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## Robert F. Enkelmann oral history interview by Michael Hirsh, December 29, 2008

Robert F. Enkelmann (Interviewee)

Michael Hirsh (Interviewer)

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Concentration Camp Liberators Oral History Project  
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[Transcriber's Note: The Interviewee's personal information has been removed, at the request of the Interviewer. This omission is indicated with ellipses.]

**Michael Hirsh:** Okay, can you give me your—first give me your full name and spell it for me, please.

**Robert Enkelmann:** Robert Enkelmann, E-n-k-e-l-m-a-n-n.

MH: And your address.... Okay. And your phone is.... And what's your date of birth?

RE: November 16, 1923.

MH: Okay, hang on one second. Where were you before you went in the army?

RE: You mean where I grew up?

MH: Yes.

RE: I was born in Breese, Illinois. It's a small town about thirty-five miles east of St. Louis.

MH: And—go ahead.

RE: I lived there, also lived in Taylorville. My dad was an immigrant German, an immigrant from Germany, Breslau, Germany. It's now Wrocław, Poland. He came over when he was nine years old. He was a coal miner, and he settled in that little town there and married my mother. During the strike, we also moved up to Taylorville, Illinois, lived there for a couple years, then came back to Breese.

During high school, I attended a Catholic [prep] seminary in Belleville, Illinois, St. Henry's College: went to high school there. After I graduated from high school, I joined one of [Franklin] Roosevelt's creations, the National Youth Organization [Administration]. We were stationed across from Scott Field; we took classes one week and we worked at Scott Field the next week: alternated. I got a job, when I graduated, as a clerk in the engineering department.

While I was there, I tried to join the Marines, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Infantry and the Coast Guard. I couldn't pass the eye test, so I thought I'd never get any service. But then I was drafted and sent up to Peoria, Illinois, where I was sworn in with a limited service—for a limited service. I took my basic training at Wright-Patterson Field.

MH: What year were you drafted?

RE: Let's see. Nineteen forty-two, I guess.

MH: Okay.

RE: March 18, on my brother's birthday, I was sworn in. I took my basic training at Wright-Patterson Field. While there, I used to go to a USO [United Service Organizations] dance every Thursday night, and saw a big bulletin there of a guy going into college and coming out with an engineer's degree as a second lieutenant. It was called the Army Specialized Training Program, which Roosevelt had designed, promised us a college education and officer's rank when we get out. Well, I passed all the—you had to have a high IQ and pass a battery test, which I did, and they sent me to Ohio State University, from Dayton. I was there for nine months, and then Roosevelt—

MH: And then they canceled the program

RE: —saw 450,000 young men scattered in colleges all over United States. He and his buddies canceled the program and tossed us all in the infantry. I went to Camp Swift and had advanced basic there, and then went overseas with the 102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. It killed some of the most intelligent men in the United States. So, I have that as his legacy.

MH: What was your rank when you went over?

RE: PFC [Private First Class].

MH: And you were a rifleman?

RE: Yeah. No, I was in the 81mm mortar battalion.

MH: Okay. Which battalion were you in?

RE: I was in H Company, 405<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

MH: 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 405<sup>th</sup> Infantry, yeah.

RE: Yeah, right.

MH: So, you were in the same unit as Elton?<sup>1</sup>

RE: No, Elton was a medic.

MH: Okay.

RE: But he was in 102<sup>nd</sup>. I don't know what his unit was.

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<sup>1</sup>Elton Oltjenburns was also interviewed for the Concentration Camp Liberators OHP. The DOI for his interview is C65-00095.

MH: He was in—well, I don't know what company, but he was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

RE: Oh, yeah, right. He was in the 405<sup>th</sup>, right. I remember that.

MH: So, at what point did you know anything about concentration camps or the Holocaust?

RE: Well, it was pretty well—I don't know. Not a heck of a lot, actually, until we start moving up through Germany, and we liberated some spots where we liberated Jewish people that were wearing their striped concentration camp uniforms. I can't tell you what towns they were in, but they were obviously smaller camps. What I remember is that we brought food to them, and it reminded me of a bunch of pigs slopping at a trough. They all fought each other for the food, they were so hungry. Some of them ate too much, really, and died.

MH: Did you actually see barbed wire enclosure camps?

RE: Oh, yeah, they were in that. Uh-huh. We liberated—I don't remember what it was. It wasn't Dachau or Buchenwald.

MH: Right, it had to be some of the small ones.

RE: Yeah.

MH: So, tell me about Gardelegen.

RE: Well, we were—after we crossed the Ruhr River, we were spearheading the 9<sup>th</sup> Army through the Rhineland. We were going like heck. Every day, we'd march maybe five or six miles. We were following the tanks, which were German—the German army was collapsing. The Russians were coming in from the east and we were coming in from the west. We traveled quite a distance every day. We would billet overnight, and then every once in a while they'd go out in the woods and they'd round up a few stragglers. But the German army was retreating like mad, and there was no fighting, and we were happy as heck.

One morning, we were walking down the road, on either side of the road: sunny day, singing. We came to this crossroads, and there was a burned up jeep and four Americans dead. It was an ambush, and that changed the whole situation. Everybody got mad as hell. So, we moved up and we got near Gardelegen, and there was a—Gardelegen had a bunch of paratroopers in there. They were from the Hermann Göring paratroop school, I think, which was in Stendal, where we were later.

They had a big fight, and the story was, as I got it, that they captured one of our officers. He convinced them that the town was surrounded and that we were gonna obliterate it unless they surrendered. So, they surrendered, and I remember walking into the town and seeing all the white flags hanging from the houses. We found some places to billet, and then guys went out on the battlefield and started looking for souvenirs. That's when he discovered the—I-s-e-n—Isenschnibbe barn where all these people were massacred: they were burned alive. The SS rounded them up and put them in the barn and burned them alive. I think there were five survivors.

MH: What did you see?

RE: Pardon?

MH: What was your first view of this?

RE: My first view of this was we found out what it was, and we all went out to look at it. And we pulled guard duty there, I remember, for a couple weeks. Number one, the stench was terrible, from the dead bodies. They rounded up German citizens from within a hundred miles and ran them through the barn to show them what the Nazis and the SS and Hitler had done, 'cause you know after the war, there was only one person in Germany who was a Nazi, and that was Adolf Hitler.

MH: Right, everybody else was "*Nicht Nazi*."

RE: Yeah, right.

MH: Yeah.

RE: (laughs) Anyway, I'll tell you a little bit more about that later. So, we got to the barn and we pulled guard there while all these people were—they came out. Before I go into

detail, are you aware that there's a—you can get a book from the Stadtmuseum in Gardelegen that describes the whole thing?

MH: Yeah. I mean, I've seen photos and everything else, but the point of what I'm doing is to talk to American GIs who saw this.

RE: Oh, yeah. This book gives you background; it's put out by the Gardelegen museum. But anyway, we saw that—actually, in this firefight, one of my favorite lieutenants was killed. And at one of our reunions later, I talked to Joey Indiana from New York, and he said, "Yeah, he sent me out and a couple guys out on patrol, and we didn't come back on time. He was riding in a tank and stuck his head out, and a German sniper killed him." So, there was a few guys that were killed there. But we got to the barn—

MH: You mean, killed there approaching Gardelegen?

RE: Yeah, right.

MH: Okay.

RE: Yeah, he was a second—a first lieutenant. He used to run our calisthenics when we were at Fort Dix. I was the forward observer in a mortar platoon, and I would go up to—we had a pillbox looking into Geilenkirchen when we first hit the lines. I got acquainted with him up there, because he had his squad that was stationed at that pillbox. He was killed in this firefight at Gardelegen. Joe told me that he had just received a letter, a Dear John letter, from his wife, and he was really depressed. But he's a big—I guess he's about 6'3" or 6'4". Really neat guy.

But anyway, after they found the barn, they took us all out there and showed us. And, as I said, they ran all these people from miles around there.

MH: How did they get the people there?

RE: That, I don't know. The pictures in the magazine just show them walking around in the city of Gardelegen. Now, we went back there in 1979, when it was—you know, it was still under Russia in East Germany.

MH: Right.

RE: The first time we went back, Elton was with us on that trip. And they had—we saw they'd torn down everything from the barn, except the one wall, and they had this inscription on it that these people were the victims of militarism and fascism. The cemetery was created, and we couldn't find the cemetery because there were big hedgerows all around it. But finally we located that, and they had a bunch of neckerchiefs on all the crosses; they were from the Youth Organization. They used to take their—give lectures on it, and they would leave their scarves as mementos for the people that were there.

MH: What was it like standing guard in the barn?

RE: Uh—

MH: Were you in it or right outside it?

RE: Yeah. Well, by this time we'd been in battle for about five or six months, and we saw so many people get killed and blown apart that death was just kind of a second nature to us. Although we were—I was always shocked when I saw an American boy's body that was dead, but Germans didn't bother me. 'Course, these people, we realized, were slave laborers, and we felt bad about that, of course, and really couldn't understand. It was actually our first close up to see a deed that the SS had—we had heard a lot about it, but it's the first time we'd seen it actually happen.

MH: What's the conversation like with your buddies at that point?

RE: At that point?

MH: Yeah.

RE: Well, just wondering how this all happened and what was gonna—what'll become, and because we knew that General [Frank A.] Keating had declared that every German would—Nazi in that town—would be responsible for a body, to bury it. Some of them had already been buried in trenches, so they had to dig them out and make this complete cemetery with crosses. There were four of five Stars of David, but it was not really a Jewish massacre. And most of the crosses on there have *Unbekannt*, which means

unknown. They weren't able to identify their names and stuff. But yeah, going into that barn, walk into—the pictures are in *Life* magazine.

MH: Yeah, I've seen the pictures. What are the German civilians who have to walk through there talking about? Or didn't you—couldn't you understand?

RE: Oh, they shook their heads and said they couldn't believe it and all that. 'Course, what we thought about it—we didn't know what happened inside of American prisons, either, even though we were here. On that same trip, I was the interpreter for General Heinz Harmel, who was—he was the commander of SS Division Frundsberg.

Hello?

MH: Yes, go ahead.

RE: We start talking about the concentration camps. He said, "I was a soldier like General [George S.] Patton. I had nothing to do—that was all [Heinrich] Himmler's doing. I didn't know anything about it. You were a front lines soldier; did you know anything about what was going on behind?" I said, "No, but I wasn't a German general either." (laughs) I guess that kind of shut him up.

MH: Yeah.

RE: But they all disowned knowing anything about the—that was all SS. And, of course, in a lot of ways, it's probably true. After I got to Stendal, I became a special agent in the Counter Intelligence Corps. I stayed over there an extra year, and I was able to interrogate a lot of those people that were involved. You know, SS camp guards.

MH: Right.

RE: I talked to a women's camp guard one time who told me that when the Jewish—if a Jewish woman was pregnant, just before—when she went into labor, they tied her legs together. So, you know, she couldn't deliver the baby and it killed her.

MH: How do you control yourself when you're talking to people like that?

RE: (laughs) Very, very difficult. Well, I felt that I was getting even, with all the guys that were—my friends that were killed—arresting these guys. Now, I actually arrested the secretary of one of the war criminals, Hans Frank, the Governor-General of Poland. He was an SS General, and he was on trial in Nuremberg; this is during the occupation, after the division went home.

I was stationed in the town of Schwabach, which is about thirty-five kilometers from Nuremberg. I came—by that time I'd gotten a warrant officer's commission, too. I was a special agent of Counter Intelligence Corps. Our job was to set up governments before they had free elections, one thing; and then the other thing was to arrest anybody who was involved in war crimes. We had a book about two inches thick and about two yards by two yards called the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Wanted List. The Germans kept terrific records: who pulled the trigger, what his name was, what time it was done, and all that kind of stuff.

In fact, at one point we found—for the war crimes, we found the—on a railroad siding in boxcars, we found the records from the German supreme court. It had pictures of the concentration camps and who started them, and stories in there about different people. Like one Jewish woman—one woman was put to death because her grandmother was Jewish, so she was one-quarter Jewish. She had a baby and put the baby in the hospital, and then she was taking milk from her breast and putting it in a bottle and left it for the baby. And she was arrested on the crime of she could accidentally pollute a pure Aryan baby by giving it that milk. And a priest was condemned to death, who supposedly molested some of the girls in his parish, because he spoke out against the Nazis.

But this guy—when I got back to Schwabach, I came in there and there was—the guy had already left that I was replacing, but he left a big box of records there. I took them down to the police headquarters; I'd take about, oh, maybe 50 or 100 of them every day. They were just little cards. And I told the police chief, "Now, anybody that's alive and living in this area who is listed on these cards, I want you to have them report to my office." Well, most of them were dead, or POWs, or in a Russian prison camp.

But one morning, when I walked in the office, there was a real nice looking man in a business suit sitting there. I said to him, "Who are you?" He gave me his name, which I don't remember, and I said, "Why are you here?" He said, "Well, the police told me to report to you." I said, "Oh, really? Why?" He says, "Probably because I was one of the private secretaries of Hans Frank, Governor-General of Poland." And I about passed out! I said, "Come on in. I want to talk to you."

Well, I knew that Frank was so afraid of being assassinated that he surrounded himself with only SS people. The SS was declared a criminal organization at Nuremberg, so

anyone who belonged to that organization was automatically arrestable. So, I said to this guy, “What was your rank in the SS?” He said, “Oh, I never belonged to the SS.” I said, “Don’t try to give me that bull.” I told him the story that I knew. He said, “Well, here’s what happened.” All the SS, when the Russians were coming—he was in Kraków, and when the Russians were coming in from the east, they took all the SS men out of the office and sent them to the front to fight and replaced them with civilians. And he says, “I was a court reporter in Kraków, so they hired—they put me in his office as his secretary.”

I said, “What did you do there?” He said, “Well, Frank kept a diary every day of everything that went on, how many people were sent to Germany as slave laborers, and who was killed in Auschwitz and who pulled the trigger, and all that kind of stuff. I made transcripts of that and sent it to the Reich’s headquarters in Berlin, to Himmler.” I said, “Oh, really? Okay. Well, I’m going to have to detain you.” I called the police chief and told them to hold him in jail, and I went over to Nuremberg. My basic reason for wanting to go there: I wanted to go there to see if I could talk to Frank to verify about this guy, because I wanted to talk to a guy who was right at the top hierarchy and see what made a guy like that tick.

I got as far as the colonel in charge of the prisoners. He was a former CIC guy, and I thought, “I’m in like Flynn.” But one of them had committed suicide, one of the lesser guys; I forget what his title in the party was. So, they had very strict rules, and I didn’t get into him. But he said, “I want you to bring the guy over and turn him over to the Polish prosecutors to get his story.” Well, whatever country that the crime was committed in of the war criminals, that country was the one who prosecuted them. So, since he had committed all these crimes in Auschwitz—I mean, in Poland—the Polish prosecutors were the ones that were prosecuting him.

I took him to the Polish prosecutors, and they debriefed him for about three weeks, took depositions and all that sort of thing. Once they had all this evidence and documentary, they let Frank’s lawyer know what they had, and if I’m not mistaken, he was the only guy that pleaded guilty there. Of course, he became a born again Christian, supposedly, but he was one of those that they hanged in the courtyard there.

MH: Let me take you back to Gardelegen, before we get—

RE: Okay.

MH: —too far away from it. When they made the German civilians come in and bury the bodies, they had to carry them from the barn and from the trench?

RE: Yeah, right.

MH: Did—I mean, no gloves, no nothing?

RE: No. Uh-uh.

MH: And what were you doing at that time?

RE: Probably getting ready to move on to Stendal.

MH: Okay, so you weren't—

RE: We were—we stayed there for a few days, and then we moved on to Stendal, where we stayed. That's where I got into CIC. We were there for about, I think, thirty days until we met the Russians at Tangermünde on the Elbe River.

MH: But you didn't see the people burying these folks?

RE: No, I did not see that.

MH: Okay.

RE: I saw them all in the barn and wandered up, and I say we pulled guard there. There were pretty horrific odors and stuff from those dead bodies. But other than that, I didn't see anybody burying them, no.

MH: Did you talk to any of the few survivors?

RE: No, I did not.

MH: Okay.

RE: I didn't think there was any survivors, until I got this document from the museum. And also, I got a video from somebody in which they were interviewed.

MH: Yeah.

RE: We probably had some information through the Counter Intelligence Corps unit, because we were stationed in Stendal, and that wasn't too far from Gardelegen.

MH: When you leave a place like Gardelegen, how long does it take to shake it off, or don't you ever shake it off?

RE: You never shake it off. No, you remember that. Well, like everything else, you know, like if your friend or wife dies, eventually it—you don't ever get over it, but it softens. But, yeah, I had some problems when I got home, nerve problems and stuff like that. But that wasn't just from Gardelegen; that was from everything.

MH: From combat, as well.

RE: Yeah. Well, I was seven months in a foxhole, the same like Elton, and I never caught a cold. But all these guys are dying all around you, and you wonder, "Why the hell am I still alive?"

MH: Yeah. How close did you come?

RE: I'm about to celebrate New Year's Eve, and the reason I am is on New Year's Eve day in 1940—I guess it was forty-five [1945]; it was during the Battle of the Bulge.

MH: Okay. That's forty-five [1945].

RE: We found out later—we were on the jeeps and everything, ready to go to the Hürtgen Forest. And they finally told us to dismount, that 84<sup>th</sup> Division was going and we were gonna take over their infantry division area as well as ours, so we were spread out over two divisions. They expected that [Gerd] Von Rundstedt would have another pincer movement right through that area. We found out later, at a reunion, that our commander and the 84<sup>th</sup> had flipped a coin and they lost, so they went down there.

Well, anyway, we start digging and digging and digging. We dug division defense positions, regimental battalion company, and I mean, we dug and dug and dug till you were so damn tired you could hardly walk. And I was—we were in this bombed house, sleeping in the basement. I had a break, and I was sleeping down there on New Year's Eve day. Some guy come down and woke me up, and I was madder than hell. I said "What's—" He said, "They're setting up in the kitchen in another house down the street and they need somebody to help him out." So, I dragged my butt out of that basement and went down the street, and about fifteen minutes later I hear this tremendous explosion and this big flash of fire down the street. I run back, and the house and the basement I was sleeping in was completely caved in. I'd have been buried alive if I'd have been in there.

What happened was every night there—we used teller mines and strung them across the roads connected with wire, like a yard apart, so if the tanks came and then activated them—if the tanks came through or counterattacked through our area, it would blow up their tracks. Well, in the daytime we needed to drive around in those streets, so they would stack the teller mines. They would stick the pins back in the—you know, so they weren't activated—and pile them up against this building. Well, our 81mm mortars—they decided that we could shoot 80mm German mortar ammunition, but it had to be checked because a lot of that was sabotaged. So, we would get a lot of contingent of this 80mm mortars to use in our mortars, and about every third thing we dropped in the tube would misfire. We had a whole stack of 80mm German mortar shells packed against that same wall.

So, they sent a three-quarter ton truck up to pick up all these old German ammunition so they could disarm it. And he was sitting there while it was loaded. I'm back there in the kitchen, of course. A German airplane flew over; we hadn't seen one in months because they were out of gas, but this was kind of reconnoitering, I guess. So, he jumps up on top of his truck, and he had a machine gun mounted up there, and he starts firing the machine gun at the airplane. Guys were firing pistols and carbines and (laughs) everything at the thing. And then his gun jammed; one of the guys was standing alongside the house there and he said, "Throw me up one of those bricks."

MH: Oh, nice.

RE: The guy threw up a brick, and he knocked the breach loose. He checked and he threw the brick over his shoulder. Somebody had forgotten to put the pins in those teller mines, and it landed on top and set the whole bunch of them off and blew up the entire building, blew off the front of his truck. Fortunately, nobody was killed. One guy was kind of

blinded for a while; they sent him off to the hospital. But had I still been down in that basement, I'd have—

MH: We wouldn't be having this conversation

RE: (laughs) No, we sure wouldn't.

MH: Yeah.

RE: So, that's why I celebrate every New Year's Eve.

MH: When you say "teller mine," is that like t-e-l-l-e-r?

RE: Yeah, right.

MH: And that's the name of them?

RE: I think so. Yeah, that's what we called them. They were maybe a foot, eighteen inches in diameter, circular. The explosive was in the bottom part, and the top part, if you—actually, if you stepped on them, you could set them off, too. The Germans had mines something like that when we crossed the Ruhr River, but they were small. Some guys got their legs blown off and things like that from stepping on them.

MH: When you came back home, did you talk about the war?

RE: Not a heck of a lot. Well, I was a year later than anybody else coming home, so a lot of the conversation and a lot of the guys were already back into their jobs and things like that, because I stayed over an extra year in the Counter Intelligence Corps. In fact, I was—I came home. My dad was very ill, and I had signed up to go back for another year. On the way back, I got to Fort Monmouth, which was a port of debarkation. An order came out from Washington that, unless you had signed up for two years, you couldn't go back unless you were an intelligence officer, which I was.

So, I'm going through the line, and this sergeant is checking me out. I knew my dad was about to die and I didn't—my brother was in the Marines and I didn't want Mother—he

said, “Are you an intelligence officer?” I said “No, I don’t know what that is.” So, I got discharged and came home.

MH: Whatever works.

RE: Yeah, right. Right.

MH: What did you do as a civilian?

RE: Well, I went back—the first day I was at ASTP, I went to the USO and met my wife up there, my future wife. She waited for me to come back. I didn’t want to get married before I went over, because I was afraid I might come back in a body bag. So, she waited. She was—I think—yeah, she was a junior, and she waited for me to come back. I went back and re-enrolled at Ohio State; they let me in even though I wasn’t a citizen of Ohio. And then we got married, and I graduated in forty-nine [1949].

I came—through a friend of mine who had an interview with Union Electric, which was a multi-billion dollar utility company here, electric utility in Missouri. He had an interview with him, and I picked him up at the railroad station and took him over there. When the guy came out and he asked who I was, I said, “Well, I’m a friend of his.” He said, “You an engineer?” I said, “Well, I am, bottom quarter after he is.” So, he interviewed both of us and he offered us both jobs, and I took it. Frank went out to Stanford and got his master’s in engineering and ended up in the aircraft industry.

So, I was an engineer with the electric company. We went through a fourteen month training program to decide what department you wanted to get in, and I was bound and determined I wanted to get into sales, because the first job I got on a guy was killed, and the last job I got on a guy was killed. I said, “Look, get me in the sales department.” Every time they interviewed me at the end of an assignment, I told them, “Sales, sales, and sales were my three choices.”

So, I finally got in, and then I became the—I was in charge of representing the company to all the big corporations in five counties outside of St. Louis and St. Louis County. I had Jefferson, St. Francis, St. Charles, Franklin, and then later we merged with Lake of the Ozarks. I helped design all the facilities up there for all the big resorts. I had Anheuser-Busch’s can plant and St. Joe lead mines and Pittsburg plate glass, companies like that. And also, I made them six million bucks when they built the new Lock and Dam up across the Mississippi River up at Alton with the Corps of Engineers. I worked with them

and talked them into putting in electric motors instead of diesel engines, and that was worth about \$600,000 a year for ten years. I had some really interesting jobs.

MH: When did you retire?

RE: Let's see, I retired when I was sixty-nine. I'm eighty-five now, so that was sixteen years ago, I guess.

MH: Okay.

RE: In March.

MH: Yeah.

RE: So, it'll be—yeah, probably be sixteen years as of this March.

MH: Have you ever—

RE: By the way, I'm still saving up for my old age.

MH: That's good.

RE: I wanted to travel, but it's not— (laughs)

MH: Yeah, 'cause we need to. Have you ever gone out and spoken to kids about what you saw over there?

RE: All the time. Yeah, I belong—one of the organizations we have, and it's the biggest one in the country, is the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. I belong to the organization here in St. Louis. We have about 500 members. A lot of them around the country belong to our organization, too. We have speaking teams that go out and talk to high schools and grade schools and I did a lot on my own about my experiences with the Counter Intelligence Corps. My grandson was my P.R. man. Every time he'd get in another grade,

he'd have me come to speak to his class. Then, when my granddaughter got in high school, she'd get A's because I'd go over and talk to her German class.

I got a video at the—St. Louis has a Center for Holocaust Studies. I got a video there; they interviewed me and decided I was a liberator, so they did about a forty-five minute interview of my experiences in the Counter Intelligence Corps. Then last year, there was a—out on Page Avenue is the army records center.<sup>2</sup>

MH: Right.

RE: And they have the records of all the guys, and once a month they do a special on something for the people that are stationed there. I was in charge of our reunion in St. Louis in aught-seven [2007]. The first stop I wanted to make was at the Holocaust Museum, so I was out there making arrangements for a visit for the guys in the group that wanted to go there. And the next day, a guy from the records department was down there asking them for somebody who might talk about that for them. So, they recommended me, and I went out and made a video for them, and they showed it all month on their TVs around the thing.

MH: Have you ever been confronted by people who say it didn't happen?

RE: No. I never have run into that.

MH: Okay.

RE: One of my best friends was Aaron Kianofsky—oh, yeah, you might want to talk to him. He's down in Boca Raton, Florida, and he was in the CIC with me. He's Jewish.

MH: Was he at one of the camps?

RE: Well, he was at Gardelegen, I'm sure, 'cause we were all there.

MH: Okay. What—

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<sup>2</sup>The National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, is a branch of the National Archives.

RE: He wasn't in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion; well, maybe he wasn't. I don't know if anybody besides the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was there.

MH: What's his name?

RE: Kianofsky, K-i-a-n-o-f-s-k-y, Aaron, A-a-r-o-n. I can give you his phone number.

MH: That'd be great.

RE: Wait a minute while I find my—

MH: Okay.

RE: Somebody's got my—I gotta get out here in the car and get my 102<sup>nd</sup> roster. Oh, just a minute. (calls to wife) Irene! Somebody's got—let me see if my wife's got the documentary, my full documentary.

MH: Okay.

RE: Irene? Where's our—oh, you got it.

MH: Actually, I think I got his numb—

RE: I've got an email address, too.

MH: Okay, I got his number, I think. He lives on....

RE: Yeah, that's him.

MH: Okay.

RE: Yeah, his email address is....

MH: Okay.

RE: But, yeah, they did a feature article about me in the *St. Louis Magazine* about—I can send that stuff to you if you want. And I wrote a feature article, three pages, for my hometown paper for Veterans' Day this year.

MH: About your experiences over there?

RE: Yeah.

MH: Do you have—

RE: Growing up in my hometown and what happened over there.

MH: Do you have an email address?

RE: Yeah, it's....

MH: Okay. What I'll do is I'll send you my address and phone number and everything else and tell you what the book is. And if you can—at your convenience, if you could send me that stuff to read, I would really like to read it.

RE: Yeah.

***End of interview***