know, but he was faced with that.

One thing they did do, however, was to transfer a number of the instructors to active duty with the forces outside and brought in other instructors. I don't think that the new instructors were the same type as those whom they were relieving to go out into combat service. They were men possibly who they [the War Department] felt were best qualified for academic instruction rather than combat activity.

Q: How much do you think that the acceleration may have either helped or harmed your education and career?

A: I don't think that it affected us too much, certainly our class. The two classes after us—the classes of '20 and '21 —were graduated on 1 November 1918. I think it definitely affected them, particularly the class of '21. I think that was recognized in that the '21 class—graduated on November 1, 1918, shortly before the Armistice—was then called back as second lieutenants to finish up a second academic year. So they had just two years, the last year of which was as second lieutenants instead of cadets. No, I think it did affect them, just having really one year of academic training before they were graduated. But then they were sent back, as I say, for the second year to partially make up for it.

Q: How much instruction did you receive in the type of combat that was going on in Europe?

A: I think there's a little misconception about education at West Point. I think the public thinks that here's a military school; you're sent up there to learn primarily about war and the military and whatnot. Now as a matter of fact, the great bulk of the courses are in math, English, physics, and subjects like those. There's relatively very little, percentagewise, of the whole academic course that evolves around war or combat. There are, of course, some military-type courses: ordnance and gunnery, military engineering, and military history. During the summer training periods you received primarily military instruction. Currently the cadets are sent to the various service schools for summer combat training including instruction in flying, too, which of course we didn't have when we were there.

But other than the practical exercises you get during the summer, and of course the drill you got otherwise in parades and going to mess and back in

formation, combat training is really a relatively small part of the total. I think the academic objective was to give a good sound academic education in addition to basic military discipline and leadership. Based on observations later, I considered West Point's academic instruction superior to that of other civilian institutions. For instance, in 1922-26 I was on ROTC duty at the University of Kansas, with freshman to senior engineer classes. I'd be giving them examinations and I was astounded at the answers I'd get from college students. On one paper, for example, I think I had about 60-odd corrections just in spelling or grammar on a single page, and similarly on other pages. I felt that certainly, as far as KU was concerned, while their instruction may have included some specialized technical subjects, they didn't cover, I think, the subject as thoroughly or cover the basics to the extent that you had at West Point.

I think that anyone who went through West Point had a good foundation in math, in English, and basic academics or else he wouldn't have gotten through. I think in most of the civilian schools there's a lot of lectures with the students attending the lecture but without the requirement of performing every day. Up at West Point, in whatever subject it was—for instance in math—you performed every day. You went up to the blackboard, you had this problem and you put it on the blackboard and you had to go through it, explain and solve it, and you were rated on it. You were rated on each assignment each day. You had to perform. It wasn't a case of sitting back and listening to a lecture, or reading some text, and then at the end of the term taking an examination, and if you passed that exam, it was assumed that you had fully covered the subject.

I think the instruction at West Point, certainly when we were there, was very intensive. We had only ten students to each section, permitting virtually individual instruction. We had one instructor for each ten cadets, which of course is impossible in civilian universities where that amount of instructor or professorial talent could not be provided.

Q: I'll ask you now about some of your classmates at West Point—only in reference to what you remember of them at West Point, unless you want to take it further. The first one I want to ask you about is John Paul Dean, but with him we could probably take it up to the end of what you remember and what happened to him.

A: John Paul was a very brilliant student. He had been to Worcester Tech [Worcester Polytechnic Institute], I believe, for three years before he came to West Point, so he had had most of the basic subjects that we had in our early years. He had covered math thoroughly and had had French and some of the other science courses. We had one course in mechanical drawing. I did extremely well in that because I could draw well, but John Paul wasn't at the top of the class in drawing. He didn't do nearly as well at that as he did in the other academic courses. He was the editor of our *Howitzer* and did an outstanding job at that. I was on the *Howitzer* staff with him, in charge of the biographies that we had for each of the class in the yearbook. Do you want to discuss his career later, too?

Q: If you want to at this point.

A: Later, of course, I got to know John Paul quite well. He was in the Corps of Engineers. In 1926 I succeeded him on his assignment in the Pittsburgh District on the Pittsburgh flood control survey project. He had initiated some of the studies, but I felt that they hadn't gone really as far as they might have gone, as there was yet nothing in the way of a report other than the field investigations on some of the flood control reservoirs that were under consideration. Upon his relief he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Engineers.

In the Chief's Office he became a specialist in flood control, particularly on the Mississippi River flood control under Colonel Graves, Colonel Ernest "Pot" Graves, class of 1905, who had been retired for defective hearing and had also been an outstanding football line coach up at West Point and was in charge of the flood control studies. John Paul became the recognized specialist in this field and was very active in connection with the studies that we had on the Mississippi River and its flood control. He was in the Chief's Office during the period 1929-33, when I was on the Rivers and Harbors desk, where we got to know each other intimately.

Tragically, when World War II broke out, I think John Paul, who was more of a student and a research type than a military type, felt disappointed at not being selected, in spite of his brilliance, for some important military assignment. I assume it worked on him, and he committed suicide [at Louisville, Kentucky], a tragic loss of an outstandingly brilliant man.

Q: What about Pat Timothy?

A: Tim was quite a bright young chap. He graduated second in the class. He also had gone to college several years before he went to the Point. He was a French linguist and did exceedingly well in French, which of course gave him a lot of high academic credits in connection with our competition for relative class standing.

Tim did not engage in any athletics. He didn't try out for football or wrestling or other such sports. But I remember one thing about Tim. In the early gymnasium classes, one of the things we had to do was to grab a rope suspended vertically from the ceiling and pull yourself up several body lengths. Well, poor Pat Timothy was sort of rotund around the tummy and not very strong in his arms, and I can see him pulling on the rope and he just couldn't raise himself off the ground, let alone climb.

Tim was, of course, a very bright boy and, as I understand it, did very well during the war as chief engineer with Twelfth Army Group [General Omar N. Bradley]. When he retired in 1946, he went into business down in the Louisiana area. I believe he got some patents on some of his developments and was quite successful in either consulting engineering or with whatever firm it was that he was operating.

Q: How about Patrick Tansey?

A: Pat Tansey was a little dynamo. He was quite bright and very active. He did go in for wrestling and gymnastics and was very good at both. You know, aggressive and quick. He also was a member of the so-called *dirty dozen*. We had Hugh Murrill, who was our cadet adjutant, and there were some of the others who were on the upper levels of the cadet staff. And some members of our class, including Lucius Clay—he was a member of the dirty dozen - Hans Kramer, Pat Tansey, and several others, somehow or other sort of felt that the cadet staff was exercising too much authority or acting like a group apart. They felt that we should get together against them, how I don't know. But I can see Pat Tansey getting up on a soapbox and orating very enthusiastically and dynamically on the subject. He was sort of the active leader of the so-called dirty dozen. I don't think that he had anything materially against the upper cadet staff; it was just his feeling

that we shouldn't kowtow to those members of our class who were in the upper layer of cadet colonel and so on.

Pat, too, served most ably in World War II in the Operations Division of the War Department general staff. The Operations Division at that time reviewed projects in connection with allocating supplies to the different theaters and their requirements. We liked Pat because he felt that the Pacific Theater was actually carrying on a war all the time, in contrast to the European Theater, where with the exception of Africa they were mainly preparing for war with the planned invasion to the European continent. We had continuing great difficulties in getting supplies and equipment and whatnot, which were given to the European Theater under its higher priority. We felt that Pat was a little more sympathetic to our cause and would, when we had dire need, be helpful in seeing what he could do to see that we got some of the critical things that were needed. Pat Tansey later came out to the Pacific and served under me and did well.

Q: How about A. G. Matthews?

A: Mattie was an odd combination. He was quite brilliant and very, very active. He was very military as a cadet and became a ranking cadet officer. He was one of the group that Pat Tansey thought were the upper layer opposed by the dirty dozen group.

Mattie served under me out in the Pacific and rendered outstandingly fine service. He was one of the first ones to come out to Australia after we had come down from Bataan. He was in command of the 46th Engineers, where he performed outstandingly on building air and port facilities, initially in the Queensland area and subsequently in New Guinea under great difficulties, with shortages of manpower, equipment, and supplies, using improvisations and personal drive. He was a real go-getter, going night and day in our early difficult days in New Guinea on airdrome and base development—all most vital for our requirements during that critical period.

Mattie was one who could accomplish great things and then, by saying this or saying that at the wrong time, could destroy much of what he had accomplished. For instance, the Air Force, of course, was always pushing for this and that, even while Mattie was turning out more than could physically be done. But the Air Force would still complain about something.

Whereupon Mattie might come out and in front of other Air Force officers say, "Well, that damn fool George Kenney, he doesn't know what the hell it's all about, " or something like that. And the same way about General [then Major General and later Lieutenant General Ennis C.] Whitehead, who was commanding general of the Fifth Air Force. Of course that would get back to Kenney and Whitehead, and they even demanded that he be relieved and sent home. I had to go up and fight for Mattie, for here he'd be doing wonders but occasionally saying something, sort of being quick tempered, particularly adverse to some of the senior Air Force boys, and they'd get irate and try to cashier him.

Mattie finally was relieved, returned to duty in the Chief's Office, and later he came out with some of the mapping group. Mattie was, in my opinion, extremely able. He could have been, I think, a major general. He never did get above colonel, possibly because of his quick temper when things went wrong.

Q: How about Leland Hewitt?

A: Hewie was bright but relatively quiet. Hewie got the assignment of air engineer with the Fifth Air Force, and then as chief engineer, Far East Air Forces, and worked closely with me and my headquarters. Unfortunately, the Air Force seemed to be primarily interested in getting their air personnel promoted and pushed on up, but they weren't equally interested in the other services who were serving with them, such as the engineers, signal, or the officers of other branches that were on duty with them. So as a result, Hewie, although he served outstandingly as engineer for the Fifth Air Force and Far East Air Forces, never got to be above a colonel. He performed extremely well, in my opinion, in the mission and the assignment that he had.

Q: Lewis Ross?

A: Tenney. I knew Tenney both as a cadet and later on quite intimately on the Engineer Rifle Team. He and I were both on the Engineer Rifle Team. He was coach of the team and later I succeeded him as coach. So I got to know Tenney quite well, not only then but later.

Tenney was on duty in Washington when the war broke, and after I came down from Bataan to Australia I received word from my wife that Tenney was anxious for field service, whereupon I requested his assignment with us. Initially I had him assigned as engineer with USASOS [US Army Services of Supply], the logistics command in our theater. Tenney did a very fine job there, even in the face of a severe physical disability with crippling arthritis, and was promoted to brigadier general. When we got on up to New Guinea, with the tropics and the problems that we had, I felt that the physical strain was getting too great on Tenney. In the terrible heat, he several times became overcome with heat exhaustion. I thought in the best interest of Tenney's health that he ought to be relieved and returned to the States, not because of any deficiency or anything that he failed to do, but in his own best interest. He was keenly disappointed. Tenney was a solid, extremely conscientious, and very able person who rendered a wonderful performance under very serious physical difficulties.

Q: How about James Newman?

A: I didn't know Jim as a cadet too well. He was a very likable person. After distinguished service with the Ninth Air Force in the European Theater, he became, I believe, engineer of the whole US Air Force. So that as a result I didn't have any particular contact with him in that respect, but I understand that he performed extremely well. I knew Jim socially and he and I were always very pleasant and had fun together, but I have no direct or intimate knowledge of his performance later on.

Q: Alexander Neilson?

A: Murray, as we called him, was a very able officer. He had a nice personality. My first real contact with him was when he was with the amphibian engineers. He came out with the 2d ESB [Engineer Special Brigade], commanded one of the regiments, the 532d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment [EBSR] [from 29 January 1944 to 25 March 1945], and performed extremely well. I know on one engagement when one of their boats had been badly damaged, and even though there was heavy artillery and enemy fire, he went on out in his craft and rescued the personnel, even in the face of this heavy bombardment, for which he was awarded the Silver star.

He handled his regiment extremely well. The 2d ESB was the first amphibian unit to report out in our theater, under [Brigadier] General [William F.] Heavey. In the early landings they went in under great difficulties with only the small LCVPs [landing craft, vehicle and personnel]. Later on we got LCMs [landing craft, medium], the larger craft. But these small craft, I know on some of the early operations, would ferry our troops in, even under extremely heavy seas. In one operation with waves of 10 to 12 feet, they still made the landing. They lost a number of the boats, but they didn't lose any men, and made the landing very successfully.

They were a great help to us in our theater. We had difficulty with the Navy sometimes in trying to move our forces along the New Guinea coast. The waters were uncharted and the Navy didn't want to take their vessels up over uncharted waters. But we had the engineer amphibian brigade with light draft craft, and they were frequently in on such shore-to-shore operations and were of unbelievable help in making it possible to get troops forward from one place to another, landing on the beaches with no port or docks against a jungle and often against enemy troops. Murray performed very, very well on such duty. Later on, after the end of the war, Murray was sent up as engineer of XXIV Corps in Korea where he did very well, too, in that important occupation. Murray is one who should have gotten a promotion but, as I say, he was in the ESBs and we had only three brigadier generals authorized, one in command of each brigade, with only colonels authorized in the other elements of that command. But indicative of the type of personnel we had, one of the ESB lieutenant colonels whom we had become president of Gulf Oil after the war; I'm trying to think of his name. But all of our engineer special brigade personnel served extremely well, and Murray was one of the best.

Q: How about James C. Marshall?

A: Jim was a bright, sort of quiet individual. Of course, his big job, I guess, was when he was with Leslie Groves on the Manhattan Project in developing the atomic bomb. Later on he came out and served in our theater as G-4 with USASOS and performed very well.

Q: Lucius Clay?

A: Of course you have books written about Lucius Clay. Lucius had a likable personality. He had a great knowledge of history. He knew a lot about the Civil War, with his grandparents' homestead in Marietta, Georgia, having been destroyed during Sherman's march to the sea. At the time we entered West Point, it wasn't but 50 years after the Civil War. So when we went up to West Point, the memories of the Civil War were still fresh in the minds of those boys who came from the South. So there was still a strong feeling about the North and South, the Union and the Confederacy.

Lucius was one who knew what the Confederates had done under great difficulties, with lack of equipment, supplies, and so forth. They actually performed, I think, better than the Union forces did, considering their lack of supplies, equipment, and so on.

Lucius had a very good memory. He could read something, and it seemed to be photographed on his mind. As a result, in matters where memory was called for, they came to him relatively quickly and easily, such as in English, languages, and history. Lucius did have some difficulty in math, and particularly in descriptive geometry, the type of mathematics where you have projections of three dimensions, where you had to visualize that and put it on the blackboard. Also with differential and integral calculus. So I had to help him on math. Being his roommate I frequently had to explain or concentrate on the explanation of some of these more difficult mathematical problems.

But Lucius was very, very popular. He didn't get into athletics. I know he tried wrestling, but I remember I could out-wrestle him, which he sort of resented but he would try it again without success. He was popular, of course, with his classmates. In contrast to his later four-star rank, he ended up only as a cadet sergeant. He did not receive any high cadet rank. His disciplinary record of demerits was not of the highest, and at that time he didn't show any outstanding trait or ability to indicate that he was going to hit four-star rank and the top to the extent he did.

But he did have determination. He was strong-willed and very strongly opinionated. If you got into a discussion with him, his view was always the correct one. He'd persist and it was virtually impossible to try to change his views—his views were made up. I know later on sometimes he'd say, "Look Pat, I'm not going to argue with you anymore because you have your views and I have mine." And he'd call it off; he wouldn't want to continue

trying to resolve a difference in opinion on some issue that came up. Either you accepted his views on it, or that was that. So later on as a commander, if he made up his mind in respect to something, why that was it, and he had the personality, force, and determination to push it through, and he wouldn't deviate or give up on it in the slightest. I think that was typified in the way he conducted his command up in Berlin, and in particular during the Berlin airlift and the way he was going to see that through. He would use every bit of energy that he had to see that that was accomplished.

He succeeded me in 1933 in Washington when I was in the Chief's Office as executive assistant in the Rivers and Harbors Section. This was a very responsible post because we had to do with reviewing the project studies and plans and specifications of all of the rivers and harbors projects throughout the country. These included also flood control and hydroelectric power projects. And answering correspondence to senators and congressmen. It was our function, really, to formulate such letters for the Chief's signature. If some issue came up, we wouldn't go in and ask General Brown [Major General Lytle Brown, Chief of Engineers 1929-1933] or General Pillsbury [Brigadier General George B. Pillsbury, Assistant Chief of Engineers] for the answers. But we would formulate what we thought proper, such as approval or disapproval or modification or substantive changes and so on. On complaints or queries from a congressman or senator we would get the report from the affected division engineer or district engineers and, based on that, we'd prepare the letters and replies.

So we'd formulate these letters for the signatures of General Lytle Brown, Chief, or General Pillsbury, Assistant Chief—and later on, in Lucius' case, General Markham [Major General Edward M. Markham, Chief of Engineers 1933-1937]. I think that assignment also gave one a good opportunity to meet many of the officers in the Corps because the division engineers and district engineers, knowing we were in that office, would frequently approach us even though they were much senior to us and say, "Now look, we need additional so and so," or seek further support for their pending requests or projects. So we got to know a number of the officers in the Corps of Engineers. Also, and I think particularly in Lucius' case, it gave him added powers of presentation. He could dictate very fluently and very easily, and I think that the four years' duty there helped greatly in giving him the facility he had of presenting quickly and in proper terms and wording his views tersely and accurately. In contrast, if he had been out with troops, he would have had little of that. But being there in the office

in a responsible executive position calling for dictation, analyzing plans, and analyzing topics of high importance, it gave him excellent training for his later major functions and responsibilities.

Q: How about Lloyd Mielenz?

A: Lloyd was a very nice, likable chap. It was unfortunate that he was caught on Bataan where he was at the surrender. He was in the Department Engineer's Office when I got out there in October '41. He served extremely well, handling their supplies and logistics functions, and as Colonel Stickney's [Colonel Henry Stickney, Engineer, Philippine Department] deputy or executive. Of course, later on when he was taken prisoner, that stopped his performance for the remainder of the war. But during the time that he was exec to Stickney, he did everything very, very well and, I am sure, would have distinguished himself under further opportunity.

Q: Samuel D. Sturgis?

A: You could write a book about Sam. I guess you know as much about him almost as I do. I knew Sam as a cadet, but not too well because he was in a different area and we just knew of him as a classmate.

The first opportunity I had really to know Sam was when he came up on the Passamaquoddy Tidal Power Project. We felt that Sam had sort of the junior assignment of the Corps officers who were up there. We had Major Philip B. Fleming, who was district engineer; I was in charge of the Engineering Division; Roy Lord [Royal B. Lord] had the Operations Division; Don Leehey the Administrative Division; Dan Note was executive officer; and then later on Sam came up to head the division that was to handle and operate the living facilities that were built for the personnel.

Of course, Eastport [Maine] didn't have much in the way of facilities, so as part of the project we had to build quarters for the personnel and officers and so on. And it was Sam's job to sort of direct the administrative functioning of those buildings and the personnel. This, we felt, in contrast with the major responsibilities that others had, was relatively minor. Everybody liked Sam because he always came up with a cute little joke or

expression, but his responsibilities up at the Passamaquoddy project were relatively small, unlike the heavy responsibilities he so ably assumed later.

The next time I knew Sam was when he came out as engineer of Sixth Army. When he first came out with General Krueger [then Major General Walter Krueger] and his staff, the first reaction we had was that Krueger and his staff, who had been on the Louisiana maneuvers, had organized the staff and were preparing to conduct the war the way they did on the Louisiana maneuvers.

You should note that on the Louisiana maneuvers they had railroads, telephone lines, telegraph lines, maps, developed facilities, highways, and ready access to all forms of logistic support. We sensed that they did not have the grasp of just what the problems of our jungle warfare were—tropical heat, jungle conditions, malaria, uncharted territory, no readily available hardware store, no medical facilities, no water supply, no electricity, no railroads, vast intervening water approaches but no docks, no airdromes, etcetera. We sort of sensed that their viewpoint was mainly toward the tactical phase of sweeping ground operations.

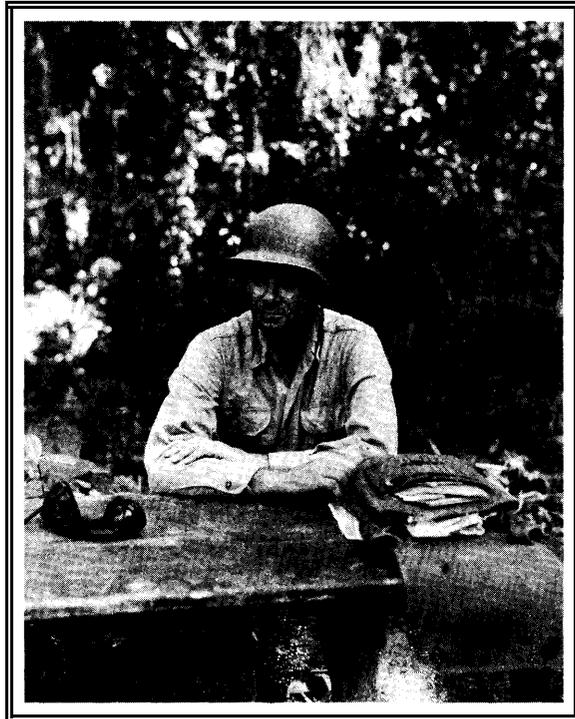
But after we got Sam and the staff bedded down, Jack Sverdrup and I went down there several times at their request to give them talks on the problems that we had here—amphibious operations, landing beaches, jungle clearing, roads, building airdromes in each new objective area, supply, equipment and maintenance, aerial reconnaissance and mapping, shelter, water supply, and oil pipelines. But Sixth Army had a good approach toward their new and different responsibilities because the first operations were with small task forces, as on Goodenough Island and other small islands, and with unopposed landings. They set up their task force, occupied the area, built an airfield and pertinent facilities, and so on. But as I said, against no enemy opposition, whereby they were good training grounds for them to get started in the organization and conduct of task forces, carrying on the landings, supply and support of those units, and construction of the base and air facilities for major operations to be encountered later.

Of course, as we embarked into major operations they would set up larger task forces. It was the policy out in the Pacific Theater that the operations instructions would direct the task force commander, the combat commander, to conduct the whole operation. In addition to handling the tactical phase,

it was his responsibility also to start and effect the main purpose of the operation, which was to go in and build an airdrome and related facilities.

We didn't have two separate commanders, like a tactical commander here and a separate engineer force to build the airdrome and related facilities. We made it the responsibility of the task force commander both to handle the combat phase and also to build the airdrome and do the various related things that had to be done. The reason we had for that was knowing that the task force commander controlled the priority on movement of equipment, materials, and supplies for the operation even though he didn't know a thing about building an airdrome. We, of course, did have the task force engineers with him. And fortunately, we had direct communication between my office; Engineer, Sixth Army (Sam); and the task force engineer.

Normally this communication is supposed to go through the commander and then through him down to the task force engineer, but it was sort of the tacit approval that prevailed throughout the command that I could give instructions on this or that, and communicate directly through technical channels to the task force engineer; or Sam, as engineer for Sixth Army. could communicate directly to the task force engineer, rather than having



Lieutenant General Samuel D. Sturgis, Jr. (then a colonel), Engineer, Sixth Army (1944).

to go through the task force commander. This practice prevailed whether it was a major general who had a corps or division or lower commanders of a regiment or two. Anyway, it worked out very well, and Sam grew up with it and was extremely able in handling all of the problems and so on that he had. Sam had one characteristic-that irrespective of whatever operation it

was or whatever he was engaged in, that at that time was the most important operation in the theater. I mean, he wanted to have first priority on materials, on manpower, etcetera. He'd appeal to you by telephone, we need or must have so and so, always trying to get priority of materials, equipment, of personnel, of staff and so and so to do the job. But he was probably the most conscientious person that you could find in working and following through on whatever projector operation or assignment on which he was working.

He was well admired and respected by the staff in Sixth Army, by General Krueger and by the staff, and so much so that he got their full support because they knew he was doing everything he could to get it done. And practically in all of the operations out in the Pacific, the one purpose in each one of these operations, all the way up, was to go in and develop an airdrome site and supporting base facility, each as a stepping stone to the next similar operation. In a lot of these operations the engineer complement was maybe half the force or even more than that because the main thing they had to do was go in, secure an area, and then develop it. Build docks, build oil pipelines and storage tanks, build roads, provide water supply, build the airdrome taxiways and dispersal areas, build a hospital or an aid station, whatever it was, provide for the storage facilities and so on to maintain this group. They knew that was the primary purpose of each operation because in that way you provided a base where you could get land-based fighter cover to protect the forward bombing and so on for the next operation.

General MacArthur's [General Douglas A. MacArthur] philosophy was "don't hit them where they are, hit them where they ain't." In other words, if the Japanese were here, we wouldn't go in to attack them right from the front, have a glorious action and lots of casualties and take great claim for having overcome it. But we would land above them or below them, set up our bases there, and then let the enemy starve on the vine. They had either to work their way back through the jungle or try to get out by water. And in getting out they'd have to use submarines to take critical personnel out or use submarines to bring critical supplies in, and in doing it that way, why you were actually further aiding the war effort because you were diverting those submarines from damaging our critical supply mission by torpedoing the line of supply coming in by ships from the continent or from within the theater.

Q: How about Gene Caffey?

A: At West Point I didn't know Gene too well, other than as being a regular classmate, because he was a flanker and was quite tall and therefore in one of the flanker companies. Both Lucius Clay and I, who were medium height, were in the middle companies.

Gene was graduated into the Corps of Engineers. Subsequently they changed the system from promotion by branch that they had prior to World War I and shortly thereafter, and went into the single list, where everybody was listed according to the length of service irrespective of rank. As a result, for example, men in the infantry and cavalry who had three months, six months or more service than we, but still were second lieutenants and first lieutenants, were all of a sudden integrated up higher on the list than we. Gene sort of resented that and decided he'd go in and study law.

So he applied for a transfer to the JAG, Judge Advocate General Department, and he was sent to the University of Virginia and pursued a law course there and got to be commissioned in the JAG, passed the bar exam, and served in the JAG. However, when World War II broke out he decided that rather than be a desk soldier he wanted to get into action, so he transferred back to the Corps of Engineers and was assigned as engineer to the Amphibian Command [Engineer Amphibian Command—EAC]. He served over in the European Theater, so I have no direct knowledge of what Gene did over there. But I understand that he performed heroically; in fact, there is a monument on Omaha Beach to him, I think erected by the troops whom he commanded. I think you referred to some problems that he had where the commander felt that he was lax in not getting to where he was supposed to be. But they later found out that the ship that his personnel were on had been bombed and sunk and he had lost a good many of his men. But I'm sure that Gene, knowing him, would have performed to the maximum with what forces he had under any extreme conditions. And he wasn't afraid of combat or fire power and performed extremely well.

After the war, he transferred back to the JAG and later on became Judge Advocate General. Incidentally, he was father of the class baby. He had the first baby son of any of the graduates in our class, and as a result was awarded the silver cup that's awarded to the classmate who has the first son. The silver cup was made up of the silver napkin rings that each cadet had in those days. They were all turned in and made into the silver cup awarded

to Gene. And not satisfied with his accomplishment in winning the silver cup, he kept on and I think he produced the rest of a baseball team to the extent, I think, of nine children. He was a grand guy.

Q: Now that we've covered your classmates in what became the class of June 1918, I would like to ask a few questions about people who were at West Point at that time and who later achieved some notoriety. Did you know Leslie Groves [Lieutenant General, US Army] at all when he was there?

A: Yes, I knew Leslie as a cadet. He was taller than I and so not in the same company. Leslie was a very good tennis player, even though he was a bit big and bulky. He had a far reach and he was not one who would exhaust himself running after the ball to hit it, but he did have a tremendous reach to get it and played very well.

I don't recall anything that particularly distinguished Leslie during the early years. The first intimate contact I had with him was when he was with General [Brehon B.] Somervell, who was called in to head up the Construction Division of the Quartermaster Corps. Leslie was in the Operations Division, and I was in the Engineering Division. I was in charge of the Engineering and Design Section in connection with the vast national defense construction program. This was in late 1940 to '41. I had to do with developing plans and specifications of standard structures like the igloos for Ordnance warehouse storage of bombs, the standard barracks that we used, the layouts of cantonments, the standard designs on the major ordnance plants and chemical plants to be constructed, virtually all of the things that were going into a vast military construction buildup preparatory to our getting into the war.

That had been under the Construction Division of the Quartermaster Corps, but they had sort of bogged down and Franklin Delano Roosevelt directed the Corps of Engineers to furnish the personnel to take it over. So Bill Somervell was put in charge and then he got other engineers like Delp [Wilhelm D.] Styer, executive officer; Ed Leavey, who had the Engineering Division; me heading up the Engineering and Design Section; and Leslie Groves in charge of Operations. The one in charge of Operations was supervising the field construction based on the designs and layouts that were sent out.

He was made a colonel early even though he was relatively junior. He wasn't one that was apologetic about it, but he had his rank and he utilized it. Leslie, of course, later on headed the Manhattan Project for the development of the atomic bomb, and I think he was an ideal man for that assignment. That didn't mean that he was the outstanding scientist or that he knew anything special about nuclear energy or the methods of producing the bomb, because they had these scientists who were doing all of that. But there was bickering among them. There were two possible courses to go in connection with developing it; and of course, if they pursued, say, both of them, you'd possibly be going on forever. But he was the one, I think, who would make the decision on the course to take and then be firm enough to see that they pursued that. He exercised firm executive direction and command, and he wasn't deterred by somebody who might know much more about it theoretically. I mean, that didn't change his views, and I think he was ably selected to handle the heavy responsibilities that they had, especially with the type of scientific personnel whom he was directing, so he deserves a great deal of credit for the accomplishments of the Manhattan Project.

Q: What about Leverett Yoder?

A: I didn't know Yoder as a cadet very well. He was an underclassman. But he did serve under me out in the Pacific. He was in command of a colored engineer labor battalion. The colored battalion at that time was just a source of labor. They had few officers, virtually no engineer equipment, and no specialized engineer construction training. They were regarded as a labor pool.

[Note: The Army in 1940 was a segregated institution; and, except for experiments in integrating officer candidate training and infantry platoons, it remained so throughout World War II. While many of the attitudes and expressions of contemporaries may seem out of place today, they reflect the times in which they were expressed.]

Q: The 96th Engineer Battalion is what he had?

A: Well, yes. It was just a separate battalion. I think they had four companies. They had very few white officers. They had very little in the way of equipment. All it was, really, was just a source of manpower.

In the early phase of the war we had relatively little in the form of engineer units. In Australia we had the 808th Engineer Aviation Battalion; we had the 43d and the 46th General Service Regiments, white; and then we had these two black labor battalions with limited officers and so on. So I put in a recommendation to the War Department that we be authorized to change their designation to general service regiments. We received that authority even though they were just black, untrained personnel with no special mechanical skills and no equipment and originally organized to provide a source of labor. But we got the authorization to make them general service regiments.

That authority permitted us to get more white officers and particularly to get equipment that went with general service regiments. All we had then was just this mass of manpower without skills and whatnot. Yoder had one of these units. He had the 96th, and we transformed it virtually overnight from a labor battalion to a so-called general service engineer regiment, which is supposed to handle engineer construction skills, all this heavy equipment and whatnot. Yoder did an outstanding job on that difficult assignment.

It was a very difficult job. A solid black untrained unit was a difficult unit to operate with. If they were integrated and trained, as they were later, you had a different situation.

For instance, I recall the 96th was one of the first units that was sent over to New Guinea. As I said, we made them into a general service regiment, got equipment for them, tried to train them to operate the equipment and maintain it, which of course was very difficult. We had them there working on airdromes, and they were doing very well. But if you had an air raid, why bingo!, the unit dispersed, because I remember being there during an air raid and virtually all the unit disappeared. You'd find some of these men with perspiration all over their faces and some of them still trembling and shaking, and they'd run maybe a mile or more away from where this was, and we'd have to gather them up and get them back together. After some bombing experience and so on they got to where they could operate and perform, and as they gradually became better trained they performed well.

But Yoder, under extremely difficult conditions, handled those units very well. He later served with distinction as Engineer, I Corps.

Q: How about David Ogden?

A: Dave Ogden came out with the third of the engineer amphibian brigades [4th Engineer Special Brigade, ESB]. General Heavey had brought the first one out [2d ESB]; Hutchings brought the next [3d ESB]; and then Ogden brought the last one out. Strangely enough, after the war Heavey and Hutchings, who had been Ogden's seniors, were demoted back to colonel and Ogden kept his temporary rank of brigadier general.

He was regarded very highly, I think, by General Krueger and some of the others with whom he served. I know he did a very fine job, but I'd have rated them as engineer brigade commanders with Heavey as first, Hutchings as second, and Ogden as next. But Ogden was a quiet, firm, able officer. He ran a very, very fine command and performed very well under all the operations that they had.

I don't think he went in for dramatics, such as Heavey's brigade did, because they were the first ones there and had to go in, probably under the most extremely adverse conditions. The others later had greater support and greater materiel and forces for the operations in which they were engaged. But Ogden did very well and later on he served with distinction as engineer of the Korean Command, as commander of the Ryukyus Command and deputy governor of the Ryukyu Islands during their development as one of our important Pacific bases.

Q: How about Elmer Barnes? Do you recall him at all? He was over with Dinty Moore as one of his deputy commanders in Europe. I just thought you might recall the name.

A: I'm certain he wasn't with us. I knew Elmer Barnes as a cadet. Later I knew him socially in Washington when I was in the Chief's Office. He was on duty there. He was a very likable person, but I had no real experience or association with him on any military activity.

Q: William Wanamaker?

A: Wannie came out to the Pacific in the Transportation Department. Transportation was very, very important in our theater. I guess it is in every field, but particularly with us out in the Southwest Pacific. Here we were almost halfway around the world from our source of supply. To get equipment and materials, we had to get an allocation. Then from production you required transportation priority to get them to a port. You then had to have transportation priority to get them loaded and get them from the main port on the Pacific coast to a main port over in the Pacific. Furthermore, you could not have that ship come right up to the point where the supplies were needed. It had to unload at some big base. Then you had an internal problem of trying to get those supplies, again by water, from wherever they were landed to some other forward base; and then from there, you had to get them by small craft or by truck or whatever means you had to where they were needed. So that transportation was one of the key problems in connection with the conduct of the war effort in our theater. I think the problem was sort of overpowering and almost impossible to achieve. But I think Wannie did very, very well in improving and working on that almost impossible and difficult task.

Q: Charles Bathurst?

A: I knew Bathurst as a junior cadet up at the Point. He was tall and vigorous and able. He served as corps engineer with XI Corps and task force engineer on some of our operations and in them did very well. He was respected by all those with whom he had contact. I think he performed more ably than possibly he was given credit for. In some commands, you know, his being an engineer colonel wasn't the same as though he were a colonel commanding one of the regiments in the task force. I don't think he [got] adequate recognition from the task force commander that was his due. Otherwise he was capable of general rank. He was very able and performed extremely well.

Q: Do you know Claude Chorpening?

A: Chorpening? I know Claude, I knew him in 1940 in Washington when he served in the Chief's Office. He was a likable person. He served later in the European Theater.

Q: Here's another one that didn't serve in your theater-Frank O. Bowman?

A: I knew Frank quite well. I knew him at the Engineer School. He was junior to us. Frank was an aggressive little youngster. He was like some of those who were short in stature who try to make up for it in their attitude of always being ready to go. But Frank was very good. After distinguished service in the European and Mediterranean theaters, where he was promoted to brigadier general, he served as engineer of our Yokohama base. He was well liked and had an excellent reputation for performance.

Q: Orville Walsh?

A: Pinky Walsh. I had him on my staff at GHQ. And then when Sixth Army wanted some senior personnel, he served on Sam Sturgis' staff with Sixth Army. Later we organized engineer construction brigades to serve as the integrated engineer command with our major task forces.

We felt there was a need in the theater, with the engineer functions as important and responsible as they were, for some form of intermediate engineer command. Prior to that you had a corps and the corps engineer and his tiny staff. You had the division, but all you had in the division was the division engineers, the combat engineers, which unfortunately just before the war had been cut back from a regiment to a combat battalion.

I think that was one of the major mistakes that they made, this reorganization, because there was never a division that went into combat that could do it just with its combat battalion. They always had to attach another battalion, or sometimes two or three battalions, to handle the engineer load. Now I don't know whether this was a factor, but in World War I you had a number of engineers who were made general officers. They had been colonels commanding the division's engineer regiment in combat. When you had both combat regimental commanders and the engineer regimental commander, and if someone was transferred or lost as a casualty, and when

one of the top colonels was the engineer, he was frequently called in to handle the brigade and ultimately maybe a division.

Now whether or not the line branches sort of resented having an engineer regimental commander with the same rank as their regiments and who was frequently promoted to general rank, they apparently decided they should make the engineer unit a battalion, with the engineer then merely a lieutenant colonel just commanding a battalion. However, he still had all the heavy engineer responsibilities of the division. In fact, in our theater the engineer responsibility within the division was much greater than that of the infantry regiments because you had these most important engineer tasks over and above combat.

At no time did you have the division in operations just with its own combat battalion, but you always had to give them another engineer battalion or more. Instead of a battalion, they'd have the equivalent of a regiment and a half or more to do the job.

Q: You were discussing your recollection of Pinky Walsh.

A: Oh yes, Pinky Walsh. So, as I say, when we set up these task forces you had to make up a new supervisory engineer headquarters and try to get an officer here and an officer there, give them these battalions, general service regiments, equipment companies, and construction units. You got a rather sizable engineer unit, but you had to form an engineer group headquarters to head it. So I recommended to the War Department for authority to set up a so-called Engineer Headquarters Command to head up an engineer construction brigade with a brigadier general heading it. We could then attach engineer general service regiments, engineer aviation battalions, engineer construction battalions, and [Navy] Seabee units, to this command as required for the specific operation. Thereby in the task force you had not just a newly assigned task force engineer group, but an engineer command with a commander who had this command and knew these units and so on to handle the engineer function. We organized these brigades, and we had Pinky Walsh as one of the first commanders of [5202d Engineer Construction Brigade]. We also had Bernard L. Robinson commanding one, the 5201st.

Pinky was sort of surprising. He was big and inclined to be a little fat, and he had soft skin, red hair, big brown eyes, and he looked like somebody who was soft in character and quiet and easygoing. But he had a keen, quick brain which seemed so different from his normal personality and conduct. You sort of pictured him as a slower moving person, but in a quiet way he was a very effective commander. I think he could analyze a problem very well and could see it through. He was held in high respect by all those with whom he served, including Sam Sturgis, General Sverdrup, and others.

Q: Going to some of the people who graduated in 1917, now we have mentioned previously Ed Leavey.

A: Leavey. Ed was a brilliant, very conscientious person. I didn't know him particularly well as a cadet, as he was in the class ahead of us. But he was assigned to the Engineer School as a student at the time that I, too, was there. In fact, his quarters were right next to ours.

Ed was very ambitious, and one thing he wanted to do was to be number one in the class. We had groups who would get together frequently for drinks or dances or whatnot; but Ed sort of withdrew from that and would spend much more time, I think, doing nightwork and homework and studying and so on, to the extent of his ability on these studies.

It just so happened that, though I was sort of playing around a little bit more, when it ended up I came out first and he was second, so he was a little disappointed at that. Later on he was head of the Engineering Division under Brehon Somervell. I served with him as I had the Engineering and Design Section, and we got along very well there.

During World War II he served in the European Theater for several years and then as G-4 of the Central Pacific Theater. After the war in Europe was over, Bill Somervell's job was largely over. The remaining action was out in the Pacific, so a lot of Somervell's staff arranged for a transfer out to our Pacific Theater, including Delp Styer, who was a lieutenant general, and Ed Leavey joined him as his chief of staff. There they headed up our logistic command station in the Philippines.

But anyway, Delp Styer, Ed Leavey, I think [C. F.] Robinson, and Walter Wood, and some of the others came out and were assigned to take over what

had been former USASOS, except it was called USAFWESPAC [US Army Forces, Western Pacific]. It was the American command that had to do with logistic support and was located in the Philippines.

So Ed came there on that assignment as chief of staff to General Styer. Very shortly afterwards the war terminated and then Ed, as chief of staff, was sent up to Baguio to receive the surrender of the main Japanese forces in the Philippines. Some of those who had served principally on tactical operations, in command or real combat operations against the enemy, sort of resented the fact that here Ed Leavey, who was a “foreigner” and had been out of, you might say, the combat activities in our theater during the war, was the one that accepted the surrender. Of course, it didn’t make any difference to me, but some sort of felt that one of their own should have had that honor. Ed later became chief of the Transportation Corps, comptroller, and ultimately, a short time after retirement, president of International Telephone and Telegraph Company. He had a splendid record throughout.

Q: How about Bill Heavey?

A: Bill Heavey had been an instructor of mine at the Engineer School. He was an instructor in tactics, and a very fine instructor. I had known him just casually as a cadet at the Point. The next contact with Bill was when he came out as commanding general of the 2d Engineer Special Brigade. Nobody could have performed more ably, I think, than he did. The 2d ESB was well trained. When they first came out there was limited floating plant; they were just limited to the small LCVPs. But Bill on his own developed the so-called ‘support battery’ where we used some of these LCVPs and equipped them with racks of short-range missiles or rockets. A number of these craft would go in at the forefront of a landing, putting down a deadly bombardment of these rockets on the landing beaches, and were highly effective.

He did a number of things in connection with special training or special preparation of his unit. He worked very closely with me and my staff. He was always writing personal letters to me, always wanted some special assistance or other. We had direct communication, and through that relationship we ultimately expanded the authorization for the landing craft to include the LCMs, the larger landing craft.

At that time we had great difficulty getting landing craft to our theater, as they had to come out as deck load. When the transports came out, they had to take planes, they had to take engineer equipment, big shovels, big pile drivers and whatnot, so there was a very limited amount of deck space for special loading, which restricted the number of floating craft that we could get.

So we arranged with Washington to have them ship out the LCVPs in sections, I believe in 5-foot sections. We erected a boat assembly plant initially in Queensland in northern Australia, and later on we were able to move it over to New Guinea in Milne Bay.

We set up this boat assembly plant and brought in sections of craft that they could ship in the hold, and we'd get them and then weld them and assemble them into finished craft. That was the way we were able to get a major increase of our landing craft requirements.

Incidentally, later on when we were assembling the larger LCMs, we decided to get even greater capacity, so we got an extra section and instead of assembling just the sections to normal length, we had this extra section installed, and it not only gave us greater capacity but it actually increased the speed a knot-I guess by reason of the better configuration of length to beam in the hull.

But Bill and his outfit performed exceedingly well. I think you may have read his book, *Down Ramp!* While it does, as naturally would happen, sort of bring out a little bit more of his own personality or personal achievements in it, I think it covers it all very well. Our volume IV of *Engineers of the Southwest Pacific-Amphibian Engineer Operations* covers in quite a bit of detail, in addition to the overall, the excellent performance of the 2d ESB, for which Bill deserves a lot of credit as its commander.

Q: How about Daniel Note?

A: Dan Note is a little different from Bill Heavey. He had been commanding officer of the Engineer Amphibian Command back in the States where they set up the engineer amphibian [special brigade] units. And then later on he served with distinction in the European Theater. So I didn't have too much contact with Note, but I know from general talk that he performed extremely

well in the development of this Engineer Amphibian Command and subsequently up to his ultimate assignment as Inspector General with rank of lieutenant general. Dan was one who was sort of quiet. He seemed to be not full of activity as compared to others but nonetheless a most able, though quiet, officer.

Q: John Steiner?

A: Jeff Steiner, at least that was his nickname. He had been a cadet ahead of me at West Point and served gallantly in World War I, winning the Distinguished Service Cross. He later resigned and then before World War II came back on active duty and joined the Engineer Amphibian Command. He came out as commander of one of the regiments [532d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment from 1 October 1942 to 28 January 1944] in Bill Heavey's outfit and performed very well. I don't recall anything special. He was very aggressive, active, dynamic, and a good regimental commander. He was later engineer of our X Corps.

Q: Willis Teale?

A: Willis Teale, also class of '17, I had known as a cadet. I admired him very much. As a cadet he won his letter in track, winning the championship, I think, in the 100-yard and 200-yard dashes. Very nice looking with a very nice personality. The next contact with him was when I came down from the Philippines. He was with the American command there in Australia. They were handling the logistics support to the American forces that were due to come on over there. He was chief engineer under Dwight Johns, who was chief of staff of USASOS. I felt that Willis Teale had slowed down somehow or other. He seemed to be a bit shy and, in talking to him, he sort of hesitated a bit. However, in a sort of quiet, undemonstrative way, he always got his job done, serving quietly but efficiently.

Q: How about several non-engineer graduates, like J. Lawton Collins?

A: I knew very little of J. Lawton Collins at West Point. The first real contact I had with him was when he was on duty over in Koblenz, Germany. I was

then commanding Company A of the 1st Engineers and he' was with the infantry, but I don' t even remember what he was doing or much about him.

In other words, he had not attained any special prominence. He didn't play football. I was on the engineer football team. We used to play the infantry and the other branches. I was also on our engineer basketball team. We played the other units also in basketball and got to know many of the officers of the other branches. I later got to know both him and his wife. She was a daughter of our Chaplain [Colonel Edmund P.] Easterbrook. They were married in Koblenz, and we (Dorothy and I) attended their wedding, and later we also were married in Koblenz and they attended our wedding. Of course, since we have been in constant communication, exchanging Christmas cards, etcetera, so we've kept in touch. He later on served with distinction early in the South Pacific Theater, commanding the 25th Division and later, as "Lightning Joe, " in command of VII Corps over in the European Theater. As you know, he later became Chief of Staff, US Army. I didn't have any chance to really serve closely with him, but we've been in touch over the years and I know of how splendidly he carried on throughout his service.

Q: How about Matt Ridgway?

A: I knew Matt Ridgway as a cadet, as he was the cadet adjutant. When World War I broke on April 6, 1917, he was the adjutant that announced to the Corps of Cadets that war had broken out and we had great cheering and whatnot. But I had no association at all with him after that. I had left Japan at the end of '49, and then Korea broke the next year. I was not involved in the Korean operation, but I do know that when General Walton H. Walker, our commander in Korea, died in a car accident, Matt Ridgway was selected to succeed him; and Matt, in the same very able way as he had performed in Europe, performed outstandingly in Korea. But as I say, I had no direct contact with him.

Q: Do you know Mark Clark at all?

A: I just knew him very casually as a cadet. We never served together. I can just recall him but do not recall him with any particular distinction. He wasn't active in athletics or such, and my viewpoint of him as of then

compared to what he accomplished later was one of surprise that he had accomplished what apparently he did. His World War II record was an outstanding one.

Q: In the class of '16, did you have any contact with Wilhelm Styer?

A: Delp Styer? I knew him fairly well, though just casually as a cadet. Later on my contact with him was when he was executive officer to General [Brehon B.] Somervell at the time that Somervell was called in to take over the command of all the military construction in 1940 shortly prior to the war-a very responsible assignment.

Delp Styer was his executive, or chief of staff. Delp was sort of a quiet person. He'd listen attentively and soon and then give you his views of his action, but he worked very well as a team with Somervell. Brehon Somervell was sort of a real live wire and a go-getter, and Delp was sort of the quiet member of the machine, but he saw that things functioned and were fully coordinated. I was with them almost a year when I got this cable from General MacArthur to come back as chief engineer of the new command [US Army Forces, Far East-USAFFE] after he had been called back to active duty as its commanding general.

I remember at that time, incidentally, that Bill Somervell, when I got this wire, said, "Well, you're not going to accept that, are you?" I said, "I definitely am." He said, "Why follow somebody who has been up and on the way out rather than staying with someone who is still on the way up?" I can still recall his saying that.

But anyway, I left, and later on I again saw Delp Styer when, as I previously told you, the war in Europe had terminated and he and top members of his staff came over to the Pacific and he headed up the supply command of our forces out in the Pacific with headquarters in Manila.

Q: Another West Point graduate of 1916 whom I know you did a lot of work with, Dwight Johns?

A: Dwight was cadet adjutant in 1915-16 when I was a plebe up at the Point. He was tall, thin, of fine military bearing, and was admired and respected

by the corps. I don't think we served together after that until World War II. I don't recall that he had any contact with me when I was in the Chief's Office. When General MacArthur and selected members of his staff came down from Bataan and Corregidor to Australia, I was chief engineer of this new command of General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Theater [GHQ, SWPA]. Dwight, who had been my senior in the class of '16, was chief of staff of USASOS, a subordinate command under GHQ, which made it sort of a little touchy. I felt a little embarrassed about it. But he cooperated beautifully, both he and I, and we got along extremely well. He remained a brigadier general, but he performed very, very well both as the chief of staff of USASOS in Australia and later in command of the Service Command in New Guinea under trying and difficult conditions.

In New Guinea we were developing a number of airdromes and port and base facilities in the Moresby area in addition to airdromes and a major port and base facility at Milne Bay, down south. New Guinea was assuming greater responsibilities under a joint US-Australian command, and it was very important to coordinate the inter-Allied service activities. Dwight Johns was relieved of his command in Australia and was made the commanding general in charge of all the service activities in New Guinea.

There he had to deal with the Australians as well as the American forces because, particularly in the early part of the war, the only units that were in combat there were the Australian forces. The major US forces in New Guinea in the initial phase were the engineers and our Air Force. In fact, our engineers were the first ones of all the American forces to actually engage in combat when down at Milne Bay. A major force of Japanese made a landing there seeking to destroy our developing base and airfields. It is interesting to note that their farthest advance was halted where our engineers [43d Engineer General Service Regiment] had cleared an area for one of three runways. They hadn't built the drome yet, but that gave them a cleared field of fire and that was where our engineers and the Australians stopped the Japanese, who then withdrew saving this vital base from enemy capture. We were proud, too, that our engineers, not the infantry, were the first to engage the enemy in ground combat.

But anyway, in Moresby and in the overall New Guinea area, we had a very large engineer command. We also had the Australians, both combat and service, and it was very important to develop this base and related air facilities and to coordinate with the Air Force, through Kenney and

Whitehead, who would continuously make extreme and changing demands. So Johns had a very difficult task up there in connection with trying to coordinate the Australian requirements, they wanted this and that in connection with their operations, and with the American forces too, including keeping the Air Force satisfied. He did it extremely well as commanding general of the Allied Service Command in New Guinea.

Q: This brings up a question about command. When a graduate of West Point receives command of an organization and he has people from classes ahead of him under him, does this cause any kind of problem? You said you were uneasy at first about having Johns under you because he was in an earlier class at West Point.

A: Well, I think it depends on the individual. Some, you know, might resent it. During the war I had Stickney, Teale, Johns, Worsham, Earl Gesler, and others who had been senior serving under me. I even had General [Clarence L.] Sturdevant, class of '08, who had been so much senior and my shooting partner when he captained the Engineer Rifle Team when we won the National Matches in 1924. He wasn't directly under my command, but in 1944-45 he headed up the New Guinea Base Section of USASOS, and you might say we frequently had to give instructions to them.

But we had no problems. I don't know what their attitude was. I'm sure the junior felt much happier—he was up on top. I think it's more in how the seniors felt in a position where they were under a former junior, as to how they accepted it. I think a lot depended on how the one who had the senior command, how he acted and recognized the situation. In other words, if you're just harpooning them or concentrating on them, you'll build up a resentment. But my attitude was sort of sympathetic, and I would always be trying to help him get up, maybe to where he should be. Promotion is, of course, only one part of qualification, and when you get it and if you can't handle it, you're out. But with respect to promotion, opportunity is one important factor in connection with it. It depends largely on whether you're in the right place at the right time.

Q: How about L. D. Worsham?

A: Worsham had previously been on the ALCAN Highway [Alaska-Canada Highway, now Alaska Highway], and that was a tough assignment. Then later on he came out to our theater toward the end of hostilities as chief engineer, AFWESPAC [Army Forces Western Pacific]. All of our construction work during the war had been done by engineer forces. We didn't do the way they did later in Korea and particularly in Viet Nam, for instance. You know that in Viet Nam they brought in civilian contractors with their special equipment and personnel and the contractors built this and that, but at terrific cost. But during our Southwest Pacific war, all of our engineer effort was done by engineer troops, a major engineer task. We used the Royal Australian Engineer [RAE] units, the work units that were with the Royal Australian Air Force [RAAF] the Navy Seabees [construction battalions], and in the rear areas in Australia we also used the Allied Works Council with the Australian government. They had personnel, usually senior personnel, who were not qualified to fight in combat, and they organized them into work corps units.

But after our recapture of the Philippines, we had Manila and other areas of the Philippines, all of which had been badly battered up, requiring reconstruction. In Manila the buildings were all battered down with artillery fire and so on, both by the Japanese and also by our forces in recapturing it. The utilities and bridges were all destroyed, so there was a major job in rebuilding. We also had Okinawa to be developed as an important Pacific postwar base, and there was a lot of reconstruction to be done there also. We decided that what we should do was to organize a regular Engineer Department division and district to release our engineer units for our contemplated invasion of Japan. So I wrote in and requested authorization, and the Chief set up an Engineer Department division. So they came out, we had conferences, and we set up the Western Ocean Division office in California, and we had the engineer districts in Okinawa, Manila, and Guam. Worsham was selected to be the division engineer. So I had frequent contacts with him in connection with the conduct of this reconstruction phase.

But it hadn't do primarily with the combat phase of the war effort. It continued on, particularly after the end of hostilities when the war was all over. Then we were developing Okinawa as a major American postwar base and building more permanent-type construction rather than the type of work we had been doing where we wanted to get airdromes and base facilities

hastily done for immediate operational needs and no construction for permanence.

So Worsham was the division engineer and performed very well. We did have many problems because it was toward the end of the war and the Philippines was in chaos. We made every effort to get Philippine labor and so on to work, but we had a major problem with Filipinos who were stealing supplies, transportation, and equipment. The contractors, too, had their problems getting the right type of US personnel to work over there. For example, on Okinawa there were no white lights [entertainment areas] or similar diversion, and some of the contractor personnel would take to drink, and they'd have to send many of them home. But Worsham carried on as division engineer and did very, very well on that.

Q: What about Bill Hoge?

A: I knew Bill up at West Point. He was on the football team and also, I think, on the baseball team. He was a talented and respected cadet, and everybody liked him. He was sort of quiet. The next contact I had with him was when he was an instructor at the US Army Engineer School when I was a student there with Ed Leavey and others. He was one of our instructors in tactics and some form of engineering, so we got to know him quite well. He was a major then. Everybody liked him. Of course, his principal subsequent gallant operations were over in the European Theater. I had no direct knowledge but heard a lot of what he had accomplished over there as an armored division commander and subsequently as a corps commander in Korea up to commanding general of the European Theater. He was highly respected by everybody in the Corps. We didn't know anybody who had any words against him for being overly aggressive or this or that. In his quiet, determined way, he performed very, very ably.

Q: Do you know anything about Stanley Scott?

A: Stan Scott was on our academy beast barracks detail. He would haze us and so on, so he was not one of our most beloved persons at that time, but he was doing his assigned job. I saw him up in Alaska one time postwar when I was ordered back to the States, and on my return flight I met him up there

and had dinner with him. He was then commanding general of the US Army Forces there. But I had no service contact with him.

Q: Were there any other classmates or cadets at West Point during your time that you either got to know very well or that particularly impressed you?

A: Elmer Q. Oliphant, but we mentioned him, and Hugh Murrill.

Q: What kind of career did he subsequently have?

A: Hugh Murrill was cadet adjutant of the corps, and he was one whom Pat Tansey was working against because he was on the upper cadet layer. Hugh Murrill had been a graduate of VMI [Virginia Military Institute] and seemed like the tin soldier par excellence. He was very erect, tall, and handsome. He was also quarterback on the football team, but he sort of kept to himself. He was military from A to Z throughout, and I respected him highly. He did not remain in the service, so that later on when World War II came, he didn't get to higher rank, as he otherwise would have attained other than colonel in ETO Headquarters [European Theater of Operations].

We did have Ophie Knight, who was the ranking cadet major of the corps. He was the senior cadet officer of the whole Corps of Cadets. After some years' service in the infantry he resigned, as did his brother. But then when the war came, he came back onto active duty and later on was assigned out in the Pacific. He served as provost marshal on my staff at ASCOM (Army Service Command). This was the new command the GHQ setup to support the major operations for the invasion of Leyte and Luzon; I was detached as chief engineer in order to head this important command.

We used to have staff conferences in connection with preparation and coordination of plans as to what forces, landing craft, lighters, trucks, and supplies we'd need to handle our engineer requirements for the major construction effort, port and medical facilities, and the vast tonnages that had to come. Ophie was our provost marshal. Well, one day at lunch—we had been going at full pressure—and one day Colonel Wallender, my staff quartermaster, had just received his promotion to brigadier general. So we had this luncheon and served a few drinks with it, congratulating him on being promoted. During the discussion, somehow Ophie, who had been the

heavyweight wrestling champion up at West Point as well as senior cadet officer, was talking about his accomplishments there and discussion got back to wrestling and his achievements. I said, "Oh, now Ophie, I was the middleweight wrestling champion. And I doubt you could throw me even now." The discussion went on like that with all the staff around, and here I was, the commanding general. Finally he had gotten so to where we just had to go to it. I said, "I'll grab you by your leg, by the thigh, I'll flip you up in the air and I'll drop you on the floor, putting my right shoulder blade into the pit of your stomach, and you won't even know what happened."

Here was Ophie weighing about 225 pounds and there I was, about 155 pounds. So we shook hands and I made a quick dive and grabbed his thigh, picked him up, flipped him over on his back, with my right shoulder blade tip right in the pit of his stomach and knocked the breath out of him and there he lay. Well, we got a pillow and put it under him and left him there and then we went to lunch. That was Ophie Knight, who had been the senior cadet officer in the corps at the time we were there, and now my provost marshal. Nonetheless, he performed very well on his assignment.

Q: What was West Point like during World War I?

A: You mean while I was there during World War I? I don't know whether there was any special change in it other than an acceleration of everything including graduations. There was also an acceleration of academics. I think they were also trying to give a little more attention to combat training, but not at the expense of academics. They were also stressing French in place of Spanish.

I don't recall anything overly special, but occasionally you'd have some visiting French general or other commander come on up and give a lecture on the operations in Europe. The war hadn't gone on long enough, I guess, the time we were there for any senior American commanders to come back and talk about their experiences. But it was not the impact one might think that it would have. At first they were cutting our only furlough off completely, but then they even waived that; the class lost only about a week or so.

Q: So, except for the acceleration, it didn't really have much impact on West Point at all?

A: No, no.

Q: Was it your intention all along to be commissioned in the Corps of Engineers or had you selected that commission because of your standing in the class?

A: I had always wanted to get into the engineers. When I got my appointment to West Point, a reporter of the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* came around and saw my mother. In my absence she gave him a picture of me and a glowing report on her son. It appeared in the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*, among the other items, and it said, "Had Hugh John Casey been born one week later, he would not have been able to enter West Point." I was entering as the baby of the class.

Then it went on to say that I graduated number one in my class in high school and one in my class in elementary school. It also said number one in my class in Brooklyn Polytechnic when that wasn't so because you didn't even know where you stood there. It also stated that I now was going up to West Point and "graduate one in the class and go into the Corps of Engineers."

Well, when I got to West Point, there were at least a dozen yearlings who came around from different places with this clipping. They would always save clippings about youngsters who were going to West Point, especially if there was anything novel in them. Then they'd come back, giving me an hour or two to be able to recite this back from memory.

Lucius Clay, my roommate, would have to stand at attention, with his chin in, shoulders back, as they braced him, while I had to repeat this article. If I repeated that once, I repeated it several hundred times, with poor Lucius having to listen to it all the time while being braced by the upperclassmen.

But you were talking about my ambition for the engineers. As to this newspaper column, I wasn't there when Mother gave them this about my going into the Corps of Engineers, and I did not even know what one had to do to get into the Corps of Engineers.

Q: How was the Corps of Engineers looked at by the cadets? Was it looked at as a very favorable branch of the service?

A: Yes, it was. At that time they had promotion by branch of service. And in the engineers, I think some of the former graduates served for a while and then they had attractive offers in civilian activity, so that a lot of them didn't stay on for long periods of service, creating vacancies. Whereas in the infantry and other combat branches, most all stayed on for 30 years. They were in the military mainly to stay, whereas in the engineers they had opportunity for other jobs, so that there was a flow of personnel going on up. That was the reason that, for instance, when we were graduated, because of expansion of the Corps and many vacancies, while all the rest of the class were commissioned as second lieutenants in the infantry, cavalry, artillery, and so on, those of us who were graduated in the engineers became second lieutenants, permanent first lieutenants, and also temporary captains from the day of graduation. As it worked out I, at the age of 19, became a captain in the Corps of Engineers in World War I.

That was the reason those graduates who could make it would rather go into the Corps of Engineers-because of the advancement possibilities. As I say, during the war, unless one got some separate promotion, our classmates would see the engineers as captains, while the other classmates in other branches, with a rare exception who happened to get a temporary promotion, were serving as second lieutenants.

Of course, later on, after World War I, they changed the procedure for promotion by separate branch and adopted the single list for all branches. On the single list, they rated the seniority of everybody in company officer grade based solely on the date in which he had entered the service. So as a result, second lieutenants who had been second lieutenants throughout the war and who had gotten in prior to June 1918 would rank us on the single list for the rest of the time until promotion by selection was later authorized for higher grades. Though we still kept our temporary rank superiority, in subsequent pro-motion there were second and first lieutenants who had been under us becoming senior to us.

Q: Did the fact that the Corps of Engineers had this separate promotion by branch and tended to have higher grades than their classmates, or even of course higher than earlier class graduates of West Point, lead to any kind of

problems? I know General Moore mentioned that there was a lot of jealousy involved and a lot of people didn't like the Corps of Engineers because they had the higher grades and had higher rank earlier.

A: Yes, there was a bit of jealousy. I don't think it was intense jealousy, but sort of a little resentment or envy as to why should these people here in this branch go on up, and over here somebody may feel that he's outstanding in his branch, and over there, let's say in the engineers, there's somebody who appears to them relatively mediocre and yet here he is up there. So apparently, as a result, they shifted the whole system and went into a single seniority list. Those of us who were in the engineers thought it was a little unfair in this respect, that when they put in the single list, they said that all those in company grade rank would be integrated by length of service but those who were majors or above would be integrated within their relative rank, by length of service. With those who were captains, first lieutenants, and second lieutenants, it didn't make any difference what their rank was; they were all listed just in the order of length of service seniority. Whereas the men above company grade were listed in the order of service seniority, but within their respective ranks. If they'd done that for the lower group, why then those who had been captains would have been on the captain list based on seniority and the first lieutenants would be on their list based on seniority, and then the second lieutenants. But the way it was, somebody down here who was a second lieutenant and had been in for a long time, who had gotten in early but never promoted, why he was up near the top of the company officer list. In the field officer grades they adjusted them by seniority, but within their respective field officer grade.

219th Engineer Regiment

Q: Upon your graduation from West Point, did you have any choice of assignment or were you compelled to take the assignment at the Engineer Officers Training School at Camp Lee?

A: No. All of the engineers in our class, I think, were sent down there initially as student officers, just for a couple of weeks. Then they selected some to be instructors, and I was among those initially so selected and stationed there.