

instructor level, and my brother could talk from the cadet level. We had quite a combination there, but we carefully avoided using anything that we'd heard. We had a pretty good concept of what was going on. As far as I'm concerned, there wasn't a heck of a lot of change between the time I was a cadet and those times. As far as the honor system and what it was trying to accomplish and all that business, I was satisfied with it. I had a good feeling about it at that time, and I don't think there was any difference -- the honor code was working the same way pretty much. The size was about the same. There was not too much difference.

Q: And from West Point you went to the Command and General Staff School?

A: Command and General Staff School<sup>37</sup> **was really a** shock because it was a tough place to get into. People were competing for the assignment all the time. I wasn't competing. I was just a lieutenant, and there was one other lieutenant. The personnel officer from the Chief's office came up to West Point one day and took me aside and said, 'I think we're going to send **you to** Leavenworth as a student.' I nearly dropped dead! But it was real fine and a wonderful thing. It really made **me**.

Q: Did they give you a reason for picking you out?

A: I don't know why they did.

Q: It wasn't usual for an officer of your rank, was it?

A: Oh no. In the prior years there had been a two-year course, and there had been a couple of suicides at Leavenworth, not doing too well at it. It was real talent they were collecting there. The other lieutenant was an Air Force man, nonacademy, named [Paul] Hansell, who was considered the finest theoretical tactician in the Air Force, at least the other people always told us this, people like Tommy White, a future Air Force chief of staff. I was extremely young. As a matter of fact, during the year enough people were promoted to major and lieutenant colonel who passed on captain's bars, and major's leaves, and even lieutenant colonel's leaves, that I never bought any of that insignia.

You'd come in in the morning, and there on the corner of your desk would be a stack of new rank. I don't know how it happened. I don't know why. I don't know whether the soldier's medal had anything to do with it. I don't know whether I had gotten a good report out of West Point or what, but it was fine as far as I'm concerned, it made a big difference.

In the "W" row at Leavenworth, when I was there as a student, I can't remember a single one of the 15 to 18 officers in that row who didn't become at least a brigadier general in World War II. There were lieutenant generals, major generals. Tommy White, Chief of Staff of the Air Force at a later date, came out of that class.<sup>38</sup> He was from the "W" row. It just happened to be the right time frame, and then the war came along at the same time.

Incidentally, you look at my career and you'll find, **except** for my first year at Mobile, I went half of my career on the military side and in schools and the other half more or less on the construction side. The end of World War II was the dividing line. I was 16 years coming back to a District and then another 20 years on the other side.

Getting to Leavenworth, in those days at that age couldn't help but advance my chances. I worked pretty darn hard, and another thing was, as a lieutenant, I didn't think I knew everything. The worst problem you have with an Army school is the more expert you are in a subject, the less you think of it. Because you think you know better than the instructor, and the instructor is trying to put across a point, not fight the issue. I found that out when I was an instructor at Leavenworth. I got together with Hansell, he lived downstairs, and studied with him every time we thought there was going to be an Air Force problem, and he studied with me every time we thought it was going to be an Engineer problem. We both did poorer in those two subjects than we did in all the other subjects. You think you know it and so you don't have an open mind, listening to what they are trying to tell you.

Another thing they taught me there at Leavenworth, they gave us a little black loose-leaf pocket notebook. They told us that you could have it open any time. There was no test, exercise, or map problem that you couldn't open that thing. so you could write anything in there you wanted to. But they had one hell of a lot of subjects! I'd sit down with a man named Jimmy Green, class of '27, Signal Corps.<sup>39</sup> He was a real brain. He later became professor of electricity at the military academy after the war. He and I studied together every night. We'd write things down on a big pad and then we'd sit and condense them, and we'd brief them to where one letter meant a whole word. By the time you had done that three or four times and put them in the little black book, you didn't need the book. It did give you a crutch, a feeling of satisfaction, but the exercise of doing it was what made you learn it. I've found that true in my speeches and things like that since. I like to outline a speech, then write it, and then reoutline it, then put it on cards -- I don't look at the cards very often, by that time I don't need them.

Q: Should we move on to your service in southeast Asia during World War II?

A: Well, we haven't gotten to Hawaii again yet.

Q: With the 3d Engineers?

A: Yes. It was a three-year tour in those days, but I got sent back to Leavenworth after half a tour, which made me disgusted. I would rather have stayed in Schofield Barracks than have gone back to Leavenworth.

Well, again, about three months before graduation from Leavenworth, I got a letter from the Chief's office asking if there were any cogent reasons why I should not be sent to the Philippines. I went back to them very happy and said I thought it was a fine idea. I'd never been there. My father and mother were there. My father was commanding general at Corregidor, and it would be nice to be stationed near them once. I thought I could learn something and be of more value to the Army. It was just fine.

In late May I got a telegram asking were there any cogent reasons why my orders shouldn't be changed to Hawaii. I sent them about three pages of telegram with all the reasons: I had been there as a boy and gone to high school there: I'd been to the university; I'd seen it; I knew the islands, the people, and there wasn't much more I could learn on that; and I needed to get more broadening by going to the Philippines. They came back with, "Your telegram noted. Your orders to Hawaii are being issued."

But there's another thing I've learned. Almost every time that I tried to fight real hard against doing something proper authorities had decided I should do and got overruled, it turned out to be in my best interest. So I've always tried to tell the young officers, "Sure, try and manage your career to a degree, come up with what you'd like to do, but don't fight the problem. If they've got a good reason for doing something, go ahead and do it because it will probably turn out better for you than if you don't." At the time they had a reason, I'm sure, balance of the number of lieutenants or captains or something. I was going to be a captain by that time by act of Congress. Had I gone to the Philippines and stayed the three-year tour, I would have been in there when the war started, and I would have had a lot different career. You didn't get out of the Philippines by the time the war started. Most everybody over there got captured or killed or wounded and that completed their activity for four years or so. Some of them overcame it, but it sure would have made a difference.

So I went to Schofield Barracks. One thing it did do, it got me away from where there was any modern equipment. We were still -- my first unit at Benning had been a mule-drawn outfit. We had a mule-drawn pontoon train. We had mule-drawn escort wagons. I was a mounted officer, and I had three horses in my company. The modern World War II equipment just didn't get to Schofield by 1941. In fact it wasn't getting much of any place. We didn't have much. As things began to stir and build up they got them other places, but at Schofield we were still running around with little dozers and trucks. It was good training, and you had good weather, and you could get at it, and it

was good experience. I had a chance to be a company commander of a bigger outfit and in a division.

Most of the younger officers complained that the training wasn't the proper kind, they weren't getting enough time, or there was too much emphasis being given to this or that, or the troops were dissipated by special duty or athletics. We in the 3d Engineers kept griping along with all the rest of them. One night Lieutenant Paul Yount, 40 who had been an instructor with me at West Point and was now the adjutant of the 3d Engineers (he later became chief of transportation, as a major general), and I were sitting there griping, and our wives said to us, "If you're going to do all this griping, why don't you do something really positive, why don't you write a letter to the chief of staff of the Army and tell him how he ought to be running this thing? You sit here and tell each other."

Well, they kind of stirred us up a little bit. So we did. We sat down for two or three weeks at night and wrote a letter to the chief of staff of the U.S. Army, through channels, making recommendations for improvements in training, as, for instance, when a unit goes on tactical training they should get special duty people back in order for them to go as a unit. It would produce better training if the tactical units were separated from the administrative side, because tactical units ought to be able to get up and go without leaving key people behind to run the bakery and the administration of the post. There ought to be bigger training areas that they could move to. **They ought to move there for months at a time, not days at a time.** And we went through a lot of recommendations. It wasn't bad, it really was a good idea.

We put it all together and addressed it through the commanding general of the 24th Division, which was Hawaiian Division. We put it in the mailbox and right after we put it in the mailbox, we lost our nerve. We thought, oh boy, I hope somebody loses that. Days went by and nothing happened. Then about two weeks later I was in my orderly room and somebody came in and said, "You're wanted up at

division headquarters right now." I went running up to the division headquarters and who should be sitting there looking a little white but Lieutenant Yount. And I thought oh, here we go. So we went in and reported. The commanding general asked us, "Did you write this suggestion to the chief of staff of the Army?" We said, "Yes, sir." He said, "You had the unmitigated gall to do that?" "Yes, sir." "Well, are you sorry you did it?" We both said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Well, I'm not. It's pretty good: What you've said here is well worth thinking about. You did at least have sense enough to put it through channels, so we can't get you for that. I think it's fine, and I want to put an endorsement on, saying that these items merit consideration." Oh, what a relief:

This was about 1940, and near the end of the war I received through channels **about the 25th endorsement back to me, my copy of it stating that "The chief of staff of the Army appreciates your interest and your thought but believes the letter is redundant. The ideas expressed therein have to a large extent already been adopted by the Army. We appreciate it,"** and so on. It's true, they had. Much of the development in the early days of '41 and '42 was along the general lines of what we had suggested in the letter, but it had never gotten to where it would do any good. But it happened, and we were dumb enough to try it. We didn't get skinned.

Hawaii? I don't know. I got a lot of experience being football referee in the Schofield Barracks football league. We did a lot of planning on demolitions in the hills and the tunnels. you know **they bring the water for the pineapple and sugar fields through the mountains because the heavy rain falls on the other side. So they have tunnels to bring it right through. Well, we were afraid the invader would land over there and come through those tunnels. Every so often we were sent to explore them and make up our mind what size charges should be used to destroy them. The thing that always intrigued me was that when you got there to the gate, the man who unlocked the gate to let you go in, and who would come along, couldn't speak English, but he'd point out the chamber where the explosives were to go. He knew all about it. He was a native-born Japanese, inevitably.**

I often wondered what would have happened if there had been an invasion. We had an alert in June of '40, when the Japanese fleet disappeared from sight someplace. We were on that alert to a large extent from there until I left the first of February of '41. That's too long to be on an alert. It loses its effectiveness. But at that time the naval commander restricted the number of ships that could be in Pearl Harbor. The dawn patrol went out every morning from the Air Force. We had people guarding bridges all around the island. But as I say, it went on too long.

The thing that always bothered me about Pearl Harbor, I'm sure there was economical and political reasoning behind it, but when I sailed out of there on a transport on the first of February, there couldn't have been a Pearl Harbor because there weren't that many ships allowed in there, maybe one or two at a time. There couldn't have been the problem of not being able to get the ammunition out because we were on the kind of alert which had ammunition by the guns. There were several forms of alert -- in one case you'd have all your guns out and manned and the ammunition there, and in the other you'd have just the opposite, with all the ammunition protected and put away someplace. So it was almost impossible for me to comprehend ten months later, when I sat in my living room at Leavenworth and listened on the radio to the story of the attack. The complete change from February 1941 -- the radar not working too well, the ships all being in Pearl Harbor, the sailors being on leave. I just couldn't believe it.

Now, our little boy, who was then three years old, was in the living room playing around when the radio began sputtering out this stuff, and we had to turn off the radio, because he kept crying and saying, "They're sinking my ships, I saw those ships, I know those ships." I had to go next door to listen. To me it was just as hard to absorb that this could go on as it was to him. I'm convinced, without really knowing facts, that the powers that be had complained that with the ships being at sea, and the sailors being kept away, they weren't selling enough goods, and that we had to reverse this posture. Why they were on an anti-sabotage alert, I don't know, but there sure

was a lack of communication and information-passing at that time. It couldn't have happened under the circumstances of ten months earlier. It could have happened, but not that badly.

During the latter half of 1940, the 3d Engineers had the opportunity to do a little troop construction, and I found out more about what the troop units can build or not build, can do rapidly or only slowly. Frankly, I was probably better off mentally going back to Leavenworth as an instructor than staying in Hawaii. Certainly, as far as my long-term future was concerned, I was better off going back to Leavenworth than to be sitting out on Bataan or Oahu.

Q: And you got orders to go back with no reason? You said that was after a year-and-a-half, which was unusual.

A: I know what the reason was. The acceleration of building up new units in the States was going on, and they were trying to get the instructors away from Leavenworth that had been there, so they were bringing in fresh blood, and I was probably replacing a lieutenant colonel who went to colonel immediately; I was a captain. And he probably went off -- well, I know he did -- he went off and modernized the armored engineer training. That was it, but they didn't ever tell you.

When I went back to Leavenworth as an instructor, classes were up to 800 for only two months at a time, so there was a terrific turnover, plus the commanders and general staff of the new divisions came there for a month of schooling. I really got to know by sight, sound, or reputation just about everybody in the Army. It was an unusual opportunity with the four years at West Point and then a break and then another four years at West Point, followed by a year in the Leavenworth class and then this Leavenworth instructor business. I sometimes have a little trouble separating the experiences.

Most of the instructors who had been there when I was a student were still there, but within six months most of them were gone. For instance, within six months, I became the responsible

instructor for two key areas: landing on a hostile shore and airborne operations. As an example, I became a director of the Army Cooperative Insuring Association [an insurance company] and in less than six months I was the senior in time on the board and became the president. And that meant I received \$25 a month as president, and so I had to get a Social Security card. So -my Social Security card dates way back to '41 or '42, which is far earlier than most regular Army military.

Also, I got the chance to go around the country observing and learning from the exercises and training going on to come back to Leavenworth to improve our presentation. We were by this time running out of time and trying to teach too many people, so we were doing it by demonstrations to a large extent. We put on an act, a four-hour act, with pretty much no ad-libbing but you didn't stand up there and read your lines, you just went ahead and talked, and went over certain ideas. This was true particularly in both the landing on the hostile shore and the airborne operations -- both of which were in the wave of the future, and for a captain or major of Engineers to be the instructor heading those teams was quite something.

But again, I'd hit there at just the right time to be senior in instructor time and to move up the ladder as more experienced instructors departed. As I have said, I met lots of future leaders and remet many I had known before.

Jimmy Gavin, one of my West Point classmates, was a student at Leavenworth when I was an instructor and came around to see me, spent a whole Sunday afternoon talking with me, wanted my advice. He wanted to get into airborne, but he didn't know whether he should do it or not. I told him that was the last thing I wanted to do. I wanted to be a generalist rather than a specialist. But I said, "If you are ever going to do it, do it this minute. Don't wait till tomorrow. This is the time. It may not amount to a row of beans, but if it is going to, jump now." This was about late '41, and he did. He got out of that school when he graduated and immediately applied for the other business and got into it. And he did right well at it. He was asking me about going airborne because I was running the exercise on it.

And you'll find out later that because I was running the exercise on landing on a hostile shore, it affected the next moves that came along. So why do these things happen? Darned if I know. But they're interesting.

Q: Do you mean a next move in terms of immediate or longer range?

A: No, my next stage, when I went from Leavenworth, what happened to me, how I got away from there. For instance, I was on a transport that was participating in an exercise in amphibious training off Chesapeake Bay, in fact it was in hostile submarine waters, so I got a little ribbon to put on, American theater. I went for a month to the largest maneuver ever conducted on U.S. shores -- the September 1941 maneuvers in Louisiana. There were many things wrong with them, but they were a real training ground. Eisenhower was a lieutenant colonel during that maneuver.<sup>41</sup> I was a captain, and I got selected -- why, I don't know, tickled me to death -- I got issued a driver, and a command car, and a case of rations, and went for a month to the maneuver. And so I went on both sides: I saw everything, wore a little green armband so I could go anywhere.

I got particularly interested in General George Patton.<sup>42</sup> I knew George Patton wouldn't pay much attention to the rules, and one day I noticed that his outfit, the 2d Armored, which was in eastern Texas, had disappeared from the other side's intelligence map. They didn't know where he was. I began thinking, he won't pay any attention to the rules. The rules' say you won't use commercial gas stations, you won't use commercial eateries. But when he wants to accomplish something, he'd just ignore that. So what is he going to try and do? And I looked at the map awhile, and I said, "He's going to try and come in and capture Shreveport from the rear -- some portion of his division, he can't get his division there, but he'll come in and make a show, and the newspapers will publish it, and Patton will be the hero." So I went to find out if that was happening.

I drove up to Shreveport in the command vehicle -- it was a panel truck really -- and when I got there

asked around quietly if anybody had heard anything of armor nearby, but they hadn't. so I looked at the roadmap, and picked out the road from east Texas, and told my driver, "Let's go down this road about 30 miles." We went down the road, and hadn't gone very far, when suddenly we came to a convoy. Standing up in the first armored car was Patton holding his hand up and saying, "Halt!" so I told the **driver to stop** and we stopped. He called me over and said, "What are you doing here?" "Well," I said, "I'm observing the exercises." He asked my name and I told him and he said, "How come you're here?" "Well," I said, "I'd rather not answer that, sir." He said, "That's just the reason you will answer it." I said, "All right, sir. I figured that General Patton would be coming in here." He said, "Well, do you know who I am?" I said, "Yes sir, you're General Patton." He said, "Yes, that's right. How did you happen to figure I'd be here?" I said, "I figured that you'd want to make a big show and look like you had won the war and you wouldn't let the rules bother you too much, so **you'd** be here with something fast-moving that could get in there and make a big showing."

He said, 'Yes, you figured that all out?' I said, "Yes, sir." "Well," he said, "I'll tell you what. We're going to bivouac down here in about two miles. You come on and spend the night with us. I'll let you sleep under our command vehicle with me." That was really a great privilege to sleep under his command car with him, but he just wanted to keep me where I couldn't get away and go tell anybody. So I joined his convoy, and the next day we entered Shreveport and the papers spread it all over. **It really** gave me good insight into George Patton. I'd had some knowledge of him before, but now I knew a lot more about **him**. This showed up later and was helpful. I learned a lot in that month-long maneuver. It was a real lesson to most of the staff to realize they couldn't go night after night, day after day, 24 hours, they had to take some breaks, bring in the number two guys and so on. Basically, **it** was just an exercise in living, there wasn't any real shooting. There wasn't a whole lot of marvelous strategy or tactics, but it was three weeks to a month of just plain living it out, and it was damn good experience because we **hadn't** had anything like that in a long time.<sup>43</sup>

Then again, I got sent off to visit the Navy at the Providence, Rhode Island, Naval War College, and see some of the amphibious Engineer troops training in New England and see what was happening.<sup>44</sup> And this was in July of '42. The commandant of the school called me in when I was to be sent on this trip and said, "\*\*Now I want to tell you something. You're not going to get away from here. You're going to stay here.. You're going to be an instructor here for a long time yet. And if you try and get somebody to ask for you and I find out about it, I'll cut your throat. Now do you want to go under those terms?" I said, "Yes, sir, I think it's a good idea." He said, "I think it's a good idea, too, but I don't want you going and trying to sell yourself/ I said, "All right, sir, I won't." So I went off on about a two weeks' trip, observed maneuver& went to observe the amphibious Engineers up in New England, went to the Naval War College, came back about the first week in August. And I reported to him and told him what I'd seen and learned and said I had not made any effort to get transferred. He said, "All right, I accept that."

About a week later I got an urgent call to report to the commandant's office. I walked in and he said, "I want you to know I don't think you did this, but you are leaving today with both winter and summer uniforms and you'll report to Washington tomorrow morning, and I don't hold it against you because I don't think you had anything to do with it." So I got all excited and took off thinking, oh boy, I've got to win the war.

I got to Washington, and I found out what had happened. There was an organization called the Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet. It was a [Navy] organization and it had controlled [the 1st Infantry Division and] the 9th Infantry Division and some Marine troops [the 1st Marine Division] to train them in developing, improving, and becoming experts in amphibious operations. The Army had become disappointed with the state of [amphibious] training.... So the Army had come up with the idea of having the 3d Infantry Division on the West Coast, a unit that had trained in amphibious operations, split their staff with the commander, Jonathan Anderson,<sup>45</sup> and some top staff and some

number two staff members coming east to become the Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet, while retaining their positions in the 3d Infantry Division.

They had been hurriedly assembled in some of the temporary buildings at the War College, and they realized about the middle of August they didn't have any Engineers. And they said, "Where will we find an Engineer that knows anything about amphibious operations?" They didn't particularly want to take the commander away from the 3d Engineer Battalion, so one of the younger ones of the G-3 staff that had come right out of the Leavenworth class and had been ordered to Washington for this Corps staff, a man named Connor, Bert Connor,<sup>46</sup> whom I had taught as a cadet (he's now retired as a lieutenant general), said, "I know the one you can get. You've got a good Engineer out at Leavenworth who's teaching the stuff, and he knows what it's about. Why not get him?" So bingo, that's why I'm there. And that's where I say the connection came.

I got there and they couldn't tell me much. We knew an amphibious operation [TORCH] was being cranked up, but we didn't know what they were trying to accomplish. We were just fishing around, but we gradually learned a little more. In about a week they sent us down to Camp Pickett, Virginia, which was to be the location of the Corps headquarters, and we began to get a little information on the areas that they were going to attack. We knew nothing about anything on the Mediterranean side, all we knew about was the force [the Western Task Force] commanded by General Patton was going in on the West African side, and we didn't know too much about it, but we just knew that. And we knew that the troops couldn't know anything. They were not allowed to know where they were going or anything like that. So we had to try and plan everything we could, and we had to try and train them.

They began to move the 3d Division to the East Coast, and the 9th Division was at Bragg. I kept pushing for some exercises to practice going ashore, even in Chesapeake Bay. We were very much restricted because there wasn't any landing craft to amount to anything, and they finally said,

"Well, if you ground one of them and hurt it, that's it. There are no more to replace it." I said, "You've got to get these people out on exercise.", So they -- I don't know who but somebody -- designated me to run a school in the Nansemont Hotel in Virginia Beach, it's down in the Norfolk area, partway out to Virginia Beach. The Navy had taken it over, and I was to go there for a week. I was to run a school for the G-staff: G-1, G-2, G-3, and G-4; and a few more of the 2d Armored Division who would be a part of this task force. They were expertly trained on the desert, but now I was to train them in a week to be experts in amphibious operations.

I went down to that hotel, and there wasn't a soul in it but me. There were Marine guards that came around every now and then. Every new Marine guard that came around and found me sitting in a room puzzling about what to do would raise hell because nobody had told him there was anybody there, and this went on. I got blackboards and lined up a course. They reported in on Monday, and I had them for six days. I had to try and teach them combat loading of ships and how you make out your landing plan and how you make out your boat loading plans, and all this kind of business. It wasn't the easiest job in the world because most of these guys knew so much more about armor than I did that it wasn't even worth talking about. But they didn't know a thing about going in the water and coming out again.

I preached and gave them some test exercises. We got a transport and combat-loaded it with tanks, and Patton showed up to watch it. The first tank lighters started ashore and one dropped his ramp too soon in too deep water and the tank went off, and that was the end of the exercise. We never unloaded another one. So they went to war without ever having practiced in calm, quiet water. That was it.

We had a little infantry exercise further [sic] up the bay. They bashed up some lighters and they told you, "All right, you will have that many fewer when you go." So that ended that, and we didn't do the things you should do. I went down to Fort Bragg and tried to see what we could do and decided

we could build them some mock-ups. Nobody had any money to build mock-ups, nobody had any authority to build mock-ups. So I said, "Okay, you build them. I'll be the authority and we'll straighten it out afterwards." And they built several landing craft mock-ups so you could practice grasping the gunnel and going over with your weapon, and they built the sides of the ship with the cargo nets to crawl down and get in the personnel craft.

I went back and wrote a request for the funds to Army Ground Forces in late August, and about the middle of September I got a letter back turning it down. They said, "No, you can't do that. There's not enough time left to use them and pay for the thing." I went back at them once more and said, "No! thank you, but they've been built. They're worn out. They have done a lot of good. The troops are better trained than they were. Now please get me off the hook." And so they came back and authorized it after we had done it. But we did get that much training in. It was scary. Somebody had to know that there was a good chance the French and the Spanish wouldn't really come in and clobber us because it looked like they were just sitting there ready to clobber us if they wanted to.

We tried to figure, what could we do to help these unit commanders? So I conceived the idea of making a model so you could take oblique pictures of it. I conceived the idea of making a plaster of paris model of the--landing area in Fedala so that oblique pictures of it would give an impression of what it was going to look like from a little landing craft.<sup>47</sup> We worked pretty hard on that thing. It's heavy when you make one like that, and we carried it around to each battalion commander. Couldn't tell him where it was, but we showed it to him and gave him these pictures. You know, just two weeks after they sailed we found out the Navy had a rubber map facility up in Norfolk that made those things, beautiful job. We hadn't known it, so we made it all out with this other, and we were carrying it around. It would crack every now and then. We accomplished some good, but it was far less than we would have liked to provide.

About that time I got an offer from the corps and division commander, General Anderson, that if I

could get free, they'd like me to go along as their division engineer. Well, this is what I had been training for all my life, and it tickled me to death. So I hurriedly sent the request up, and it came back from the Chief's office saying, "Not unless you can give him a job which calls for a colonelcy, because he's going to be a colonel pretty soon. We're not going to send him with you as a lieutenant colonel."

When Patton finally got ready to go, he decided he wasn't going to take the amphibious corps, and I don't blame him. He was going to do it himself and didn't need this extra headquarters. So we got left. I got left hanging in the lurch. One thing I asked for was, "Please don't send me back to Leavenworth." So they said, "All right, we'll send you up to Fort Belvoir, where you can wait to command the next combat regiment that's activated in the Corps." And that's how I got away from Leavenworth.

Q: Was this when you assumed command of the 79th Engineer Combat Regiment?

A: I got up to Belvoir and got assigned to the Engineer Replacement Training Center, and they asked, "What do you want to do?"<sup>48</sup> I said, "I'd like to be an assistant exec for the center and go around and spend my whole time observing training and making suggestions to you of where it could be improved, or changed. or modified, provided you'll let me have your lesson plans so I'll have something to use when I activate a regiment." And they said, "Well, that's a fair deal." So I spent several weeks just going around looking at training and making suggestions for improvements and changes and in turn they gave me big stacks of lesson plans which I carried with me.

When I was ordered to Salina to activate the 79th Engineers, I couldn't find anybody who knew where Camp Phillips was. so we went down through Birmingham to have a couple of nights with Jeanne's folks, and then went to Memphis, and I got smart and went to the Second Army headquarters in Memphis and found the Engineer section and said, "What officers are-you going to give me besides brand new OCS?" And they looked at me and laughed and said,

"That's all you're going to get. You are going to have an average experience of three months as an officer in your outfit." I said, "You can't do that to me." They said, "Yes, we can because it's getting to the bottom of the barrel. It's now early in December 1942, and there isn't anything.@'

So I said, "Couldn't you let me go through your list of reserve officers that haven't been called to active duty and see if we can't find a few?" They thought that was a fair deal and allowed me to pick three. So I went through a big bunch of records and picked three. I particularly picked three who had been on CCC duty where they had gone through this living operation, routine discipline, feeding, housing, and health, because I figured if we could 'get some who could get us to living properly we might learn how to train properly later. So we headed for Kansas. In Second Army headquarters they knew that Camp Phillips was near Salina. That's the first time we knew exactly where we were going other than to Kansas. And we got out there and, boy, it was a rough situation.

On the tenth of December 1942, I activated the 79th Engineer Combat Regiment, Camp Phillips, Kansas, with a strength of one -- me! About two hours later a young man stuck his head in the door and asked where he could find the 79th Engineers and I said, "Come on in, you're in them." His name was Lieutenant [Winfield A.] Mitchell and he was in the cadre, and I said, "You're the first one here, so you're the adjutant. Now sit down and tell me who else is coming in the cadre.\*' So he did. There were seven officers and about 110 men. He gave me some fill-in on what kind of people the other officers were, all young, pretty fine young men. With his help I picked out the supply officer, S-3, and so on. And sure enough, within the next 24 hours they began arriving. In the next week or so we received one major and three captains, reserve officers, which gave us a little experience, and we got the rest of our officers, half of whom were just out of OCS and the other half had been out about six months. So we averaged about three months' experience.

Camp Phillips was raw. There was mud. We had to put our cadre to work primarily building duck

boards so that when the troops came they'd be able to move without getting sunk in the mud. The buildings were raw, they were just completed. They leaked air. They were the cheapest form, but they were livable. The officers' quarters, the BOQs [Bachelor Officers' Quarters] had screenwire up at the eaves: the frame dropped down over them to help keep out snow. But many a night I'd wake up with my head covered with snow. And the water bucket would be frozen solid. We at least got to know ourselves but we had no equipment, nothing like that.

About three days before Christmas, before our fillers had arrived, I received a phone call from a man who said he was the corps engineer of the 11th Corps and that I was in the 11th Corps. Well, this was all interesting to know. He said, "We'd like to get you to help us out/" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "We want you to command a second regiment simultaneously at Camp Phillips." And I said a little more dubiously, "Yes, sir." And he said, "It's the 366th Engineer Regiment, General Service. It's all black. We don't know where the cadre's coming from. We do know that the fillers are loaded aboard trains and en route to Salina now. So we want you to take them, organize them, put them to bed, feed them, until we can locate the cadre and who the commanding officer will be, and so on. But in the meantime, you'll be commanding both regiments. I said, "Yes, sir," and immediately sat down and tried to figure out what we'd do. I decided to cut my cadre in half and leave Major [Walter] Schamel, my exec, running my regiment, and I'd go over and run the other one, with half the officers and half the men in my cadre. I thought the only way I was going to get real help was to go to the 94th Division; General Malony.<sup>49</sup> So first thing the next morning I rushed over to see General Malony. His outfit had about six months' training by this time, and he was a very cooperative man and listened to my tale. He said, "I know what you want. You want bodies." I agreed and he said, "How many do you want? What kind?" I said, "I want bodies that can feed, house, and administer, as many as you want to give me, but that's it." He said, "You'll have them tomorrow morning." And the next morning I went over to the area of the 366th, and a lieutenant

colonel arrived marching about 150 officers and a few key enlisted men. This lieutenant colonel had been a tactical officer at the military academy when I was a cadet, and here he was far senior to me, but he was reporting to me for this purpose, and it was a help. We got the beds in place, the mess halls cranked up, and met the trains at midnight in a blizzard. They had come through a blizzard in Missouri and had no steam, no water, and no food for over a day. So the most we could do was to rush them into trucks and deliver them to their warm barracks and feed them and put them to bed. And we did and we didn't have any riot, but they were a pretty sad-looking bunch. They worked pretty well.

After about two weeks, we began receiving officers assigned to the 366th, and just at the critical moment, when I didn't know how we were going to handle us and them, too, we got word who the commander was going to be. The commander was to be Colonel Keith Barney,<sup>50</sup> division engineer of the 94th Division, and he was right there, and so he report and took over what became known as "Barney's Black Beauties." And a very interesting item. Just before Barney took over, one of the officers arriving was named Finley, he was a captain, reserve, and he had been my first sergeant in the 3d Engineers at Schofield Barracks. I tried to trade Keith Barney out of him for any three officers he wanted to pick and he said, "If you want him that much, I'll keep him." And he so organized that general service regiment that no one in one battalion outranked Finley, so that Finley became battalion commander, and to the best of my knowledge when the war ended, Finley was a lieutenant colonel commanding that same battalion.

As for the 79th Engineers, we had a tough time. There were no weapons. We had to make wooden rifles in order to do any kind of tactical training. We drew something like 21 M-1s to qualify the entire regiment in the blizzards, and snows, and sleet in Kansas. Nebraska blew by one day and Oklahoma and Texas the other! But we did qualify them. I learned a little about conscientious objectors. On the rifle range the chaplain came up to me and said, "I'm sorry but we have a conscientious objector here and he won't

shoot." And I said, "Well, does he object to shooting at a paper target?" He didn't know. so I said, "Okay, let's go." I put the chaplain on one side and me on the other, and we discussed it with this young man. He was fairly sincere. In fact I think he was sincere but he hadn't known how to declare himself until now. But he thought that if he even shot at targets, this would indicate that he was getting ready to shoot at something more, which made a certain degree of sense. I finally told him, I said, "Look, what we're going to do, we're going to talk to you, and I'm going to squeeze your finger, and that thing is going to go off. And when it goes off, it's going to scare you, but you're not going to be shooting at anything. You're just going to be shooting. If you'll then try that a few times and find out you can qualify, if you get qualified, I'll put you in the medical detachment where you won't even be issued a rifle." Sure enough, we got him qualified. The chaplain talking on one side and me squeezing on the other until he got to the point where he was willing to do it, and he qualified himself and was put in the medical detachment, and that's the last I heard of him. We never got any reasonable amount of equipment during the time I was with them. We finally got rifles along about May. We were changed from a combat regiment to a combat group, the 1113th. One of the worst things they did to us was take away our band. We had developed a great deal of morale striding along behind the band singing a song called "We are the 79th Engineers." But when we got converted, we lost the band.

About the first of June I received a phone call from the Chief's office, the personnel division, and they said, "We've got good news for you. We're going to send you to the first course of the joint Army-Navy staff college." I said, "Well, what is that?" And they tried to explain it to me. I said, "How do I get out of it?" And the answer was, "You don't." "Well," I said, "this is -- I've been training this combat outfit to go to France, and it's pretty near ready. Why not go?" They said, "Let us explain the requirements. The requirements are for a colonel or lieutenant colonel of Engineers under 40, experienced in amphibious operations, and you're the only animal

of that type alive in the United States continental limits today." And I said okay, there I go. They said they'd try to save the 79th -- the 1113th -- for me. I got through with the course in September, and they made a valiant effort, but I'll come to that portion later. That took me away from Salina and put me in this joint Army-Navy staff college.

Those are the two things we passed over yesterday. One thing more. Some of these things led me to develop a policy or principle that I have been trying to sell ever since, particularly in dealing with young officers. That is: have intellectual curiosity. Take advantage of any chance to see what the other guy is doing. I am particularly referring now to within the Corps of Engineers. You'll have troops here and a District over there, and these people don't pay any attention to what these guys are doing and vice versa. And I say just next week you may be there and you may be here, so take advantage of every chance to go visit projects, troop exercises, and talk with them and find out what's happening. Get interested in stretching your own head a little bit about such things as geology or permafrost or water. I'm not saying to spend a lot of time studying it, but just take advantage of the opportunities to run into it and find out a little bit. Later on, as deputy chief and Chief, I promoted that particularly while visiting troop units. I'd say, @Well, you're missing a chance. There's a chance to see a big job in operation, and they'll answer your questions. They'll show you around and be pleased to have you. And if you stay in the Army and the Corps of Engineers, someday you'll be running or building one of those things."

Q: That's a good philosophy.

A: That's just something I think you ought to keep harping on.

Q: . Yesterday when we ended, you were talking about your assignment to the Army-Navy staff college. I wonder if we could move on then to your assignment to the Southeast Asia Command and how you didn't get back the command of the 79th Engineer Combat Regiment. I have some specific questions to ask

you about Southeast Asia when you get to that. You might begin by saying something about the purpose of the Army--Navy staff college, because you were in the first class.

A: I got up there in early June and my family went home to Alabama. The course was a brand-new development. It changed pretty radically after that first year. They started us at the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island. Then we went to the Air Force field at Orlando, Florida, where we concentrated on the Air Force side. Then we went to Washington and our classes were conducted in a building originally built for the Chief of Engineers and taken over by the War Department and subsequently by the State Department. They put us to bed in an apartment just two blocks away near the Lincoln Memorial, so we were right there together. It was a four months' operation -- one month at Newport, one month at Orlando, and two months there. There must have been about 50 people in it.

We went to the Naval War College and this was an eye-opener because if there was anybody dyed-in-the-wool, if you want to call it that, or fixed in their ways in those days, it was the Navy. It was quite a shock to some of us. There was a way to do it and that was it, period. But it was a good training for all of us that were there. You were forced to rub shoulders and noses with the other people, and you could begin to understand at least a little bit of why their concepts and strategy and tactics were fixed in certain lines.

Q: You mean it was a real contrast to the Army's school at Leavenworth?

A: To me it was. They hadn't gotten up to the modern era as far as I was concerned. At least I didn't think so. You did it their way, or you didn't get the support, that was it in their minds. It was interesting, it was at the source of a lot of the business. Now this was in the summer of '43, so this was the time that the war in the Pacific was getting pretty hot. We had just gone back as far as we were going and were starting to come the other way. There was considerable controversy in those days between the South Pacific and the

Southwest Pacific, between MacArthur and the Navy command. The Navy commanded the South Pacific and MacArthur commanded the Southwest Pacific, and they were competing for means and goals and everything. It was a time when most of us would have liked to have had somebody come along and say, "This is the way it will be done, here's the way to do it, and this will work," because we didn't know. It was pretty touch and go.

We went to Orlando next. My family went down to the beach at Daytona, and I got to go over there for a couple of weekends, for Saturday night and Sunday, which was nice. There they more or less pointed our noses down the line of the Air Force's concepts, some of which I had gotten at Leavenworth, because in those days the Army and the Air Force were one. but this was a more concentrated deal. Then we went for two months to the school in Washington. There the concluding operation was about one month of dividing the class into three different committees, each committee headed by one of the services--Army, Air Force, and Navy. The rest of us were scattered around in there to balance it out.

What was intriguing to me, the exercise was staged in the Pacific, and we were to find out how to take a place there that was not yet taken in fact but that it was obvious was being considered. So we felt we were at least working on something pretty live. The interesting thing to me was that after all this three months of effort trying to broaden us, and we get through and we present our three committees, they came out with an Army plan where the Army man was the chairman, a Navy plan where the Navy man was the chairman, and an Air Force plan. It was obvious that we needed this effort to put us together because it wasn't easy. But to me, studying that and working on it as hard as we did, it made me admire even more the way MacArthur and his crowd bypassed and developed, hopped, and made tremendous progress moving up there without running head-on into the kind of thing that we had been faced with. If they'd have tried to take this place I'm talking about it would have been tough--it was one of the Japs' better defended areas, and it was bypassed. It died on the vine about a year after being bypassed. It was quite a lesson as far as I was concerned.