

Fort Hunt Oral History
P.O. Box 1142
Interview with Rudolph Pins
by Brandon Bies and Sam Swersky
New York, New York
September 14-15, 2006

RUDOLPH PINS: How is your hotel, by the way?

INTERVIEWER: Oh, it's great, it's fine, it's a great location. It's not a five-star hotel. Very modest. Very, very modest. But it's just fine.

RP: So, Sam, you lived in Far Rockaway.

INT: No, no, no, my father did.

RP: Oh, your father did?

INT: They came down to Washington during the Second World War. And [inaudible], the rest of the family is mostly here in New York and New Jersey.

RP: Well, I've lived in the Washington area 16 years and loved every moment of it

INT: Really?

RP: Yeah, the first few years I came to New York, I hated it.

INT: Really?

RP: I really hated it. Mainly I didn't know anybody. In Washington, I had tons of friends.

INT: And it's a different kind of setting [01:00].

RP: Yeah, no, you can't just get use your car.

INT: Right.

RP: The biggest deal of New York is to have a parking space. So, people use the buses and subway, and leave their cars in a parking place, which they wouldn't dare drive [unintelligible].

INT: So do you still have a car?

RP: No, I got rid of my car 20 years ago.

INT: Twenty years ago.

INT: Okay, Brandon.

INT: Everything's good? All right. I'll just give a brief introduction. This morning is Thursday, September 14th, 2006. This is National Parks Service Cultural Resource Specialist Brandon Bies, as well as Sam Swersky, here in the home of Rudy Pins, a former Fort Hunt veteran. And Rudy, if you want to just get started by telling us a little bit about your [02:00] personal background, when you were born, where you were born, a little bit about growing up.

RP: I was born in 1920, in a small, rural, provincial town in Germany. My father was a veterinarian. My mother was a housekeeper. And we lived there until 1934. I attended the local schools. By the time 1934 came around, [Adolf] Hitler [02:33] had arrived, things didn't look too rosy, and my parents decided to send me away to go school. At that time, the general thinking was the whole Hitler [02:50] thing might go over in three or four years. But I came -- so at the age 14, I came by myself to the United States [03:00], settled with quasi foster parents, people whom we have slightly known, in Cleveland, Ohio. Attended school, schools in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and then went to Western Reserve University [03:24].

INT: Okay. And what year was that?

RP: That was 1941.

INT: Okay.

RP: Then with the outbreak of World War II [03:38], I was still a German citizen, and I was classified 4-C [03:43], which was the classification for criminals, asocial elements and enemy aliens. So I was still in limbo at the time, I would have been drafted otherwise. I

continued to go to school [04:00]. Then suddenly, in '43, my classification was altered to 1-A [04:06]. And within a week, I was in the Army.

INT: Really?

RP: [laughs] Then after a short stay at the reception center in Ohio, I was shipped off to a place called Camp Abbott [04:22], Oregon, to get basic training with the Corps of Engineers [04:27].

INT: Okay.

RP: I went through that, and some specialized training, then was shipped out to Fort Belvoir [04:36], Virginia, for more special training, for camouflage specialties, et cetera, et cetera. Thereafter some people talked to me, I was picked up by an Army major who interviewed me. I told him I spoke fluent German, et cetera [05:00]. And within a few weeks, I found myself being transferred on super-secret orders, put on a bus from Fort Belvoir [05:15] to Alexandria, Virginia, where I was to meet somebody at the post office, which I did. A sergeant came up in a jeep, picked me up, and introduced me to P.O. Box 1142 [05:33]. That's how I --

INT: At this point, did you know anything about what you were going to be doing?

RP: No, I had had no idea whatsoever. Well, I had an idea it was in the field of Intelligence, something of that nature was mentioned.

INT: But they didn't give you any special training, before you went there?

RP: No. No, a lot of the people who went to 1142 [05:51] were trained at Camp Ritchie [05:58], Maryland. I bypassed [06:00] that somehow, and I was immediately recruited to start monitoring and interrogating, and everything that went along with it.

INT: About when was this? You just mentioned '43?

RP: '44, actually.

INT: '44, okay.

RP: I was actually drafted in August '43, and I arrived at 1142 [06:28] March 3rd, 1944. By that time, at this point, all of the Italian POWs [06:39] had left.

INT: Okay.

RP: As a matter of fact, I think all -- I don't think there was any -- There may have been one or two left, but they had departed. And it was just, at that time, German POWs [06:47].

INT: Okay. And do you want to describe a little at this point, we'll go into more [07:00] detail later, but what you were told the function of 1142 [07:05] was, and what your role was to be there?

RP: Well, they didn't go into too much detail, except that here were prisoners of war [07:18], who seemed to be of special interest to the Army. Either they had a critical background, specialized military background, or they had information on the targets for the Air Force, maybe work in specific factories and so forth. Or they had knowledge of the command structure. Anything that was extraordinary, not routine. They may have worked with special units, for example with the [08:00] Russian volunteers, or with other foreign volunteers, and they could be of strategic, even tactical, interest, as well as possibly psychological interest, propaganda-wise, and political interest. Anything that we could find out. So that the primary purpose was, "Get into this person's background, find out what they know, what they don't know." If they knew a lot, they would stay for some time. If somebody made a mistake in picking them, and they were really of no interest, there was a quick turnaround.

INT: Okay.

RP: And they were shipped out to regular POW [08:52] camps.

INT: Got you. And what were you told, that your specific role was going to be in this whole process [09:00]?

RP: Well, my role was really twofold. I did some interrogations. And that was always done, if I remember right, working together with some of the officers who had guidelines from the Pentagon [09:18].

INT: Okay.

RP: See what they were trying to find out from [inaudible] person. In every case, you always had to measure these people's morale, how they felt about the war. How their families felt about the war, et cetera. Then the second part was the monitoring. Most of these POWs [09:45] were in cells, or rooms, designed for two, maybe three, people. And we hoped that by doing this, they would enter [10:00] into conversation, and we would pick this up and get some good leads that way for interrogators. Sometimes we put people in with them who were instructed to get them to talk.

INT: And would those be Americans, or would they be Germans?

RP: They were -- 90 percent of the cases, they were Germans --

INT: Really?

RP: -- Who had been cooperative. There were some Americans also put in there. It could be risky, of course.

INT: Did you ever do that?

RP: No.

INT: Okay.

RP: That was the main purpose. Later on, as the war ended, of course we had -- all the people

came in under the project of Operation Paperclip [11:00]. And all the scientists, who were interrogated by specialists who interrogated them about their fields, greatly interested in whether they had made any progress in atomic science, and things of that nature.

INT: Did your background particularly suit you towards that? Had you studied the sciences when you were in college?

RP: No, I was -- I'm totally non-scientific. My background was history, political science. And I knew the structure of the Nazi [11:37] Party, and everything around it quite well, and that was all that I knew. But as far as science was concerned, I was totally unqualified.

INT: Okay. And then, how long were you at Fort Hunt [11:55]? About when did you leave 1142?

RP: I arrived March [12:00] 3rd, '44, I left in the middle of May, '46.

INT: Okay.

RP: I left a little bit early, I had an early discharge, because I'd been recruited by the War Crimes Tribunal [12:17] in Nuremberg [12:18] to do interrogations in Nuremberg.

INT: Okay. And so did you go direct from 1142 [12:25] to Nuremberg [12:27]?

RP: No, because the usual Army bureaucracy and screw-ups and so forth, it took until August until I finally managed to get to Nuremberg [12:40].

INT: Okay. And were you still in the military when you were at Nuremberg [12:46]? Were you in uniform?

RP: No. One of my conditions was that I would go there as a civilian.

INT: Okay.

RP: And they honored that request, although we [13:00] wore uniforms there [inaudible].
There were special uniforms for civilians.

INT: Okay.

INT: Why did you make the request that you be a civilian instead of a --

RP: Because while in the Army, when I was a staff sergeant, I knew the difference in how they would treat sergeants, and captains, and civilians. And so if they wanted me, I didn't want to be treated as a sergeant. There's nothing wrong with being a sergeant, certainly. It's very honorable, but you get better treatment if you're an officer. And as a civilian, you wear officer's uniform without rank, and so forth. And you get officer's pay, of course.

INT: What, briefly, was your role, specifically, at Nuremberg [13:58]?

RP: At Nuremberg, I was an interrogator [14:00]. And also partly investigator. But 90 percent of my job was interrogating potential indictees, potential witnesses, and some of the people who already had been indicted. And occasionally I would go out in the field to interrogate people who were being held in other countries.

INT: And how long did this go on for?

RP: Until January, '48.

INT: Okay. Do you have any sense of why you were chosen for Nuremberg [14:43]? You know, was it because of your experiences at 1142 [14:47], or did you apply for it? Or were you intentionally selected?

RP: Well, I think one of a couple reasons. One, my experience at Nuremberg [14:52]. Two, the chief interrogating [15:00] officer in Nuremberg [15:02] was the same person who recruited me before I -- for 1142 [15:08].

INT: Oh, at Belvoir [15:08]?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: So yeah, I guess he remembered me, and his name was Walter Rath [15:13] [phonetic].

INT: Okay. And after Nuremberg [15:19], you had not finished school yet?

RP: No, I finished college, then went to work for the government for a while in Washington. Then switched over to the publishing field.

INT: The publishing, okay, okay. And that's essentially what you did until your retirement?

RP: Right.

INT: I assume you're no longer active in that.

RP: No longer.

INT: But I'm sure you're fully capable.

RP: Right.

INT: That's a good introduction, in kind of a nutshell. And I want to go back now, and talk a little bit more about some more -- really in a lot more detail, since we do have a great [16:00] deal of time, about some aspects of 1142 [16:05], and of your upbringing. You mentioned that you were born in Germany in 1920. Did you have any siblings?

RP: I have a brother.

INT: Okay, okay. And did he come here to the United States with you?

RP: No, no he didn't.

INT: Okay, okay. And then, were you able to correspond with your family while you were here in the United States?

RP: Until Pearl Harbor [16:34].

INT: Okay, okay.

RP: After that, all communication stopped.

INT: Oh, certainly. Certainly. And then -- do you mind talking about what happened to your parents, and what they went through in Germany?

RP: Well, it's very [inaudible]. They were arrested in 1943 [17:00]. They were deported to Riga, in Estonia, where they, I guess, my father was slave laborer for a short while, and then executed in the summer of '44.

INT: Okay. And your brother? Was your brother with them?

RP: My brother immigrated to Israel.

INT: Okay.

RP: And he just died last December.

INT: Okay. Okay.

RP: He did all these paintings, and so forth.

INT: Okay. And at what point did you find out about your family's fate?

RP: Not until about the fall of 1945.

INT: Okay.

RP: There was a survivor, who then went to Sweden, and I think came to refuge in the U.S. [18:00], who didn't know about me, but he knew my brother. He got in touch with my brother, and [inaudible].

INT: And what were your -- this may sound like a silly question, but what were your feelings - - did you have a sense from your work at 1142 [18:19] about what the Nazis [18:21] were really up to?

RP: Oh, yeah. You know, we had a pretty good idea.

INT: And how did that make you -- did that make you feel any differently towards the folks that you were there interrogating, and monitoring?

RP: Well, you can't help but have certain emotional feelings, but I was able to suppress them fairly well. And I always preferred to look at everyone as an individual. There were 6,500 Germans, but not everyone was a criminal. There were some pretty good people. So I treated [19:00] everybody as an individual. And when you interrogate somebody, you get to know what that person is like. And certainly it would not behoove me as a soldier to treat people according to my feelings. This was a job I had to do, and I hope I did it well.

INT: So you know the interrogations. Can you run through what a typical interrogation might be like? How long it would be, and who, you know -- was there a typical person to interrogate, or would it vary a great deal?

RP: Well, Brandon, it varied a great deal. Some people in fact had very little to say. In some cases, we only had maybe one specific question to ask them, maybe a follow-up to somebody else's interrogation [20:00], and the whole thing would be over in 10 minutes. In many cases, we'd interrogate people three, four, five, a dozen times, some of whom we asked them to write reports. They were the ones who often got to stay in these little huts we had.

INT: I'd like to talk about those.

RP: Yes, incidentally, they were treated very well. They had -- the POWs [20:35] had their own cooks --

INT: Oh, really?

RP: -- who were a lot better than our own Army cooks [laughs].

INT: [laughs] So was there a mess hall for the prisoners, or did they eat in their rooms, in their cells?

RP: They ate mostly in their cells. The one with the huts had meals brought to them.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay [21:00]. And getting back to the actual interrogation, would you typically be with someone else, or by yourself?

RP: Usually by myself.

INT: Okay.

RP: But there were cases when an interested officer or somebody might be sitting in with me.

INT: Okay. And would you be given a set series of questions to ask, or would it be more off the cuff?

RP: As far as I can remember, Brandon, there were never any written instructions. Instructions were given in conference before, and of course some questions would develop depending on the answers that we had.

INT: Absolutely.

RP: There'd be follow-ups, and so forth.

INT: Where would the actual interrogations be taking place? What was the setting?

RP: I don't recall the exact building, but there were interrogation [22:00] rooms.

INT: Okay.

RP: Where -- real simple rooms. They were not torture rooms. There were just a desk and a chair for him, chair for me. And I don't believe they were recorded, but they might have been.

INT: Okay.

RP: They might have been recorded, because it seems to me that I had seen transcribed interrogations.

INT: Okay. Would you be taking notes, then, on the responses?

RP: Yeah, we would take notes.

INT: Okay, okay.

RP: And for some, some POWs [22:41] who were cooperative. Others were more as neutrals, and others were negative in their action. They had to be encouraged.

INT: Did you ever get the sense that a certain prisoner may have been lying to you?

RP: Oh, yeah. This [23:00] occurred. And quite often you could catch them at it. It's one of the facts of any interrogation be it police or the [inaudible]. The person being interrogated doesn't know how much the interrogator knows, and very often thinks he knows a lot more than he actually does, which is good for us, of course.

INT: [laughs] And speaking of that, how much did you usually know? Did you have a general sense of what was so special about this person, why they were being questioned?

RP: Well, in some cases, we had some knowledge. We went through their personal belongings, and often we had some ideas of what they -- their backgrounds, and their units. And some information came along [24:00] with them on the trip, when they were transferred from the front to our unit. A lot of these people were transferred directly from the front, where they were captured, put in a jeep, put in a plane, and without a change of clothes arrived at 1142 [24:19].

INT: So they would still be wearing their German uniforms, and everything?

RP: Yeah, yeah.

INT: Really? And while they were there, would they get a change of uniform? Did they have a prisoner uniform; did they wear civilian clothes?

RP: They did not have civilian clothes. They -- to the best of my recollection, and mind you, this is 60 years.

INT: Absolutely understandable.

RP: They wore plain khakis.

INT: Okay.

RP: And whether they were marked as POWs [24:55], I'm not sure. I think they were.

INT: Okay [25:00]. What level of freedoms did the prisoners have? Did it vary among prisoners?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Military versus scientific prisoners, for lack of a better characterization, if you had to split them into groups.

RP: Whether there was a difference between the military and the scientific, I really don't know.

INT: [affirmative]

RP: Usually the POW [25:31] was free within the prisoner area. Unless they were considered dangerous, or a special case. There were some very exceptional cases, and I mean very exceptional cases, where we put a POW in civilian clothes, and took them into Washington for a meeting.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: But that was highly unusual [26:00], and probably not even, not permitted, officially. These were the people who were very cooperative, who had more to give us. And by

treating them well, they would give us a lot of additional information.

INT: Okay.

RP: But this was a very, very exceptional case, which happened maybe -- certainly no more than a half a dozen cases.

INT: Okay. Would you ever escort any of those people?

RP: No.

INT: Okay. Okay.

RP: I escorted them -- towards the end of the war, I escorted some of the higher-ranking officers to the base movie.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah.

INT: So was there a movie theater there?

RP: There was a base movie theater. And I remember nothing about it, except the fact that I took these guys to the movie.

INT: [laughs] [27:00]

RP: What films were shown and where, I don't recall.

INT: And so getting back to the actual prisoners, do you want to -- could you describe a little bit about what their accommodations were per se? It sounds like that there were different levels of accommodations for the prisoners?

RP: I was never in a cell.

INT: Really? Okay.

RP: But there were -- as far as I know, there were two cells, I think, for [inaudible], with two beds. And I'm sure they were reasonably comfortable, because you wanted them to have

a positive experience. At the same time, they were still prisoners. Now the people like [Gustav] Hilger [27:59], the Japanese colonel who was captured in Burma, and [28:00] Hiroshi Oshima [28:01], they had these little huts, they were really small. They were fancy names, studio apartments. They were not really fancy, but at least they had privacy. Sometimes there were two to a hut.

INT: Okay.

RP: And they had a little sitting area, which was a little more comfortable.

INT: Okay. And I want to keep trying to get some more details about these accommodations. The ones that were in the actual cells, where there'd be two beds, was that in a larger building that contained --

RP: Yes.

INT: Okay. Any sense of how many cells may have been in a certain --

RP: I don't recall.

INT: Okay.

RP: My guess would be between 25 and 50. But it's a pure guess.

INT: And would this structure be [29:00] surrounded by barbed wire? Would it be open to the outside? Were they locked in their cells, or could they roam about the structure? That's fine.

RP: I don't really recall. Certainly there was a fence around the installation. I believe -- I do believe that the prisoner area was fenced in.

INT: Okay.

RP: Were they locked into their cells, each night? I don't think so, but I can't say for sure.

INT: Okay. And what about the smaller --

INT: I have to change the tape.

INT: Okay. We have to flip the tape over.

(End of Tape 1A)

(Beginning of Tape 1B)

INT: You were just starting to say, so you weren't supposed to be in the actual prisoner area, unless you had some level of business there?

RP: Exactly.

INT: Do you remember, were there -- anything about the guards? Were there guards posted in this building, or around the --

RP: I'm sure there were. We had an MP detachment at the base.

INT: Okay.

RP: The extent of their deployment, I'm not 100 percent sure, but I'm certain they were within the prisoner area, as well as at the gate, and the perimeter of the base.

INT: Okay, okay. Were you yourself ever armed while you were there?

RP: No.

INT: Okay. And then the smaller cottages or whatever you'd like to call the smaller buildings, where some of the [01:00] other prisoners were kept, the higher ranking or more important prisoners. You said you recalled that they were a little bit more spacious, they had a little, you know, a little sitting area in them, I think you said.

RP: As far as I know. Again, I didn't spend any time in them, but --

INT: Okay.

RP: I understand they were.

INT: And the photograph you showed us earlier, that's an example of what one of those --

RP: Exactly.

INT: Okay. And do you know, were those bugged? Did they have monitoring devices in them?

RP: That's a good question. I don't know. I don't believe so, but possibly, yes.

INT: And again, do you recall if they were, in any way surrounded by -- were they enclosed by barbed wire, or were they just part of the fort, and part of the buildings that were there?

RP: The [02:00] individual houses weren't enclosed, but I think they were probably POW [02:05] areas.

INT: Okay.

RP: Of the overall area.

INT: Okay. Do you remember about how many of those huts there may have been?

RP: I can only guess. I would say about half a dozen.

INT: Okay, okay.

RP: I don't think any more.

INT: Okay. Since we're talking a little bit about the physical description of the fort, where did you live, while you were at 1142 [02:33]?

RP: We lived mostly in barracks. Very regular, normal G.I. barracks. Three beds and, and so forth. Until later on, I was moved to former NCO [02:52] barracks where everybody had their own little cubicle.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay [03:00].

RP: [inaudible]

[laughter]

INT: And what sort of folks were in the barracks with you? Was it just folks that were just interrogators? Were you mixed in with guards, or other folks?

RP: No, we were all interrogators.

INT: Okay.

RP: With various backgrounds. The MPs had their own barracks, and the people who were [MIS] X [03:31] had their own barracks.

INT: Oh, okay. So there weren't folks from the X Program [03:35].

RP: No, we were not -- Interrogators, and I guess evaluators, they may have mixed a little bit. But I don't recall.

INT: And with the specific facilities of the barracks, were the latrines in the barracks? Were they detached buildings, and you had to go [04:00] --

RP: They were detached buildings.

INT: Okay.

RP: I forget about my later accommodations. They may have been inside.

INT: Okay.

RP: I'm not sure.

INT: Okay.

RP: But they were detached.

INT: Okay. And did they have running water, hot and cold water? Could you take a hot shower?

RP: I think they had hot water.

INT: Okay. Okay. How about the mess hall where you ate? You mentioned earlier that you think the prisoners' food was actually better than your food.

RP: Our food was pretty miserable.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: It was run by a -- I don't want to denigrate anybody on tape. But a staff which tried to look out for itself. And the food we got was -- the best I can say for it was terrible. And that's a compliment [05:00].

[laughter]

INT: Would it be the same food on a regular schedule, or would they change it up every once in a while? Or was it just the same, typical Army food?

RP: It was basically same old Army food, yeah.

INT: Okay. Would you eat with the officers that ate --

RP: No, they had their own mess hall.

INT: They had their own mess, okay.

RP: At least I believe so. I'm pretty sure they did.

INT: Okay. Three meals a day, I presume? Breakfast, lunch, dinner?

RP: They had to, yes.

INT: Did everyone eat at the same time?

RP: I'm sorry?

INT: Did everyone eat at the same time?

RP: That's a good question, Sam. Those of us who were monitors, when they had a night shift, for evening meals, got to eat at another time, but I don't recall that. The same with the MPs, they also of course had-- They had 24 hour shifts, can be the same difference [06:00].

INT: Did you tend to sit in the same area with, again, other people who were interrogators and

monitors, or did you --

RP: Yeah. I think it was just one mess hall for all of us. I believe.

INT: Okay. You had mentioned about -- for those of you on the night shifts, was your job, was someone -- were you on call 24 hours a day? Did you have an assigned shift?

RP: We usually had assigned -- posted assigned shifts. But nobody always had the night shift because they would change off. There were always about, I would say, six to 10 monitors on at a time.

INT: Okay. And would the monitors be shifting about, listening to different conversations at once? Would you just be listening to one room?

RP: No, we were [07:00] -- especially at night, we would have quite a few, because chances are you get the snoring in one room, so you keep switching, to see whether you get somebody --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- saying anything interesting.

INT: Okay.

RP: And mind you, that even during the daytime, probably only 20 percent of all of the conversation was of any interest. They talk about their girlfriends, and their sergeants, or whatever. Their families. Nothing of any particular intelligence interest.

INT: Getting back to the physical description of the fort, you mentioned earlier that you believe there was a post movie theater, or at least a place where movies were shown.

RP: Yeah.

INT: But you don't really recall anything about that structure. Do you remember, was there a PX [08:00], where you could buy various little things there on post?

RP: There must have been something where we could buy toothpaste, and things of that nature. I think it was in the headquarters building, but it was extremely limited.

INT: Okay.

RP: Most of us would get them from Washington, on a weekly basis.

INT: Okay.

RP: We would do our shopping there, and so forth. I remember a swimming pool.

INT: Okay. And was that open to anyone on post to use? Could you use the pool?

RP: Yeah. At one time, there were separate hours for officers and NCOs [08:46] and men. But by 1944 or [coughs] -- so that was -- those restrictions were lifted.

INT: Okay.

RP: You could use it any time you wanted to, as long as we're free.

INT: Okay [09:00]. And did you use that frequently?

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: Yeah?

RP: Washington summers are hottest.

INT: Absolutely. Absolutely. Although you did have those air-conditioned buildings.

RP: Oh, yeah. But not barracks.

INT: Right. And did they allow alcohol on post? Did your folks drink any beer or liquor or anything like that?

RP: Not that I know of. Maybe the -- officer's club must have had some alcohol.

INT: You mentioned a little bit about going into Washington. What were sort of the things that you would do socially, either at Fort Hunt [09:42] or in Washington or Alexandria?

RP: Well, we would go in together with friends sometimes, trying to look for a decent

restaurant, we might go to a movie. Go sight-seeing [10:00]. I had a few friends in the Washington area I visit. And a lot of the guys were looking for dates and Washington was full of unattached females as well as males. So there were lots of opportunities.

INT: Did you ever frequent the --

RP: The USO?

INT: Yeah, the USOs, thank you.

RP: I think I did go a couple of times. I think there was one at the Union Station.

INT: Oh, okay.

RP: And I'm sure there were a couple of others around.

INT: How did you get around, when you were making these trips? Did anyone have cars at Fort Hunt [10:56]?

RP: I don't know if anybody -- I'm sure [11:00] a couple of people did, especially among the officers. But there was a bus stop right outside, on the Memorial Parkway [11:10]. So the bus stop was our transportation.

INT: Okay.

RP: And several times I would go out -- at least once, maybe more often, you'd get a late bus from Washington to Alexandria, the bus station. Then there was no more bus to 1142 [11:29]. We walked.

INT: Oh, really? Did you ever hitchhike up and down the Parkway [11:36]?

RP: We didn't really hitchhike, but we were picked up -- waiting for a bus, we were picked up a number of times. Couple guys were picked up by Mamie Eisenhower [11:49] once.

INT: Really? [laughs] And did folks who picked you up in cars, or that you ran [12:00] into, did they ask what you were doing there, at Fort Hunt [12:05]?

RP: Not really. If they asked, we were very noncommittal, and then I guess they weren't that interested, or they realized, and didn't say anything more. Although the people in Alexandria, they knew what was going on. Because the so called Black Marias, the blacked-out vans, police cars, would pick up POWs [12:32] at National Airport. And the POWS [12:34] would then sing German Army songs, which of course could be heard on the streets, as they were being driven through Alexandria. So they had an idea what was going on.

INT: And so you recall these vehicles that -- you said the windows were blacked out?

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: And was it along the lines of a bus or something like [13:00] that?

RP: No, it was very similar to a police van.

INT: Okay.

RP: And they worked really well. They had blacked-out windows. And the planes that brought the POWs [13:13] were taxiing to a handoff, so the POWs [13:16] wouldn't know where they were. And the vans would drive into the handoff, backed up to the planes. The POWs [13:27] would then be loaded, so they wouldn't have any idea where they were.

INT: Did you get any sense that that's how many of the prisoners got there, is through the airport? Or was that only the highest ranking of prisoners?

RP: No, a lot of them got that way.

INT: Okay.

RP: They were transferred from other POW [13:49] camps, Camp Meade [13:51] and others. But a lot of them came that way.

INT: Any other [14:00] recollections of socially, what folks would do either in Washington and Alexandria, or in Fort Hunt [14:09] itself?

RP: Well, there wasn't much to do. We took a lot of long walks outside. I'm sure the area around Fort Hunt [14:16] is developed, but in those days it was just really -- it wasn't even suburban then, it was country. There were some rather dilapidated shacks and housing all around. And we'd take long walks, and just talk, because I mean we couldn't get into town.

INT: When you were talking about the prisoners being brought from National Airport to Fort Hunt [14:51], when the prisoners arrived, you were probably one of the -- were you the only German-speaking people on the base [15:00]?

RP: Well, we as the interrogators were, yeah.

INT: So did you have any interaction with the prisoners as they arrived?

RP: Well, sometimes we would supervise as they were unloaded and were assigned to cells, and so forth. And they were, I recall now, yes, upon their arrival, they got rid of their uniforms and stuff, they would then go take showers, and put on khakis.

INT: Do you recall, were they ever surprised by being met by a number of soldiers, American soldiers who spoke flawless German?

RP: Not that much. They may have encountered some of them at the front in the very initial interrogations.

INT: Right, right.

RP: But not that much.

INT: At 1142 [16:00] itself, were there any other activities folks, you know? Was there a post library, would folks play cards? You know, how would folks amuse themselves on base?

RP: I only took [unintelligible]. I don't know about the MPs or -- we only did very little except to yak and talk, and took walks, go to Washington. I'm sure there was some card playing, but not an awful lot of it. There were no facilities, except for the pool. There were really no facilities to do anything very much. But if there were, I don't recall them.

INT: Did you have daily dress parade and reveille, and all of that?

RP: That's a sore point [laughs].

INT: Oh, really?

RP: When we got a new CO [17:00] for the camp, a Major [John] Hogue, [17:02] the not very much beloved Major Hogue. Slower to come up the ranks from stables to stable boy in the regular Army. I hope I'm not insulting somebody. He didn't like what he saw. There were a bunch of people sometimes sleeping late, or going to work and not acting very soldierly, in a way. So he instituted reveille, and -- what was the expression we used, where you line everybody up around you, and you pick up all the little pieces of paper?

INT: Policing the camp?

RP: Policing the area. There was a better word [18:00] for that, which may not be printable, I don't know. But in any case, he had us doing that for a while. And there was an occasional parade. I don't know if everybody partook of that or not. But it was not very often. And that was -- one reason was that we had irregular hours. Not everybody was available always, for things of that nature.

INT: Do you remember anything else about your relationships with the commanding officers of 1142 [18:52]? I believe you mentioned to me, I think in some of our previous conversations, that many of them were old Army officers. And you [19:00] mentioned someone from Rhode Island?

RP: Well, predominantly officers were National Guard or Reserve officers from Rhode Island.

INT: Okay.

RP: They may not -- including the officer in charge of the interrogations. Colonel [Zenas] Bliss [19:21].

INT: Okay.

RP: I had a very good relationship with the CO of the installation, Colonel John Walker [19:30], who was old Army, and walked up on his old campaign hats. And he was a very -- a little strict, but a very, very nice guy. He was interested. He may not have been a rocket scientist, but he knew how to deal with people, and how to respect people. And he would come around sometimes at 2:00 in the morning, to the monitoring area, to see how we were doing [20:00] and so forth. And chat, and so forth. Very, very good person. He stands out in my memory. Then he retired, I think, in '45.

INT: Okay. And what about -- what do you remember about the actual hierarchy of how the camp was run? Was Walker [20:28] the CO of all of 1142 [20:32]?

RP: Yes, he was CO of all of 1142 [20:34].

INT: And then I think you said --

RP: Bliss [20:36] --

INT: Was in charge of the interrogations?

RP: in charge of X [20:42] -- he's in charge of --

INT: Y?

RP: -- Y [20:45].

INT: Okay. Do you recall who was in charge of X [20:47]?

RP: We had so little contact with them. And I don't know who the commanding MP officer

was either.

INT: So there was an officer in charge of [21:00] the guards and MPs?

RP: There had to be.

INT: Okay.

RP: I would think.

INT: Okay. And then do you recall how the hierarchy worked below Bliss [21:10], within the interrogation -- within the Y [21:14] program?

RP: No, I don't. I knew just the officers, and the rest of us. And our jobs were really intermingled very much. In many cases we did the same thing. Manifested by the fact that a lot of us wore officers' rank uniforms, while on the job.

INT: Really?

RP: Which was necessary, because any field-grade officer, or general officer, would not let himself be interrogated by someone who was not an officer [22:00]. So it's okay to laugh to us. [inaudible] people and they were given ranks basically according to their looks and age. You don't put a colonel's wings on someone who's baby-faced and 18 years old. So it was still graded that way.

INT: And so how about you? Do you remember what rank you would be assigned?

RP: I was a lowly lieutenant.

[laughter]

INT: And would that be a lieutenant in the Army?

RP: Yes.

INT: Okay, okay. And so you would wear that uniform sometimes while you were interrogating?

RP: Right.

INT: I mean, obviously, you wouldn't need to do that while you were doing room monitoring, just the actual interrogations.

RP: No, no, no. Just that.

INT: Would you -- when you did interrogation dressed in this lieutenant's uniform, would you introduce yourself? Would you give your name? Would you give a false name?

RP: As [23:00] far as I recall, and I should remember, but I don't, I don't believe we gave any names at all.

INT: Okay.

RP: Then again, there may have been exceptions.

INT: Would you wear an officer's uniform during all interrogations, or just in interrogations of other officers? If you were interrogating the German equivalent to a sergeant --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- would you dress in a sergeant's uniform, or would you --

RP: Yeah, sometimes. Usually only if the interrogatee was another officer.

INT: Okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay. And talking some more about the officers, do you remember who your commanding officer was? Were you assigned to one specific officer?

RP: It seems that the one I dealt with most, maybe you can [inaudible], [24:00] was Captain [Herman] Halle [24:02].

INT: Halle?

RP: H-A-L-L-E, who was also known -- he did use a pseudonym, Captain Leon [24:12].

INT: Oh, really, that was his pseudonym? Okay.

RP: There was no direct command relationship. But it seemed to me he was the one who all of us reported to, and met with and so forth.

INT: Would there be an officer in charge of all of the monitoring, and an officer in charge of all the interrogation? Or was it more spread out? As you mentioned, there were officers doing almost all of the jobs themselves.

RP: Well, the monitoring -- I only know there was a Major [James] Morris [24:46], who later went down to Washington and became my landlord. He was the technical expert on all the technology [25:00] for the monitoring and so forth. I was basically in charge of the monitoring.

INT: Really? Okay. You were in charge of all of the monitoring, or you were in charge of what -- your own schedule?

RP: My own schedule. There was nobody really -- I guess, if there were eight monitors, and of those two were privates, and two were corporals, maybe there was one staff sergeant, automatically the staff sergeant was in charge.

INT: Sure.

RP: But that would change from day to day, and there was no command structure. I suppose if something should happen, somebody would have to be told that they were in charge, and that's how it would work.

INT: Sure, sure. What do you remember about the physical description? We've spoken about this a little bit [26:00], but of where the monitoring would take place, where they monitored, where you actually would be? What kind of building --

RP: It was called locally the Honeysuckle Lodge [26:14]. Have you heard that before?

INT: No, I haven't.

RP: It was a building specifically built for that purpose, on a hill. On a hill, I mean, about 15-20 feet up in a thicket of greenery called Honeysuckle [26:39]. And a little walkway, like a boardwalk, would walk up to it.

INT: Okay. And so what kind of building was it? Was it a frame structure, was it concrete?

RP: I think it was concrete, or what do you call these bricks [27:00]? I believe it was concrete, Brandon. Inside was very utilitarian, but comfortable. Comfortable chairs, and desks to write on, tables. There were, of course, all the monitoring equipment. And there seemed to be a couple special rooms, with typewriters, where we could type out what we would record, the information we monitored. Then we would put these records, and play them, and type out the information.

INT: Okay. When would you make one of these recordings?

RP: During the night or during the day. When we were -- somebody else would take over then, close the rooms that we were monitoring [28:00].

INT: Okay. What was there -- how would you decide that it was time to record? Most of the time, were you just taking notes on what was going on, or were you recording?

RP: Yeah, Most of the time it was silent; there was nothing to do, nothing to record. Every half hour, 15 minutes, we'd at least write down "Sleeping," "Nothing going on," or "Talking about girlfriend." Or "Talking about food." They talked about food a lot, at the end of the day.

INT: With -- again with that building, do you recall -- was this monitoring building, was it aboveground, or was it belowground?

RP: Oh, yeah, it was above the ground.

INT: Okay.

RP: Right on that little hillock, I guess it's called.

INT: Okay.

RP: And it was overgrown. Just shrubbery [29:00] and very fragrant in the springtime.

Honeysuckle [29:06] and --

INT: Was it attached to --

INT: This is a good time to stop.

INT: Okay.

(End of Tape 1B)

(Beginning of Tape 2A)

INT: Are you kidding me? I imagine, if I lived in a place for four years, it would be a lot more cluttered than this.

INT: Okay, Brandon. This is tape two, if you want to make a little announcement.

INT: Are we going on both counts?

INT: Yes.

RP: I'm going to get a drink of water.

INT: Oh, sure.

INT: Absolutely. As I said, the way I look at it is, if you -- you certainly remember more about 1142 [00:34] than I will. So, it wouldn't take much.

INT: Okay. Good.

INT: We've been talking a little bit about the monitoring room -- and I guess I should probably just start with a new introduction, actually. This is the second in a series of tapes with Rudy Pins, here in his apartment in New York City. Again, this is National Park Service

historian Brandon Bies [01:00], as well as team member Sam Swersky, and it is Thursday, September 14, 2006. Now, we can get back into what we were talking a little bit about the -- we were asking some questions about this building, the monitoring building that you were in. You said that it was an above-ground structure; do you remember about how big it may have been?

RP: I would say it was about 40 to 50 feet long, possibly a little bit longer, then about 25 feet wide.

INT: Okay. And was it adjacent to --

RP: A one-story building.

INT: Okay. Was it close, or adjacent, or attached to where the prisoners were, or --

RP: Not at all. It was all set off by itself. Whether this was by design or not, I'm not sure [02:00].

INT: And, could -- was this posted as off-limits, or --

RP: Yes, it was off-limits to all except for authorized personnel.

INT: Okay, okay. Do you remember were there any use of underground bunkers, or hidden rooms, or anything, at 1142 [02:25]?

RP: Well, I'm smiling because yes, in a sense, but it was unofficial. I don't remember whether they still exist, but during the Civil War [02:37] there were underground installations at Fort Hunt [02:43].

INT: Yes, those gun batteries are still there.

RP: Yeah. And when we had some very recalcitrant prisoners, we would take them down there. Either hooded or otherwise, just put a little fear of God into them. And then interrogate them; maybe we'd have MPs with us, or somebody, and just to give them,

think a little more unsure of themselves. They were too cocky, or what have you. We might leave them in there for a few hours, never overnight, or anything of that nature.

That's the only underground installation that I know of; it was definitely unofficial.

INT: [affirmative] Was there a room in there that you used, or did you just lock them into the -
-

RP: We didn't -- there wasn't really any room, there was just a guard there to make sure they stayed there.

INT: Okay. Were they -- do you recall if that was bugged, at all for monitoring, or there was just someone there to --

RP: No, no they were not.

INT: Okay, okay. What sorts of people would [04:00] -- again, I understand this was not very common, but when it did happen, what sorts of prisoners were given that treatment?

RP: Well, they were prisoners who were obviously hostile, and we thought might in some way affect some of the other prisoners. They varied in rank, and really -- it wasn't anything done very frequently; I think we did it a dozen times altogether, that that was used.

INT: Were they ever roughed up at all, in any way?

RP: No, not to my knowledge. The worst thing we ever did -- and I -- we had to know that, I think, to talk about it or not -- we would threaten some of them with deportation to Russia.

INT: We heard that before, so [05:00] you don't have to worry about spilling any beans, or anything --

RP: We would have Alex Dallin [05:06], who was, of course, a native Russian speaker, and

Alex Schidlovsky [05:12], who was even more, even more -- he was really very Russian. And they would dress in Russian uniforms and they would attend the interrogations. Then we -- the prisoner would be there, we would negotiate a transfer. Then afterwards we would play good cop, bad cop -- if you want to talk, okay; go to a nice POW [05:42] camp in Fort Meade [05:44], or otherwise you could go to the Soviet Union [05:49]. And guess what they preferred? [laughs]

INT: Did you get the sense that this worked?

RP: I think it did. I think it did. It's again [06:00] a matter of the interrogatee not knowing, who all -- he may have suspected a ruse, but he couldn't afford not to. He said, maybe it's true, wants to go back home, and so he -- that's what we had in our favor.

INT: And you said that the --

RP: And also, Alex [06:18] would typically have a copy of Pravda, which you could buy at that time in Washington, sticking out of his pocket. You know, making it look more authentic.

INT: [laughs] And so, did you know where they got these uniforms from, the military just procured some --

RP: No, the Pentagon [06:44] has, and the CIA [06:46] -- well, it wasn't CIA -- was the Pentagon, but they had [unintelligible].

INT: And you said the two individuals that you recall dressing up as that were Dallin [06:58] --

RP: Dallin and Schidlovsky [07:00]. Very good, very authentic-looking Russians.

INT: Was that a common practice, or was --

RP: No, it was very unusual, probably didn't do that more than, again, three or four times.

INT: And that would be for prisoners who were being particularly difficult.

RP: Yes.

INT: Okay, okay. Did you ever have folks dress up in uniforms of any other countries?
French, or Italy, or England?

RP: No, no. We had a good [unintelligible] captain on our base.

INT: Oh, really.

RP: Yeah, very nice guy.

INT: Do you recall his name?

RP: Yeah. It's not going to help you. I think it was Smith [07:49] [laughs] -- very nice, very--
about six foot four, something like that.

INT: And what was his role?

RP: I'm not sure [08:00]. Sort of a liaison. He did interrogations --

INT: Oh really.

RP: Yeah. He -- I guess he was, because he was British staff in Washington, and so forth.
Everybody liked him. Nice guy.

INT: And, do you recall, were there any liaisons from any other countries?

RP: Not to my knowledge. There might have been, but no, I don't recall anybody.

INT: Okay. Speaking of folks who were there at 1142 [08:42], do you recall -- what do you
recall about the Asian-Americans, who, the Japanese-Americans, who were there? Do
you actually remember their being --

RP: Well, they were, they were part of our barracks, at least some of them. They pretty much
[09:00] kept to themselves, but they were friendly and well-accepted. It was a -- it wasn't
much of a relationship, but what there was, was positive.

INT: And what do you remember their specific role was?

RP: Well, we had at that -- well, they came in quite late; I believe they came in August '45, so the war was almost over. By that time, I guess on Saipan, and a few other areas, we had captured a number of Japanese POWs [09:40], so we -- they did the interrogation of the Japanese POWs [09:44]. What they did, and how, and all the -- any of the details, I'm not at all familiar with. Just that they made a good impression, we all got along, there was never any kind of an incident [10:00], but --

INT: Do you recall -- were there were any Japanese-American officers, or was it just enlisted men?

RP: I think only enlisted men, but there may have been; I can't swear to it, I think one of them was. I know there was a little mix-up of staff sergeants, corporals, et cetera, et cetera. A lot of them were probably from Hawaii [10:33] or the West Coast.

INT: Sure. So, you believe they were interrogating primarily Japanese who had been captured in the Pacific.

RP: Yes.

INT: What about any of these Japanese who were actually stationed in Germany, were there any of them?

RP: Okay, those, like General Oshima [10:58] and Colonel Konematsu [11:00], these people either spoke good English or good German.

INT: Oh, true, that makes sense.

RP: Oshima [11:07] spoke very good German, didn't speak any English. And so we handled him, but whether the Japanese boys ever got to him or not I don't know. He also got this daily ration of brandy from us.

INT: The Japanese -- I realize you may not know much about this -- but the Japanese who

were brought in from the Pacific, do you remember actually seeing Japanese prisoners there at 1142 [11:46]?

RP: I did see some, yes.

INT: Any sense of the --

RP: It was incidentally. I didn't interrogate any of them.

INT: Sure. Did you have any sense of how many Japanese prisoners [12:00] may have been brought through?

RP: If I tell you, it's a pure guess. I would say never more than about 25 to 30 at a time. At the very most.

INT: And were they --

RP: I think turnover was pretty fast.

INT: Okay. Do you have any sense of what kind of information they were trying to get from them?

RP: No.

INT: Okay, okay.

INT: This was mostly after the war in Europe had ended, or --

RP: This was -- by that time, the war in the Pacific was almost over, so only a month before the end of the war in the Pacific, Sam.

INT: And of the two Japanese officers that you had mentioned from -- that came over from Germany, what do you remember -- did you ever actually participate in any of their interrogations, or their room monitoring [13:00]?

RP: I don't -- I never interrogated them, no. I saw them, and probably, if they were monitored, they would have spoken in Japanese. And I don't recall any Japanese

monitors.

INT: Interesting.

RP: So, they probably weren't monitored.

INT: Okay. Do you recall how long they were there at 1142 [13:32]?

RP: They were brought over, I would say it was May, maybe June, of '45, and they left -- they weren't there more than a few months. They were taken to Greenbrier, the Greenbrier [14:00], West Virginia. They were housed, and then shipped back on a Swedish trooper ship, back to Japan.

INT: Did you get any sense of what sort of information we were trying to get out of them?

RP: Not -- I think it was pretty general. I mean, technically they were not prisoners of war [14:31]; they were diplomats, interned diplomats, and we were not supposed to interrogate them. We could talk to them, and that was what we -- basically what we did; we interrogated, we might have some questions, but it was basically talk. And we knew enough about them, we knew that Oshima [14:51] was the instigator of the so-called Tripartite Pact [14:57], Hitler [14:59], [Benito] Mussolini [14:59] and Japan. [15:00] He was one of the chief instigators. He was not a very friendly witness, he eventually got 20 years in the war crimes trial [15:10].

INT: Oh really. While we're on the subject of Japan, do you recall what your reaction was to hearing that the atomic bombs [15:20] had been dropped?

RP: Well, I was -- I was certainly very interested, and very happy. I am a totally non-scientific person, so I was very interested to read about it. By that time, I was certainly still in 1142 [15:47].

INT: Did, did you ever have any sense that anything that was done, or that passed through

1142 [16:00], actually led to the development of America's nuclear program, the atomic bomb [16:06]?

RP: No. I doubt, maybe we did, but I don't know we -- because the scientists, the scientists and such weren't brought in until August, at the very end of the war. But there may have been some information was gathered by the likes of Fred Michel [16:30] et cetera, that could have helped.

INT: Did you ever have any fear while you were at 1142 [16:41] that you would end up, that you would be involved in the war against Japan?

RP: No.

INT: Okay.

RP: No, no. There wasn't any reason to be. We had one character who was a spy [17:00], who was a double or triple spy, who we had on our hands, who may have had some dealings with the Japanese in Turkey, but that was very vague.

INT: Do you recall his name?

RP: No, but he had so many names anyhow. He was, I think, an ethnic Hungarian, who worked for the Hungarians. Certainly he worked for the Germans, he worked for the British, and he was finally -- finally he was caught by us and was pushed across the border from Turkey into what was then French Algeria. And he was brought over to us, 1142 [17:54] where he was interrogated extensively [18:00], and I didn't even get all the information on that, but I participated in it. At least, all of us who worked on it, we had a commendation put into our jackets, by a commendation from J. Edgar Hoover [18:16].

INT: Really?

RP: Yeah. So, for me I was forbidden to see what was put into our jacket.

INT: So, have you ever seen it?

RP: No.

INT: No? When this spy was captured, whose side was he working for at the time?

RP: Good question. I don't think anybody knew; maybe he didn't know himself. So, he was working for himself.

INT: So, it was the sense that he would just be working for whoever was currently paying the top dollar?

RP: Giving him money. Yeah.

INT: Do you recall how long he was at 1142 [18:51], or what sort of treatment he might have received?

RP: No idea. He was just kept pretty -- pretty [19:00] quiet, and I would say he was probably there for quite a while. But, only a couple of the officers, I guess, interrogated him, it was pretty restricted.

INT: So you don't think any enlisted men were at all --

RP: I don't believe so. And not many officers, just -- I think just a couple.

INT: Okay, okay.

RP: Possibly the FBI [19:27] was involved, too. They may have sent somebody over.

INT: What level of involvement, do you recall, having with FBI [19:35], or folks at the Pentagon [19:37], or even the OSS [19:38], or any other organizations?

RP: As far as I know, none with the OSS [19:41]. I imagine the people at Y [19:48] and X [19:49] did. The Pentagon [19:50], of course, we reported directly to the Pentagon [19:56]. So there was an almost daily staff car [20:00] going back and forth to the Pentagon [20:03]. The FBI [20:07], except for this one case, I don't know, but, again,

there may have been other cases.

INT: Did you get any sense of what type of information was going to the Pentagon [20:22]?

You said there was a daily staff car between 1142 [20:25] and the Pentagon.

RP: I have no idea. I suppose it was, it being the Army, we interrogated x number of people, we had this and this many arrivals, this and this many departures, and just this kind of record keeping.

INT: Did you get any feedback on the reports that you were getting --

RP: No, no. Everything was, communications one-way, which is also typically Army. You screw up [21:00], then you hear about it.

INT: I lost my thought, I apologize. I'm sorry.

INT: No, it's fine.

INT: With the Pentagon [21:17] -- I had something to ask about the Pentagon; now I obviously can't recall. Oh, okay, what sense did you have -- what happened to the information that you got out of the interrogations, or out of the monitoring? What -- I mean, what physically -- your -- like, physically, where did that go? Did you hand it to someone --

RP: Certainly, we were not told; everything was secret. My reports went to maybe Captain Halle [21:54], or somebody else, to Colonel Bliss' [21:58] office. They were then [22:00] sent to the Pentagon [22:01], where, I presume, it was sorted out. If it was target information, it went to the Air Corps [22:09], at that time; political information, to some political or propaganda outfit, maybe at Eisenhower's [22:19] headquarters. A lot of it was probably thrown in the waste basket; depended -- it was evaluated to see what was really important information, what wasn't. So, some could have been of tactical interest to commanders at the front, Third Army, or what have you. But I have no knowledge of

exactly what happened, or the actual process of distribution.

INT: Okay. So, once it left your hands, you never saw it again [23:00].

RP: Or heard about it.

INT: Or heard about it, yeah. Okay. Do you recall -- one of the veterans we've spoken with, who I think, you spoke with him, I think -- Wayne Spivey [23:12], in Georgia -- he was in what was referred to as the Evaluation Section [23:17]. Do you recall anything about them, and what their role was?

RP: I really don't. Again, I assume that they would look over some of this material, and then had to -- first, you would have to see whether it was of any value. You don't want to send stuff to the Pentagon [23:38] which says nothing happened, no; silence, snoring, and so forth. So that would be eliminated; they were the primary screening unit.

INT: I apologize for jumping around [24:00], but originally we were on the subject of, if you recall, the Japanese-Americans who were there. Do you recall, does anyone else stand out at 1142 [24:10]; for example, do you remember if there were ever any African-Americans who were stationed there, even in roles such as cooks, or guards?

RP: Not that I know of; I don't recall a single one.

INT: What about --

RP: It was very much a segregated area. When you got on the bus to Alexandria, from around Washington -- once you got up to the District line, the bus driver would stop and say, "All colored people in the back."

INT: Really?

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: Did that surprise you?

RP: Well, the first time it surprised me, yes. The first time it happened.

INT: What about women in the camp? Do you remember, were there any females stationed --

RP: We had a WACs [24:58] captain [25:00]. I don't know what she did.

INT: Do you recall her name?

RP: Why she was there. No, I don't. Of course, needless to say, the butt of many jokes
[laughs].

INT: Was she an older woman, or a --

RP: To me she was older. I suppose she was about in the -- probably in her 30s, maybe early
40s; I don't know.

INT: Did you have any idea what her role was there?

RP: I haven't got the slightest idea what she did.

INT: Do you know where she lived on post?

INT: Good question.

INT: Presumably, not in the barracks.

RP: No [laughs] I don't -- I don't know. But we were pretty well inculcated with-- you don't
ask too many questions; who does what, why, they don't know what we were doing -- we
did not need to know what they were doing [26:00]. And they were told not to talk about
it, and vice versa. That's why we sometimes sounded a little ignorant about what was
going on, but we were supposed to be.

INT: And that brings up another subject we wanted to talk about in a little bit more detail, in
terms of knowing what's going on. The MIS-X [26:25] program -- when you were at
1142 [26:29], what did you know about what was going on there with that program?

RP: Almost nothing. I had heard rumors -- look, somehow I heard there was -- it had

something to do with escaped prisoners, or prisoner escapes. That's the only thing that I knew.

INT: Did you --

RP: Somebody came up with -- somebody had invented a map, or something. But I [27:00] really didn't -- the security was top-notch.

INT: Did you interact at all with folks in that facility?

RP: No, no. We really didn't, and I don't think it was encouraged.

INT: Okay. Did they live, and work, and eat in separate buildings?

RP: They certainly lived in separate buildings, and worked in separate buildings. And Sam asked before, they ate in the same mess hall, possibly. I don't think -- I think they did, but they may have had a separate section. But this is something that I don't, I can't swear to that. I don't recall.

INT: Do you recall, roughly, any numbers about how many people may have been in that program?

RP: It would be a pure guess; I would say about 40, 50.

INT: Okay. What about your program? What about in the [28:00] Y [28:01] program, was that larger or smaller?

RP: I would say about the same size, maybe a little bit larger. Maybe.

INT: And then, what about general, for lack of a better term, support staff; the cooks, the guards, any sense how many of those folks were there at 1142 [28:25]?

RP: The cooks, maybe half a dozen of them there. The MPs and guards, I really don't know. I don't think there were that many. There may not have been more than 25 or 30. There should have been more, considering the amount having to do night duty and so forth.

And there was a headquarters; there was a master sergeant, what do you call, a top sergeant [29:00], and I think somebody else topping him. I think there were no more than three or four people at the headquarters building.

INT: So, overall, if you had to take a guess, at any given time, how many U.S. personnel were stationed at Fort Hunt [29:20]?

RP: That's a pure guess, Brandon, I would say maybe 200. But it's a pure guess.

INT: Okay. Did that -- did the numbers seem to fluctuate a good bit as people came and went, or did there seem to be a steady --

RP: The job where I was, was pretty steady. But again, I don't know what happened with the MPs, or -- of course, there was an increase when we got the Japanese boys in [30:00]; this was when there were an extra 10 or 15, I think, 20 guys. I don't think these poor guys had ever eaten Japanese food.

INT: That's incredible.

INT: That's a very good question.

RP: If the cooks put it out, they were lucky.

[laughter]

INT: Do you remember, while you were there, any visits by, for lack of a better term, VIPs, high-ranking officers, or anything?

RP: I only remember one. General -- he later became head of the FAA -- it was P, starts with P. I want to say Pirrato [phonetic], but that's not it at all. Pete -- no, no [unintelligible]; it was Pete [31:00] somebody. I think it was an Air Force General. [unintelligible] it was -- they didn't exactly ask for me, they didn't ask for him to meet me. Pete [31:18], had a V in the name. If you know anybody at the FAA who is a long-timer, they might -- he

was early at the FAA -- [General Elwood "Pete" Quesada.]

INT: I'm sure we could find who it was.

RP: Under Eisenhower [31:34], or Kennedy [31:36], or somebody.

INT: But otherwise, there weren't, that you recall, a tremendous number of high-ranking visitors --

RP: No, no, no. I don't think the Pentagon [31:46] people came out too often.

INT: Okay.

RP: Trying to think if anybody else ever -- no, I would have heard about it.

INT: Okay [32:00]. What about civilians? Do you remember there being any civilian employees, or clerks, or typists, or anyone in civilian clothes there?

(End of Tape 2A)

(Beginning of Tape 2B)

INT: Roughly half hour, and then that will take us right up to about --

INT: Would you like a glass of water, sir?

RP: I'm sorry?

INT: Can I get you a glass of water?

RP: No, I'm fine. I'm just worrying about Sam watching us eat.

INT: [laughs] Please don't worry about it. So sure, we can go for another half hour here roughly.

RP: Okay.

INT: And then take a break after that. What about naval personnel?

RP: We were very separate. They were generally considered top notch. And the one I -- the one I remember is this Vladimir Rychly [00:43].

INT: Okay.

RP: What's his real rank -- the rumor was he wasn't even an officer. But he was always running around with lieutenants [01:00], Navy lieutenants in the [unintelligible].

INT: And what was his last name again?

RP: Rychly [01:06], R-Y-C-H-L-Y I believe.

INT: Okay.

RP: He later became, in the 50s, I believe. He was the American naval attaché in Belgrade.

INT: All right.

RP: Very, very, very bright guy. But a specialist in submarines and especially some of their newer technology. Their torpedoes and their sonar equipment and all of this. There was also a well-known captain [phonetic] -- I think a Navy captain. Whose name -- I want to say Andre, what I think it was his name. If I hear it, I'd know. He was there for a while. Otherwise, Rychly [02:00] was by himself.

INT: There's another name of a fellow that I want to mention who we believe was through the Navy, but it's not clear if he was a civilian or an officer, and his name was [Jack] Alberti [02:15]. Is that the one you were just thinking of right now?

RP: Yeah, that's what I was thinking about.

INT: Okay.

RP: I forget his role. I thought he was an actively high-ranking Navy captain.

INT: Okay.

RP: But I'm not sure. He could've been a civilian.

INT: Okay. And do you remember what he was up to?

RP: No. They were very, very, very security conscious.

INT: Okay.

RP: They were all -- they were highly respected and liked.

INT: Did you get a sense of what their role was there at 1142 [02:52]? I -- did they have their own monitoring and interrogation program?

RP: No. They used ours.

INT: Okay [03:00].

RP: So we did monitor U-boat [03:02] personnel.

INT: Sure.

RP: But it was -- but Rychly [03:07] did his own thing, ran his own operation as far as I know. Did his own interrogations, maybe his own evaluations, et cetera.

INT: Okay. And were there -- you said they did their own interrogations, they met with him.

RP: Yeah.

INT: So did you know if Rychly [03:30] and Alberti [03:31] spoke German?

RP: Oh I'm sure they did.

INT: Okay.

RP: I'm sure Rychly [03:35] did.

INT: Okay.

RP: I imagine Alberti [03:37] did. Now we interrogated some submarine personnel with an -- in a non-technical information, morale, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Their backgrounds.

INT: And were there any other naval personnel there? I [04:00] guess they would be considered enlisted men. You know, in the navy or was it just that handful or those couple of --

RP: That's all.

INT: Okay.

RP: That's all I know of.

INT: Okay.

RP: They may have had help but I didn't know who they were.

INT: Okay.

RP: They were, as I said before, they were very security conscious.

INT: And so and what was your interaction with them, if any?

RP: Social more or less.

INT: Okay.

RP: We'd meet them, see them we'd talk and chat.

INT: Sure.

RP: And I guess there was some business talk when we interrogated some of the crew and we'd ask about it and -- the information and et cetera. They might even brief us on a couple of things. Submarine torpedoes.

INT: Did you say they used your monitoring information?

RP: No, we did the [05:00] monitoring for them -- there was no Navy personnel in the monitoring room. Not by a particular design I guess they just thought we could take care of it.

INT: To talk a little bit about the actual -- so you were talking about the submariners and what not. Of the military prisoners who were there, so I assume first of all, most of the folks when you first arrived at 1142 [05:36], were they prisoners of a military nature as opposed to the scientists or?

RP: Oh, all of them.

INT: All of them.

RP: All of them.

INT: And what --

RP: Except for that one spy. They were all military or naval or Luftwaffe [05:51] and --

INT: Okay.

RP: We didn't have any civilians that -- technical -- technical people. No scientists [06:00].

INT: Okay. And what branches of the service were they -- of the German service were they from? All branches or?

RP: From everywhere imaginable.

INT: Okay.

RP: Every rank imaginable, from a private to a three-star general. They came from all parts of Germany and occupied Germany. There were Germans, there were Hungarians. We had Austrians, we had German ethnics from all over. We had Baltic people. We had people and this is from the anti-Soviet Russian Army that fought with the -- on Hitler's [06:51] side. We had all sorts -- Luxembourgers who were drafted into the German Army [07:00]. So yeah we had them all.

INT: And you mentioned earlier on that you recall that there had been some Italian prisoners there as well.

RP: Yes.

INT: Okay.

RP: But I looked -- I may have seen one. But I'm not even sure about that. It was -- then by the time I arrived there, there was all gone. I had not a single contact.

INT: Do you know if there had been Italian American interrogators or monitors stationed

there?

RP: I have assumed, not monitors -- the monitoring didn't start until I think a certain time I arrived.

INT: Oh really?

RP: It was later, yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: And as far as interrogators, I assume there were, but they were gone by then.

INT: Were -- you mentioned that the German prisoners were from all branches of the service [08:00]. Were the majority of them from the U-boat [08:05] service? Or the Luftwaffe [08:08] or?

RP: No, we had a good number from the U-boat [08:09], but it didn't -- not that many U-boats were either captured or survivors. So we had of course our share of Luftwaffe [08:18]. Probably they were shot down or there're Luftwaffe units fall from the ground. But most of them were Army, some SS [08:31]. But most of them were regular Army troops. From all branches on -- Artillery, armored troops, infantry. [unintelligible] what have you.

INT: Did you get the sense that the German prisoners had been passed around from country to country? That is had any of them been captured by the British, interrogated by the British, and then turned over to the Americans [09:00]? Or were they all captured by Americans?

RP: I would -- again, I would, well -- the low level I was, I would say hardly 85 percent were captured by the Americans. There may have been a few captured by the British and turned over, but generally they would like to take care of their own. And as far as the

French were concerned I don't think there were -- The only time they [09:30] would've been turned over to us if they physically couldn't handle the prisoners at the front. They needed somebody to take -- take them back to the cages or whatever. Otherwise I don't know of any case at all. Maybe you encountered some in Europe.

INT: No, I -- that's why I was asking if, you know, if what you knew -- we really don't have a great [10:00] sense -- we assumed, yes. Most of them are --

RP: Most of them were -- and also because as far as we were concerned, the fresher the information the better. So if somebody had been held by someone else for a number of weeks or months, then the information wouldn't be so good. And our information would have been compromised.

INT: So did you get a sense that during this military period when they were bringing in lots of military personnel, that it was time-sensitive information that in --

RP: In some cases, definitely, yes.

INT: And did it in terms of operational information?

RP: Yeah, especially shortly after D-Day [10:45], we wanted to know where a lot of the units were and who was in charge so we could use that intelligence, during that period when we were having a tough time breaking through the line [11:00].

INT: Were there particular times where you suddenly saw a large number of -- an influx of prisoners after D-Day [11:14] or after --

RP: Yeah, I think it was. Of course it was -- by the time they got to us they were -- it was already 14 hours so there wouldn't be that flood of sorts. After D-Day [11:27] especially after the breakthrough of the gentlemen in Calais. After that when we rushed into Paris, we got a lot of prisoners. There were many -- there were many -- especially many

foreigners, and by foreigners, I mean Russians, outfits in the German Army and ethnics from Russia and Caucasian groups and so forth [12:00] who were -- served with the German Army and so forth. A lot of them had been stationed in occupied France, so we got quite a few of them.

INT: Did you get any sense when you were monitoring or interrogating these military folks -- just does anything stand out in your mind as being exceptionally important? Do you remember any incidents where you were hearing something that you thought was very, very important that immediately, rushing off to make sure somebody got that information?

RP: The main thing, I don't recall. There was a lot of interesting stuff, but I frankly do not recall.

INT: So nothing really stands out as --

RP: No.

INT: -- you know, a fantastic battle plan or some information?

RP: No. Nobody would -- nobody came up with a map, plans for counterattacks. Anything of that nature, unfortunately [13:00] not. It was a matter of little pieces putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

INT: Was there a particular feeling after D-Day [13:11] or after of the importance of the mission or it was more important --

[phone rings]

RP: Well I don't think so. I think it was pretty much the same. Hello?

[audio break]

INT: Maybe later on this afternoon or tomorrow, a little bit. So I hope you don't mind

repeating information.

RP: No, no, no. Not at all.

INT: Get you repeating for us, because even though that's not directly related to 1142 [13:45], I think it's still a very, very important part of your story.

RP: Yeah, it's part of me.

INT: And certainly probably what you did at 1142 [13:53] is largely why you ended up going -
-

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- to Nuremberg [14:00]. So we were speaking about the actual -- the significance of what was coming out of these conversations, and you were saying you don't really remember any specific wonderful incidents where it's something that you --

RP: No, I don't. And it became any more important afterwards? No, they did not because before the invasion, of course, we were very much in the system, the situation in occupied France and occupied Belgium and so were instituting information of that nature to -- which would possibly -- little bits and pieces that would help the U.S. Army [phonetic]. And then afterwards we -- it was information to speed it up for a final victory.

INT: Do you -- did you get the sense while [15:00] you were monitoring the conversations that any of the prisoners knew what was up? Did they know that their conversations were being monitored?

RP: No, they never knew they were being monitored.

INT: Okay.

RP: Of course that gave us a head start of the interrogations of --

INT: Sure.

RP: What was the other part of the question?

INT: That was essentially it.

RP: No, they had no idea --

INT: That they were being monitored.

RP: -- they were being monitored.

INT: You were never -- you don't remember them ever discovering that they were being monitored or anything like that?

RP: No, no, no.

INT: Okay.

RP: It could've been that one or two were suspicious --I imagine some were, I believe-- that we'd been monitoring, because we could hear them foraging around undoing light fixtures and so forth looking for microphones.

INT: Really?

RP: But these microphones were pretty well embedded in the building and the ceiling and so forth.

INT: And do you recall specifically where they were hidden [16:00]? Just in the ceiling at some point.

RP: Mostly in the ceiling and the walls.

INT: In the walls, okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Was -- were just the individual rooms bugged? Or was it -- do you remember if anything -- exercise areas or areas outside?

RP: I don't know.

INT: Trees?

RP: I can't swear to it, but I don't think so.

INT: Okay.

RP: Only the rooms.

INT: Okay.

RP: No, I don't think so.

INT: Okay.

RP: Trees don't talk. [laughs] People are not trees. I don't know.

INT: I've lost my train of thought, I apologize. I'm trying to think of related questions. Let's see -- I've had a complete memory blank, about what I was [17:00] going to just ask.

RP: Perhaps you want the kind of people who were?

INT: Yeah, I mean, or if there's anything at all that you would like to add throughout this. Anything that stands out in your mind about, again, specific incidents while you were there. So I'd like to talk to you a little bit --

INT: Did you ever use plants, in other words, someone who was either had sort of come over to our side --

RP: Oh yeah. That's --

INT: Have them enter into conversations in the monitoring situation?

RP: Oh yeah. As Brandon brought up, they were so called SPs [17:46]. And they were planted in the cells.

INT: That's exactly what I was going to ask. And what did SP stand for?

RP: Stool pigeons [17:55].

INT: [laughs] Do you recall why that term was selected [18:00]?

RP: No. Somebody someplace came up with it. No, they would be encouraged to ask innocently just to steer conversational. If the guy who answered somebody when he was talking about his girlfriend and food and he would be encouraged to talk about things of interest to us. Then get comments and then eventually get him around to talking about more interesting items.

INT: Do you recall how stoolpigeons [18:39] were selected?

RP: No I don't. I guess they had to be people we pretty much relied on, were fairly reliable. They would expose themselves [19:00], sometimes [unintelligible], they could be found out. Although I don't think that they really happened.

INT: So do you recall if any of the stool pigeons [19:13] were found out by the Germans that they were --

RP: I am not sure. The background that I received seems there was an incident. But I'm not sure of that. There may have been a couple of suspicions, but generally not.

INT: Were they almost like a part of the staff or were they?

RP: No they were other POWs [19:36]. We did use a couple of times, a few times where I think we used our own staff. But it would be better if he is a POW [19:51].

INT: But if the normal POWs [19:53] were rotated in and out of Fort Hunt [19:56], were there SPs [19:57] that were kept --

RP: Yeah there were some that were kept for [20:00] some time. To help us out, cases like that.

INT: Were they getting special treatment?

RP: Not really. They were probably sent to a better camp because there were good POW

[20:13] camps and there were bad POW [20:16] camps. And so that -- that's the only inducer that I know of.

INT: Do you recall -- what was their reason for wanting to help out the Americans? Just to try to get better treatment?

RP: There were a few of -- may have been ideologically motivated. There were an anti-Nazi [20:43] or maybe have become that way and being treated -- there were ethnic Germans sometimes who were not being treated as full Germans. They got sick of that. There may have been some who were just [21:00] for their own self-interest, thought they probably would get sent home earlier, get better treatment, and so forth.

INT: Did you get the sense that any of the prisoners knew where they were?

RP: Only once. This we got through our monitoring. We were monitoring a room. There was a guy, I forget his rank and so forth, and he said I know exactly where I am. He said I used to be with the German embassy in Washington, and I used to take my girlfriend out here. This was Fort Hunt [21:50]. [laughs] We hustled him out in a hurry.

INT: Oh yeah. [laughs]

RP: It was a real [unintelligible].

INT: But [22:00] -- that's the only time that they -- that anybody really knew where they were at.

RP: Now they had no idea -- even at what stage, no they -- Of course they came and they flew in on a [unintelligible] -- but the only thing that some of them noticed was the very increased, a lot of air traffic, that we were near a national airport. And [unintelligible] whom you mentioned in the book, he claimed that we were doing that, that we were flying planes around to show off how many planes we had.

INT: Oh really?

RP: Yeah. But otherwise I don't think anybody knew what State they were in. Certainly if they were there in the wintertime and saw the more or less mild winter, they knew they weren't --

INT: What part of the country?

RP: That they weren't in Maine or North Dakota.

INT: Right [23:00].

RP: But otherwise they didn't know.

INT: Could they -- could they see any of the surrounding area outside of the fort or was it wooded?

RP: No. No it was all wooded and we couldn't see anything.

INT: Okay. And so you couldn't see the Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway right there.

RP: No, no.

INT: Okay.

RP: We were near the highway. I doubt it -- I would look -- you might have been able -- on a quiet day, you might be able to hear some traffic. So that could be anyplace.

INT: Sure, sure. Yeah, roads anywhere. What about, from we were talking a little about some of the military prisoners, the scientific prisoners, did they primarily start coming in headed out towards the end of the war or after the end of the war [24:00]?

RP: Really after the end of the war.

INT: Okay.

RP: No, they were the -- von Braun [24:05] and all those, they were picked up in a hurry, and then they just grabbed anybody they could grab.

INT: Do you remember if von Braun actually went through Fort Hunt [24:17]?

RP: I don't think he did.

INT: Okay.

RP: I'm not sure of that, I don't think he did. But I think they had some significant scientists.

But none of them, I don't think any of them, these scientists, arrived before May 45.

INT: Okay.

RP: Before V-Day [24:37]. I doubt it very much.

INT: Do you recall if these scientists were of military rank or were they all?

RP: They were a mix.

INT: Okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay. And their length of stay, was it similar to that of the military personnel or was it --

RP: I think so. There may have -- especially since the [25:00] war was over, they may have relaxed some of the rules. Maybe some of them stayed in these huts. But I don't really recall.

INT: Were the huts there throughout the entire time that you were there?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Do you recall anything at the fort being constructed while you were there? Any new --

RP: Only the monitoring.

INT: That was --

RP: Yeah, that was -- yeah, it was being finished when I got there.

INT: Oh really? Okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: And I think they were ordering new -- the new wing, prison wing or whatever you want to call it, because they once had us install all the microphones.

INT: Oh really?

RP: Those were new. But I never saw those really.

INT: So when you were there -- for part of the time you were there, do you recall two separate prison areas?

RP: Well the areas were the same.

INT: Okay.

RP: Yeah. And then the new wing was then [26:00] constructed I guess within that same area.

INT: Oh okay. Okay. But then as soon as they finished that, the whole thing was the --

RP: Yeah. Yeah.

INT: Was being used --

RP: Yeah. I couldn't be very reliable with the [unintelligible] exactly how it's going to go, I don't recall. I mean there were three [unintelligible] as such.

INT: Five minutes.

INT: Do you recall, were there around the prison commons, were there guard towers or anything?

RP: There must have been. I'm sure there were. And I really don't visually recall them, but I'm sure there were. Because we did have one [unintelligible] escape. This was before I got there.

INT: And what had you heard about that [27:00] escape?

RP: Very little, that, somebody had probably escaped and was shot trying to escape.

INT: Did you know who it was?

RP: At the time I did but I've forgotten.

INT: Okay. His name was Werner Henke [27:16], a submarine captain.

RP: Oh yeah, you're right. Now I remember. And I guess he'd been accused of procuring or machine gunning or gunning survivors.

INT: In a nutshell, yes. He had -- our understanding is that he was made to think that he was going to be prosecuted for war crimes.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Although that may not have been the case.

RP: Yeah.

INT: But you don't recall nothing like that happened while you were there?

RP: No, no.

INT: Other prisoners being shot or?

RP: No, nobody tried to escape as far as I know. Or made any kind of attempt.

INT: Okay [28:00].

RP: Again, it could've happened without my knowledge.

INT: Sure. Yeah, well we'll call it quits for right now.

RP: All right.

INT: And I can regroup my thoughts a little bit.

RP: Okay, let me bring up a little bite to eat.

INT: If there's anything that we could help with, just let us know.

RP: Oh no, that's fine. It feels very dark in here now.

INT: [laughter] I'll open the window for a little bit. It's much cooler back there. Okay.

RP: Okay. I sort of [inaudible]. Here you are.

(End of Tape 2B)

(Beginning of Tape 3A)

RP: -- that's the Holocaust [00:07] -- this study about in the -- about Suffolk County, and what Drew University asked me speak once.

INT: Purdue University?

RP: Drew University in New Jersey.

[audio break]

INT: All right, again, this is National Park Service Historian Brandon Bies, along with Fort Hunt Oral History Project team member Sam Swersky, and we're here in the home of Rudy Pins. It is Thursday -- the afternoon of Thursday, September 14, 2006, and we're going to continue with some more specific questions about [01:00] Rudy and his experiences at 1142 [01:04], and again going on with what we were doing before lunch, I'd like to continue to ask some more specific questions about things --

RP: Sure.

INT: -- and one is the whole secrecy around P.O. Box 1142 [01:19]. When you first arrived there, were you -- did you even know the place was called Fort Hunt [01:26]?

RP: Not immediately, no. Eventually I did -- I did know that.

INT: And when you were there and out and about, was it -- was it made very clear to you that you weren't to tell folks what you were doing?

RP: Oh, yes.

INT: Okay.

RP: One of the first things they impressed on us. Strictly secret and I wasn't to tell anybody.

INT: What about when you left? What about when the war ended? Did they sit you down and say [02:00], "Hey, look, what went on here, don't tell anyone?"

RP: No, I believe they may have mentioned that but the oath I took for secret that was binding for the future, as well.

INT: Okay, and so do you recall actually taking an oath, per se, an oath of secrecy or anything like that, or was it more --

RP: I probably signed something, I imagine.

INT: Okay.

RP: But I don't -- I don't recall --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- specifically.

INT: Okay, and over the years have you talked with anyone else about what your experiences were at 1142 [02:39]?

RP: Not in detail. I may have talked -- told some friends that I had been interrogating POWs [02:47], but no particular details of it.

INT: And to what extent did you keep up with other -- with other veterans of 1142 [02:58] after the war?

RP: I really didn't [03:00] very much. With some -- a few of them like Alex Dallin [03:03] and so forth for the first three, four, five, six, years after the war, we were in touch, but then as happens so often, we sort of lost touch with each other.

INT: Who was -- speaking of the friends -- while we were eating lunch, you had mentioned -- and Sam had brought up as well, you mentioned "the gang." Was there a group of guys

that you hung out with more than other folks that you were friends with?

RP: Well, you make certain friends. Some you get closer to them than others --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- and so forth, maybe because of similar backgrounds or interests. There was three, four, five, six of us who maybe would together go to town or go for long walks around the surrounding area. There were no formal [04:00] --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- no real gang --

INT: Oh, sure. Oh, sure, yeah, no. Yeah, and --

RP: -- and we didn't -- not that we'd do this exclusively to other people, but we'd see more of each other than other people because we worked together, of course.

INT: Do you recall who was in your core group of friends there at 1142 [04:24]?

RP: Offhand, I would say there was Erwin Lachman [04:27], and Carlo Weiss [04:29], John Pierre Bauer [04:31], maybe Charles McCrae [04:36] [phonetic]. He wasn't quite part of that but -- there were a couple of others, as well.

INT: And --

RP: Some came later, some have been there earlier.

INT: Sure. What -- you obviously shared a common bond to some extent [05:00] with a lot of the other interrogators in that you were -- you were Jewish and many of them -- do you believe that the majority of the other interrogators were in similar circumstances, had also been Jewish immigrants from Germany?

RP: Basically, yes, but we didn't -- no, it's not something that we would harp on or --

INT: Sure. Did folks go to Jewish services --

RP: No.

INT: -- or anything? Okay.

RP: No. Some may have on their own. I mean, into town, Alexandria, I don't know, but I don't know of any.

INT: Did you get the sense during the interrogations that any of the folks that you were interrogating [06:00] knew that you were Jewish, particularly some of the --

RP: Oh, no, I don't think so.

INT: Okay.

RP: Some of them may have suspected, I don't know. Some probably thought anybody who spoke German was a refugee, and others did not really have a connection at all.

INT: Did you get any sense then that it was -- that they treated you any differently because they might have thought you were Jewish, or --

RP: No.

INT: Okay, okay, and what about even from the American side, from your own officers. Did you get any sense of any discrimination or anything like that?

RP: No.

INT: Okay, okay.

RP: There were probably too many of us, but no, there was no such -- any evidence of that, no incident I ever heard of, saw, or felt [07:00].

INT: Jumping around a little bit more, a lot of individuals from 1142 [07:11] that we've spoken with ended up either working careers with the CIA [07:15] -- for the CIA or some other level of maybe Army intelligence, remained in contact with them after the war. Were you ever, to your knowledge, ever recruited by any intelligence agencies? Were

you ever requested -- obviously, there were your experiences in Nuremburg [07:34], but after that, was there ever any interest in --

RP: There was some attempt, some consideration was given. I did work for the government for a while.

INT: But when you worked for the government, was it anything to do with intelligence or anything?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Oh, really? Okay, and what was that?

RP: Well, I don't intend to go into that.

INT: Okay, okay [08:00]. Again, continuing to jump around, you mentioned earlier that there was a name for the building where you were doing the monitoring, the Honeysuckle Lodge [08:17]. Were there any other nicknames for any of the other ones?

RP: Not that I know of, no.

INT: Okay.

RP: There may have been. You know, I don't know of any.

INT: And it was called the Honeysuckle Lodge [08:29] because it was surrounded by?

RP: Exactly.

INT: Okay. Let's talk a little bit about some of the more specific prisoners or folks that stick out in your mind. You talked a little bit earlier about this Gehlen [08:46] character.

What do you recall knowing about him and recall about his stay at Fort Hunt [08:52]?

RP: Well, General Gehlen, General Reinhard Gehlen [08:56] was the [09:00] chief of an organization which the Germans called Fremde Heere Ost [09:06], and that translates, more or less, into "Foreign Armies East," in other words he was supposedly a specialist

on Eastern European armies and equipment, and he was in very close collaboration with General [Andrey] Vlasov [09:28], who had defected, become a prisoner of war [09:34] -- he was a Russian -- and then defected to the Germans and organized his own anti-Soviet [09:46] Army, and General Gehlen [09:48] was very much involved with this group, and he was captured with his entire staff, and I don't remember the names of the [10:00] people that -- a nickname -- one of his staff assistant's nickname was Babushka, but they stayed with us for quite some time --

INT: Oh, really.

RP: -- and obviously they were interrogated about Soviet [10:17] capabilities, and what he knew about them, and what he knew about some of the personalities, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

INT: Were you involved in any of those interrogations?

RP: Only tangentially. I don't --

INT: Okay.

RP: I don't recall any actual interrogations. I escorted him to the movies. We went to the movies a few times and his whole staff. He was present but not exactly a very warm personality. He was -- he's got presence enough [phonetic].

INT: You said you had accompanied him to the movies [11:00]. This would have been in Washington?

RP: No, no. On the post.

INT: On the post, okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay. Do you know, were he and his crew ever let off-post, or were they left there.

RP: I'm not sure. It's possible, but I'm -- I don't have any particular knowledge of that.

INT: Yeah. Would you characterize Gehlen [11:19] as being a Nazi [11:22]?

RP: I think I'd characterize him as a complete career officer, probably a little bit of an opportunist, but not an armed, fanatic Nazi [11:35]. Of course, if he had been, I don't think he would have gotten the job that he had after the war being the head of the German Secret Service [11:42].

INT: And what do you know -- if you want to go into, for just a few seconds, about what he did do after the war with the German Secret Service [11:52].

RP: Well, that's about all I know --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- is that he was the head of the equivalent of the German CIA [11:58] after the war.

INT: Okay [12:00].

INT: When he was at Fort Hunt [12:02], was it considered that he was a very important prisoner of war [12:09]?

RP: Yeah, we considered him important and knowledgeable and intelligent, yeah, so he was a valuable property.

INT: Do you recall about how long he was held there for? You said you thought it was a fairly long period of time.

RP: Yeah, about I would say maybe four months.

INT: Okay.

RP: But that's a guess.

INT: Sure.

RP: Give or take a month or more.

INT: And did he show immediately after the war against Germany ended?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: Right.

INT: And would he have been along the lines of the sort of folks that would have been flown into the airport?

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: He was captured at the very end of the war.

INT: Do you recall if he and his group -- if they were held in the prisoner compounds, or if they were in the [13:00] cottages, the huts?

RP: I think the whole group had one or two cottages to themselves.

INT: Okay.

RP: That's my theory. Again I'm not that certain.

INT: Any sense how many people were in this group?

RP: I'd say about six.

INT: Okay. Moving onto other -- is there anything else that you recall about Gehlen [13:26] or anything else that --

RP: No, not really.

INT: Okay. What about moving onto to Gustav Hilger [13:32]? You had -- we mentioned earlier that you had a photograph of him, so you obviously maintained contact with him, but what did you know about him, and what was your interaction with him at 1142 [13:43]?

RP: Well, of course, Hilger [13:44] was never a soldier. He was a civilian. He was the number two man of the German Embassy in Moscow, and it was the only diplomatic post he had, 1917 until 1941 [14:00], and then was, well, exchanged at the outbreak of the German Russian offensive, then -- and, then worked in Berlin, at the foreign office. His boss, of course, had been Ambassador [Frederich-Werner Graf von der] Schulenburg, who was involved in the plot against Hitler [14:27] and then was subsequently executed. Hilger [14:33] was a -- I don't know whether he was a Nazi [14:39] or not. I don't quite know what ideology -- he was almost, you might call it, a technocrat, who was the most knowledgeable person about the Soviet Union [14:56]. He knew everybody. Everybody, political, cultural [15:00], economic -- who was anybody in the Soviet Union [15:04]. Worked with us, he gave us a lot of information. He was a very pleasant person. He even gave me some Russian lessons.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah, and then eventually settled down in an apartment near Thomas Circle in Washington.

INT: And do you know exactly what his role was in the United States when he was --

RP: Well, as far as I know, he was a consultant to the CIA [15:45].

INT: Okay.

RP: -- who, I'm sure you know, were trying to get as much out of him about the Soviet Union [15:52] at that time as possible.

INT: And did you -- how did that trip to Fort Hunt [16:00] with he and his wife come about in the early '50s?

RP: Oh, I had -- well, when I came back from Nuremburg [16:08], somehow we got in touch,

I think through somebody out of the State Department, and he had a house which was just loaned to him by a former American ambassador to Afghanistan, Ambassador Finland Angus Borg, had a house out in Leesburg, and I more or less -- we became very good friends. I would come to his apartment and have some vodka and caviar, and then I would drive him out on weekends. We would drive out together because he didn't drive.

INT: Oh.

RP: We'd drive up together to Leesburg; usually a bunch of friends would show up. This went on for several summers, and one weekend we decided we would --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- visit Fort Hunt [17:00], and decided that his former home had now become the restroom of the park.

[laughter]

INT: And so when you were at Fort Hunt [17:11] for that visit, could you describe how it looked and how different or similar it may have been?

RP: Well, everything was gone. The Honeysuckle Lodge [17:20], everything except one frame home near the entrance, but everything else was completely gone, except that little facility.

INT: And the hut, which they were using as a --

RP: Restroom.

INT: Yeah, okay, and you don't know when that was -- you have no idea when that was removed or anything, do you?

RP: No, no.

INT: Because -- have you -- have you been back to Fort Hunt [17:45] since that trip?

RP: Yeah, I was -- I think I went back once or twice. Then I was back actually about four years ago.

INT: Oh, really.

RP: Just for a few minutes to show a friend who was [18:00] driving with me, show them where I had been.

INT: Got you. Since Hilger [18:07] was so involved with the Russians, did any of -- you had mentioned earlier that -- who was it again, now, the two -- was it Dallin [18:20] and -- Alex Dallin and Schidlovsky [18:24] --

RP: Schidlovsky.

INT: Were they involved with him whatsoever, or -- because I presume they spoke Russian, and --

RP: Oh, they spoke --Schidlovsky [18:32] -- I don't think he was. Dallin [18:35] I think was not as much as I was, but I think he did know -- but Alex [18:46] didn't stay around stay around the Washington area.

INT: Okay.

RP: [unintelligible] do some teaching and writing and so forth.

INT: What do you remember [19:00] about the German submarine, the U-234 [19:06]?

RP: Well, I just remember that was quite a story. It was a very large submarine that had an unusual number of important people -- unusual, people with unusual rank and knowledge and they had -- they had, I think, a three-star Luftwaffe [19:29] general, Ulrich Kessler [19:30], onboard. They had an anti-aircraft specialist, whose name, I believe was [Franz] Ruf [19:41] [phonetic]. He was a colonel, who was to show the Japanese and give them some more knowledge on the anti-aircraft experience. There was Kay Nieschling [19:54],

a Navy commander, a fanatic Nazi [20:00], who was scheduled to become judge advocate general for German personnel in the Far East. There were two Japanese engineers, who promptly committed hara-kari when the sub was captured. There were some unusual -- they had full-length color movies on board. There was at least one case of brandy -- good brandy, understand. We never saw it.

INT: It never made it -- did it make it to 1142 [20:48], and --

RP: No, I think it made it to some Navy brass. What else about it? They had complete plans, blueprints for the Messerschmitt jets [20:59] on board [21:00]. I know that the captain and maybe Kessler [21:11] -- there had been an argument onboard, but you probably saw that in the book -- whether to surrender or try to make a run for Buenos Aires. But the U-boat [21:23] captain said rank or no rank, he was in charge of the submarine.

INT: So what --

INT: How much of things that you're telling us are from the book, and how much of it was --

RP: I haven't read the book.

INT: Oh.

RP: Nothing will be from the book.

INT: So, these -- the things that you're --

RP: They are personal memories, yeah.

INT: People who had been working at Fort Hunt [21:48] -- are these things that you learned through interrogation or through things that --

RP: No, through interrogations and through just general discussions, knowledge [22:00]. I may have read an article about it. That's quite possible, but I never read the book.

INT: Were you assigned to any one of these individuals you just mentioned in particular, or --

RP: I did talk a number of times to both Nieschling [22:19] and Kessler [22:26].

INT: Okay.

RP: Kessler [22:28] did sort of a job -- and I understand, when he was captured, he was extremely hostile, very hostile, and towards the end of the time with us, he was quiet amiable.

INT: So he was no longer hostile when he got to 1142 [22:45]?

RP: No, I don't think we considered him hostile. He was a prisoner but --

INT: What about crew? Was the crew of the submarine brought through?

RP: Must have [23:00] -- well, maybe not. I don't know, but I don't recall any of them. I don't recall whether the crew was, or not -- possibly some.

INT: And do you recall, were you involved in both interrogations and in room monitoring for some of the U-234 [23:25] prisoners, high-ranking folks, or were you mostly just speaking with them face to face?

RP: Basically speaking with them, yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: I don't know whether they were monitored or not. There was a little different attitude because -- you'll remember this was at the end of the war. There was no purpose, or rather we had no tactical advantage to gain. The war was won.

INT: Right.

RP: There was no military activity, so at this point, it would have been a bit historical interest. It would have been [24:00] of propaganda interest, possibly, but then we were -- about military history, yes, but otherwise [unintelligible].

INT: Did there tend to be a different attitude among the prisoners since the war had ended in

how they responded to interrogations?

RP: Yeah, in a sense. I think it was less -- there was more resignation and less hostility. They knew the thing was over. They didn't like it, but now they had to think about, "Can we go home?"

INT: So, did they tend to be more forthcoming in answers that you --

RP: I don't know, Sam, whether they were forthcoming or not, but they probably were a little bit more relaxed. What they [25:00] really had to worry about in some cases was, I think, they couldn't show too much anti-Nazi [25:06] sentiment because there was some strong pro-Nazi elements in the camps, and that would be dangerous [phonetic]. There were some vicious pro-Nazi [25:22] elements in POW [25:24] camps.

INT: Even after the war?

RP: Even after the war.

INT: Was it intimidating to be speaking with former German generals?

RP: Really interesting --

INT: Yeah.

RP: -- but not intimidating.

INT: Were you dressed in your officer's uniform for --

RP: Yes.

INT: Okay.

RP: I would think so.

INT: Do you remember anything else about the folks who you mentioned, Kessler [25:56] and Ruf [25:57] and Nieschling [25:58]? Anything else, any [26:00] specific incidents involving them?

RP: No, I really don't, though they were -- well, they were treated as, you might say, VIP prisoners, but --

INT: So, were they --

RP: -- as prisoners, not like Oshima [26:21], and those who were had to be treated a little differently --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- as internees.

INT: Were they kept in the huts?

RP: I think so. Again, I'm not certain.

INT: Do you recall a particular prisoner or a -- well, a scientist off of the U-234 [26:45] named Heinz Schlicke [26:47]?

RP: No.

INT: No. Okay. A number of folks we spoke with spent a lot of time with him, so I just thought I'd mention that name. Do you recall if any of the [27:00] physical equipment that was on the U-234 [27:04] ended up passing through Fort Hunt [27:06]?

RP: I doubt it.

INT: Okay.

RP: I don't know -- I don't know of any, but I doubt -- that probably -- the Navy would have taken care of that when they actually brought the U-boat [27:19] into port. There was no reason for it. There was no particular reason for it to come to 1142 [27:28].

INT: Do you recall -- other than the folks on U-234 [27:34], and some of them we've already talked about, like Gehlen [27:37] and Hilger [27:38] -- any other prisoners stick out in your mind?

RP: One individual was -- we got one of the first jet pilots -- was a -- I believe, a sergeant, an Austrian [28:00], and we had the -- I should have in the -- I should know some others, we had a number of very high-ranking officers, but right now no particular names come to mind. If I look through some notes --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- and if I find some --

INT: Well, for example, when you would be assigned to speak with someone that was a jet pilot, how would you know -- you said yourself that you weren't much of a science person.

RP: Yeah.

INT: How did you gather information in that, and --

RP: Well, information would be possibly first of all what we called morale information. His background, his family background, how he and his fellow pilots felt about the war. We might [29:00] question him about the organization of his unit. Where had they trained? Where was the training for jet pilots, for example? How many hours were they able to fly? Whether there was a shortage of jet fuel, or not. Those things we could ask, but when it came to specifics about the performance of the aircraft and jet engines there -- the more technically --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- wise people would take over and would question.

INT: Was there a handoff from one interrogator to another?

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: In other words, if you were --

RP: Oh, yeah. You know, one prisoner might encounter three, four, five different interrogators who had different subjects in mind.

INT: So, amongst the group of interrogators [30:00] in Fort Hunt [30:01], were there those that had specific specialties that would be addressing different issues --

RP: No, they weren't divided that, very officially, but it was a small group. Everybody knew so-and-so, he's knowledgeable about this. He could ask about that, and the other guy, person knew beans about atomic energy or what have you. Let him do the other stuff. This was pretty informal, as far as I know.

INT: So, you were the sergeant among the interrogators. You said that there were privates, there was --

RP: Well, we were all really -- rank, none of the NCOs [30:50] didn't really meet much with us. Everybody they say low enough was promoted, but we all did the same work. It wasn't that I was in charge [31:00] as a sergeant of a corporal or private. We did the same work. Except as a private, you got a little more money, but basically your job assignment didn't change.

INT: --So, are you saying that although you weren't in charge of anyone, but it was more of a --

RP: Right.

INT: -- collegial atmosphere?

RP: It was very -- we all worked together. It was -- there was no such thing as the, we'd be divided into squads or what have you. I was left in charge of sweet privates or private corporals. As far as we were concerned, private so and so did the same work as Sergeant Jones. They had already worked together, they slept in the same barracks, and [32:00] there was no distinction, except for the insignia and the pay.

INT: Were you as a group fairly self-directed in doing the interrogations --

(End of Tape 3A)

(Beginning of Tape 3B)

INT: -- talking about how you came upon the questions for -- and the personnel to interrogate the prisoners of war [00:12].

RP: I'm sure a lot of the questions came from the Pentagon [00:15] -- and many in some cases. They were handed down to the officers, and then the officer would discuss those with us and say, "They want to know about this and that. Find out what he knows about this." It was rather informal. There were no formal directives, channels. It was not very military in that respect.

INT: Did you have daily briefing meetings or meetings by the week or as groups of prisoners came in --

RP: As -- I think as necessary. They could be daily. We could be meeting only once a week [01:00]. I don't frankly recall. They were not necessarily held in any particular briefing room. You might have an officer come into the monitoring room and say, "Hey, guys, we need this, and we need that," or so forth.

INT: So --

RP: So, it was very informal, which I'm sure bothered a few people.

INT: So, it would really be just an indication to you as a group, eventually --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- to have -- as interrogators, as to the topics, maybe some specific questions, and then amongst yourselves, because you knew everyone's areas of expertise, you would divide into working --

RP: And they would come down and say this German sergeant -- no, no, no, he's [02:00] -- he knows something about fortifications of -- near the French border. Why don't you try and see what you can get from him -- or they might say here's a captain but in civilian life, he was a chemistry or physics professor, University of Frankfurt. Maybe he was doing some work that was of scientific interest so, I don't know, Fred, why don't you go and talk to him, and then it -- as things developed, you'd find -- and might even know him or somebody else who was even more specialized. That's basically how it worked.

INT: What were the areas of expertise that you would say existed amongst the group of interrogators --

RP: Well, there --

INT: -- and were there any names that -- with particular specialties.

RP: No, there were no particular lines of [03:00] -- there was no particular roster, written or otherwise. Just this guy or interrogator, he had PhD in physics, or this guy was a psychiatrist, or this guy was knowledgeable about the Nazi [03:23] party, and all of us -- supposedly enough knowledgeable about the whole structure of Germany, the Nazi party and the Army, so everybody, automatically and -- would get into that, and I don't remember, but I assume if somebody came to me with some scientific knowledge, I would say, "Hey, you know, ask -- why don't you put Fred or somebody else on that thing," but usually [04:00] they would know already and would have them.

INT: So, if you had to take a stab at it, what would you say that your specialty was?

RP: At my age, I wasn't a specialist at anything. That time -- I was knowledgeable about Germany as a whole, about the Nazi [04:26] party, and became pretty knowledgeable about the Nazi Army, and I guess I knew how to talk to them, hopefully, how to get

information out of them, et cetera.

INT: If they weren't --

RP: We were able -- you have to be able to self-understand what was important and mattered and what was not important.

INT: Yeah.

RP: Which is not that difficult.

INT: How had you developed your expertise in the Nazi [04:59] party, the Nazi Army [05:00], and so forth?

RP: Well, having lived -- having lived there, having read about it, I was always interested in it, so I knew the personalities, I knew what some of the activities and organizations were like, and we became pretty, pretty -- I knew the differences between certain similar-sounding organizations and the -- and as you go along, of course, become more of an expert.

INT: But you had come to Cleveland at the age of 14. At that point, you're not an expert in --

RP: No, but I kept reading about it and learning about it. An expert is the person -- that person who knows a little bit more about something than the other guy. That was me.
[laughter]

INT: If during the course [06:00] of an interrogation, things just weren't going well or you weren't getting the information that you wanted, you mentioned earlier that there were very rare instances where maybe somebody would be dressed up as a Russian or take him to the bunkers. Was there anything else you used to try to get information? Did they ever use alcohol or any --

RP: Not to my knowledge.

INT: Okay.

RP: There was never any physical -- active -- action. There was no alcohol, no drugs, nothing of that nature.

INT: What would you say was the most effective way -- in your two years of working with prisoners there, what did you think worked the best? How did you get the most information?

RP: It really depends on the individual you're [07:00] talking to. You try to be as sincere as the situation allowed, and that's the generality, but try a little bit to appeal to their -- maybe their pride or make them feel that maybe things, if they cooperated, could improve, or they even -- little things like better food, better treatment --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- better care, et cetera, and a lot of them were quite happy to be POWs [07:43] and be out of the war, and certainly the treatment and the food that they got with us was a lot better than the treatment and the food that they got in the German Army, unless they were generals. So, you [08:00] try to sort of get their confidence. There was -- there were no magic tricks. It was just trying to get some facts, being able to marry one fact that you got from them to something else that you could ask, and that would bring in further answers, maybe complete the picture a little bit. Sometimes you didn't get much -- and sometimes you didn't get much because the guy didn't know about it. Then, you ship them off to someplace [unintelligible].

INT: Did you have any knowledge of where the prisoners were going next or --

RP: No.

INT: -- did you believe they were just going to some --

[talking simultaneously]

RP: The nasty ones were -- we understood -- they were scheduled to go to [09:00] a place called Camp Alva [09:02] in Oklahoma. It was supposed to be the worst. Why it was the worst, I don't know. I think the climate was kind of lousy.

INT: In terms of just the worse one to be at, or it was a very high security facility --

RP: I don't even know.

INT: Okay.

RP: It just didn't have a good reputation. As I say, I think it was the climate, it may have been the facilities, but that's where we would send them -- the ones who were nasty.

INT: To your recollection, did many of the prisoners bring things with them from when they were captured, whether it's little knickknacks or books or --

RP: Yeah, there were letters and books and so forth, but that was -- I didn't handle that, but --

INT: Yeah.

RP: -- it was the MPs [10:00] would take charge of those and give them to probably one of the officers who would go over it to see if there was any intelligence or --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- any particular passports or family letters of importance, anything that could lead to a better interrogation, but that -- I wasn't involved at all.

INT: Do you have a particular best memory of your time at 1142 [10:34]? Does anything stand out as a particular event or incident that you really look upon now favorably looking back on it all?

RP: Luckily -- generally, I think we had a -- basically a -- it was a friendly place. We all got along quite well. I don't recall any hostilities between any [11:00] groups or individuals.

We all got along quite well. It was a pretty homogeneous group. As I mentioned before, we didn't mix a lot -- mix at all with people in X [11:17], we didn't -- or the MPs, any of those but we all got along well, and I really don't recall any particular problems. There may have been one or two; we didn't care about that much. I don't think it was the brightest, the best, but surely I don't know. There was no real difficulty, and we were all reasonably, considering the times, happy times -- you don't want to go home, but so long as you had to be in the Army, I think it was as good and interesting place as [12:00] it could be.

INT: All right, we've got about 15 minutes or so of tape left for right now. There's a few things I'd like to hold off until tomorrow. As I said before, I'd like to take a look -- to take a look at some of the documents we left with you, and we'll talk tomorrow about some of the more specific names of --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- people.

RP: I'll have a chance to go over that tonight.

INT: Right, and also tomorrow I'd like to take a half hour or an hour and really -- and talk in a great level of detail about Nuremburg [12:34] --

RP: All right.

INT: -- so for today, is there anything else specifically about 1142 [12:41] and Fort Hunt [12:42] that you think that we've left out or anything else that sticks in your mind that we haven't talked about already?

RP: No, I'm trying to think. As I mentioned, there were fairly good times. They were fairly, reasonably carefree [13:00]. We had a job to do. We -- most of us more or less enjoyed

our job, found it interesting, and we made some good friends. We didn't -- certainly didn't have a problem you might find sometimes in the Army where you would have either racial conflicts or where you had a bunch of really ignorant hillbillies who would either through loud music or constant fighting. We didn't have this. It was a -- I hate to say it -- but a civilized -- it was a fairly -- atmosphere, if you will, in spite of Captain Hogue [13:53].

[laughter]

Hogue [unintelligible] as he was called.

INT: Do you want to talk at all [14:00] about -- I guess we mentioned him a little bit earlier. He was the one who had made you come in and pick up all the trash?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: Well, he was -- obviously he was very uneducated and not any credentials --

INT: Yeah.

RP: I mean, I as a college sophomore, junior, I was one of the most uneducated persons in the whole organization. We had college professors and what have you. Then, this guy comes in and -- I mean, I don't think he had an eighth-grade education. I mean, he didn't fit in. Maybe he meant well. Who knows? He thought that we needed soldiering. Well, he was the only fly in the ointment -- not even that bad. Basically, we all -- as I said, we all got along well, and I'm not saying that we Pollyanna'd about, but this is [15:00] really true. I don't really ever recall a single fight.

INT: Really? Can you talk a little bit more about the backgrounds of the interrogators that were there? You said that, as a sophomore, you were one of the least educated.

RP: Yeah.

INT: And also maybe --

RP: Well, the interrogators were -- there was -- it was -- it was a refugee group, which made it a large group. There were others who were German Americans, mostly working class and middle class guys, all of them very nice. We all got along very well. There were a few academics who would -- who learned German in college or what have you, one of them -- I know we had one phonetics professor, University of Washington [16:00], and --

INT: Do you recall his name?

RP: I think it was [Harlan] Olson [16:04].

INT: Olson? Okay.

RP: Yeah. He was the type of person he could listen to you talk for five minutes and he would say, "Well, you grew up in Delaware." That was amazing, and that guy was older -- he was a little older, so I'm sure he wouldn't be around anymore. When I say older, of course, it's a joke. I mean, they were about -- maybe in the mid-30s.

INT: What was the -- I mean, what would you say the average age of the interrogators was?

RP: Probably about 27. Of the -- and the officers were a little bit older, maybe in their 30s.

INT: So, you were fairly close to the average age, or --

RP: Yeah, I --

INT: -- if not a year or so younger, but --

RP: I would say so, yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: I would -- I would say that.

INT: Okay [17:00].

INT: Let's see if you have anything else, Sam -- you have a remarkable memory. Once we mention names that you remember people about -- their physical stature --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- their interactions, their special --

RP: Visual memory.

INT: -- techniques. Yes.

RP: There were a lot of people who had good, interesting backgrounds. Yeah, that was basically it -- there were -- the backgrounds of these people -- they were I think the refugee group, the German Americans, a few academics, a couple of others, like Leslie Klieforth [17:51]. He was not the quintessential American, but his father was counsel in Cologne, so he grew up in Germany --

INT: Oh, okay.

RP: -- spoke perfect German, and Alex Schidlovsky [18:07] was Russian. He was a white Russian, his family from the Bolsheviks and then lived in Germany for a while.

INT: Okay.

RP: And he spoke German. There were a few people like that for one reason or other were fluent in German.

INT: And one group that I want to bring up that would fit into that core category would be somebody I think you've already called -- that there were a couple of Mormons who were there. Does that ring any bell with you?

RP: Yeah, I know there were some Mormons, or my -- was that from the 1142 [18:51] days or some other time? But it would have been 1142 [18:55] then, and I think they were pretty nice people. I remember [19:00] them talking about -- that they had to go out in South

America or someplace and act as missionaries. That was part of their career they had to do, but it may have been they were missionaries in Germany.

INT: And that's what I had heard --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- but that's why we wanted to --

RP: That's quite possible. Who was that? But when you mentioned that, you know how you get these vibes, pleasant or unpleasant or nothing, and these were pleasant. They seem to have been nice people.

INT: One of the names that we've been given was a fellow named [Sterling] Callahan [19:41].

RP: There was somebody named Flaherty [19:47] [phonetic].

INT: I've heard that name before as well.

RP: Yeah.

INT: This particular one was named Callahan [19:53], and, only one or two other veterans had mentioned it, but I just --

RP: Yeah.

INT: I didn't want to feed you information, but since you remember so well [20:00] --

RP: Well, that's all right. I don't -- I don't recall offhand. I don't recall offhand.

INT: But everyone shared a fluency with the German language, yes?

RP: German, yes. That the absolute requirement certainly among -- in Y [20:24] and the people who did the interrogation and monitoring --

INT: So, you --

RP: -- without it you were useless.

INT: So, you had shown us when we walked in today a dictionary of words.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Is that something that was created at Fort Hunt [20:40]?

RP: Oh, yeah, because --

INT: Could you show that to us and tell us a little bit?

RP: Yeah, I give it to Brandon to keep.

INT: I think --

RP: That is a spoof of a dictionary, Sam. It's not a real dictionary.

INT: So, that's just something you guys created?

INT: Sam, that's a -- It's right underneath --

RP: That's a spoof. Jokes on [21:00] words.

INT: I think you're touching it with your right hand.

RP: It's just something we did in our spare time as a real spoof, but they were useless as an actual dictionary. These are literally translated items that make kind of, make kind of fun.

INT: I don't read -- I don't read German. I don't understand German. Could -- is there anything in the book that you could just sort of pick out as -- what does it tell you about as a group--

RP: If you don't know both languages, it doesn't make any sense.

[laughter]

You have -- you have to be bilingual. You could have a -- have "hot dogs," one of the Germans might say [speaks German], but no, it means nothing about food [22:00]. It means a dog who's hot -- who's hot and that's the way it goes, and some thought it sounds funny, sometimes it was not that funny. Hundreds of such phrases and words.

INT: So, do you recall whose idea it was to make this book? I think the authors are on the front.

RP: Yeah, and I think we -- I think Leslie Klieforth [22:28], and it says that Leslie Klieforth, Rulfby [22:34] [phonetic] and Andy [Andreas] Heuser [22:36] had the idea. It could very well be.

INT: Could you tell us about those three?

RP: What?

INT: Could you tell us about the three that --

RP: Yeah, Leslie Klieforth [22:48] -- well, he was a son of the American counsel general in Cologne. Leslie was very [23:00] amiable and smart guy. He kind of let himself go physically and so forth, he always loved his money. We'd find a \$20 bill as a bookmark someplace. To him, a \$20 bill was baseless money, and -- but he was a smart guy. He came from Wisconsin. I don't know what he did afterwards, and Rulfby [23:32] was one of the older guys. He had worked for a little -- a German company called Sherring [phonetic], a pharmaceutical company. He worked for them. In what capacity I don't know, but he was already, I would say, close to 40, and Andy Heuser [23:50] was a good friend. I can't think of much about him, other than he was a little bit on the phony [24:00] side. He couldn't wait to get into town to meet some girls, and pretty much extreme that way, in a way, but very nice guy. Very [unintelligible]. I don't know -- I think he came from Wisconsin, Minnesota area, as well, and I know very little about his background.

INT: Were there -- speaking of women and folks there wanting to go after women much -- was that -- was that typical or was that atypical? I mean, after all, it -- you were just a bunch

of 20-somethings --

RP: Exactly.

INT: -- guys.

RP: It was pretty typical.

INT: Yeah.

RP: People would run into the town, and we -- but I think he'd pick somebody up, and I know at one time, a small group of them rented a little shack between Alexandria and Mount Vernon [25:00], a sort of a tryst, but that didn't -- that -- I don't think that was more than two weeks.

[laughter]

I forget what happened. Didn't work out. Didn't do me any good, I know.

[laughter]

But we had a couple guys -- that was -- there was a Dutch guy named Van Dam [25:20] [phonetic], I think, Henry Van Dam, he was part of that group. Yeah, it was a normal thing, but we only had -- we had no females --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- on the post except that one WAC [25:40] who was no great -- of no great sexual interest.

INT: Right. Any other questions for you, Sam [26:00]?

INT: Yeah, in just a minute or two --

INT: Great.

INT: -- but I'm still enjoying lunch.

RP: Well, that's the good thing about coming back tomorrow. You can think of more

questions.

INT: That's right. No, I get it. If there's anything else, I'd love to talk some more about the people --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- but I'd also like to have a chance to go through and remember more of them --

RP: Yeah, I'm sure I will come across some names that I have forgotten -- or some -- there they are in full color.

INT: And also have you go through -- I know you'd sent me the email, but going through that photograph and --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- who you remember in that photograph.

RP: Okay, we'll do that.

INT: I have another question. There was a period I think -- and again, this is my third day on the job, but there was a period where scientists had come after the war who had certain specialties in either rocketry or atomic physics.

RP: Right.

INT: So, could you [27:00] expand on that a little bit -- how they had arrived, when they had arrived? Is it after the war, or during --

RP: Not that much, Sam. I wasn't very much part of that operation. This is known widely as Operation Paperclip [27:16], and right at the end of the war, there was a race for -- to get -- find out as much as possible about rockets and things, so the Russians and the Americans in their eyes -- they rushed up there to Peenemunde [27:34] which is where they launched all the rockets. They -- everybody grabbed -- whomever they could grab in

a hurry. Anybody with any really scientific background, some of whom apparently were quite valuable as sources of information. Others were total duds. They were nothing better than to be [unintelligible]. They were shipped back [28:00] in a hurry. I wasn't involved with that at all, Sam, or very, if I was, I've forgotten, it was very tangentially, maybe to take care of a couple guys and this and that.

INT: Did you get the impression, though, that most of them had come to Fort Hunt [28:20]?

RP: All of them that were grabbed? I didn't think about that at the time. I just knew there were a bunch of -- how many of them came to Fort Hunt [28:31], -- many of whom were actually taken someplace else for interrogation is -- I don't know. I can't really give you an answer on that.

INT: The other question, I guess -- did you have a question?

INT: Kind of related to that, do you remember hearing of a place up in Boston called Fort Strong [28:51]? It --

RP: I've heard of Fort Strong, but not in connection with 1142 [28:59].

INT: Okay, because [29:00] --

RP: Maybe -- well, you're poking into my memory, things come back. Maybe there was something, but what it was, I don't -- I don't know.

INT: Apparently, a number of folks from 1142 [29:15] ended up going up to Fort Strong [29:17], which was known as P.O. Box 2276 [29:21], and were stationed there to speak with a number of these German scientists, with von Braun [29:28] and his --

RP: Well, they were probably there because he had that whole brain trust of Harvard, Yale and the whole New England -- a professional establishment up there, the whole faculties, they were there, as well. They probably helped in the interrogations of forming the basis

for it, so that makes sense that they would have -- yeah, I -- way back in my memory, there seems to be something that I heard about it [30:00] --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- but probably didn't pay much attention to it.

INT: Okay.

RP: It didn't affect me in any way or shape or manner.

INT: We're running out of tape, but the one question that I have -- I've been holding onto. I mean, been bothering me during this time. This was a job for you for over two years --

RP: Yeah.

INT: -- and you had seen a lot of people come flowing in and out. How long did people come in for, generally, and how long did they -- how long did the prisoners of war [30:27] stay there?

RP: Sam, that varied with the individual. Some would be turned around in a day or two when we found out that they had no information of any value for us. After all, we had -- we had a limited amount of space. Others would stay for months, but on the average I would say probably a week to 10 days, but that's very generally speaking. It really varied. If we didn't need them anymore, they were shipped out [31:00] because we always -- we always needed the space for them.

INT: Excellent. We're -- we have 30 seconds of tape left.

RP: Okay.

INT: I'm going to stop before calling --

RP: I don't know whether I've been of any use --

(End of Tape 3B)

(Beginning of Tape 4A)

RP: You know, they have some Japanese things from there, too.

INT: Yes, yes. That was one of our first confirmations that we knew, that --

[talking simultaneously]

INT: I saw that. Yeah, yeah. Okay, today is the morning of September 15th, 2006. This is the Fort Hunt Oral History Project, with the National Park Service. This is Brandon Bies, along with Sam Swersky, here in New York City at the apartment of Rudy Pins. And we are concluding our second day of interviews with Rudy about his experiences at Fort Hunt. So I'm going to get started with talking about some specific questions that we may not have covered yesterday, and then we'll get on to that list of names and photographs in a few minutes. What do you remember [01:00] about the entrance to Fort Hunt [01:03]? Was there a guard station there, did you have to show a pass? How did one pass in and out of Fort Hunt?

RP: Well, of course, as you got off the George Washington Parkway [01:15], there was sort of a driveway, maybe 100 yards or a little bit more. Then you came to a guard post, just a regular guard post. You did have to show IDs. It's possible that after a long time, if the guards knew you, you could just pass. Only if you'd been there for some time, then you had to go back -- absolutely you had to show ID to get in.

INT: Was there a gate that was open?

RP: No, no.

INT: Or a rail fence that went up and down?

RP: No, I don't recall any kind of a device of any kind that was used.

INT: So just guards?

RP: Just guards. Usually two of them [02:00].

INT: Okay. And do you recall if there was any sort of a fence that went all the way around the entire outer limits of the compound? Or did you just see woods?

RP: Basically you saw woods, but I believe there was a fence going around, just for general security. I'm not 100 percent sure of this, but I would say I'm about 80 percent certain.

INT: Okay.

INT: Brandon, before you continue, I just need to let you know that the noise in the background is unavoidable. I think it's the air conditioner.

INT: It's the [inaudible].

INT: Okay.

INT: Moving on to another specific question, you had mentioned yesterday that you were somewhat unique, you believe, in that you did not go through Camp Ritchie [02:55].

RP: Right.

INT: Most everyone went through Camp Ritchie.

RP: They did.

INT: How did you personally [03:00] learn interrogation techniques? Presumably the folks who went through Ritchie [03:07] had been specifically trained in that. Do you recall, did someone sit you down? Did you learn --

RP: No, I just learned by doing, maybe by observing a few times. There was no, no formal training of any kind.

INT: Okay, okay. And you had said, I believe yesterday, were the interrogations, was it primarily one individual, yourself, or with an officer?

RP: Generally, it was by myself.

INT: Okay.

RP: There may have been an occasion or two when an officer was present. If he had some specific interest in the individual, or he had a question that he wanted to ask himself. But it didn't happen very often.

INT: Would you ever speak with [04:00] multiple prisoners at once? Or was it always one-on-one?

RP: Not to my recollection, no.

INT: Okay. And again, getting into the actual interrogation, the actual techniques, was it just to -- would you try to strike up a conversation and be friendly and get to know them, or would you just get right to the point, and start asking questions?

RP: Well, of course, you try to be friendly, because you always get more out of somebody if the relationship is good than when it's hostile. We talked about some generalities, as a rule, but at the same time it's a pretty formal way of a prisoner [05:00] and soldier relationship.

INT: Could you describe, sort of step-by-step -- were you in the room, and then the prisoner was brought to you?

RP: Usually I would be in the room first, then the prisoner would come in.

INT: So could you just describe it, I mean in a general sense, what it was like? Just describe the room, where you might have been sitting.

RP: Well, the room was a very bare room. It was -- as far as I remember, there was nothing there but a table and a couple of chairs. And I would come in, and probably have a folder with me, which had some of the questions I wanted to ask, and some other information. And I would sit down, and then the MP would usually bring in the PW [05:54]. The MP,

if I recall, I don't [06:00] believe he stayed in the room with me.

INT: Okay.

RP: He might have, but I don't believe so.

INT: Were there windows in the rooms --

RP: No.

INT: Or was it -- so it was a closed-in room with a light in the ceiling, or something?

RP: Yeah. This is normal I know -- spotlight there.

[laughter]

INT: And then as he came in, I mean, what was your demeanor? How did you normally carry yourself when he walked in the room?

RP: Well, that would depend, Sam. Usually I was just very straight, noncommittal, I mean, you know. But maybe if we've had previous conversations, and they had been friendly and positive, I might smile. But generally it was just sort of no particular emotions showing type of person --

INT: Would you [07:00] offer a cigarette or a glass of water or coffee or anything like that?

RP: I don't recall any coffee, and I don't think you offered them cigarettes.

INT: Okay.

RP: I myself not being a smoker. It might have happened, it happened in Nuremberg [07:22], but I don't recall this happening in 1142 [07:31].

INT: Just offhand, do you recall, did a lot of the interrogators at 1142 [07:38], did a lot of folks smoke and drink, or was it a mix?

RP: I think it was a general mix. Certainly there was -- if there was drinking, it was never to excess. I don't recall any drunken episodes. And smoking was, in those days, pretty

general. I would say probably [08:00] 60 percent smoked. I don't know, that's an off the cuff figure.

INT: Sure. Of the actual interrogators, was there a great deal of turnover? Were people there for a long period of time? Is there any sense of what the average stay was for someone in your position?

RP: Well, the turnover was not great. Not in our group. I can't speak for the officers. We -- it was a pretty steady group. I don't recall any -- we'd get a few new people. There was an influx of two people now and then. But very few people left.

INT: If somebody did leave, do you recall if there was ever anybody who just wasn't [09:00] cutting it, they weren't working out as a good interrogator, they weren't -- their technique wasn't good enough, or they just didn't have what it took to be an interrogator?

RP: Well, if that happened, I wasn't aware of it, and certainly nobody would've --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- brought it up. I mean, there were people who left now and then. I mean, maybe they weren't cut out for the job, or maybe even better in something else where they were needed.

INT: Did you share between yourselves tips on how to get information from the prisoners of war [09:41]? And did you sometimes find that --

RP: It may have occurred, Sam, but I don't recall. It would've been on a very informal basis when we were chatting with each other, but there was no sitting down, saying "Hey, why don't you try this?" or "Why don't you [10:00] try that?" It just didn't happen that much. Also a lot of the guys didn't do any interrogation. They just were all monitors. In fact, most of our -- probably -- the monitoring and interrogation ratio was probably basically

65-35, mostly monitoring.

INT: Okay. And did most folks just do one, or just do the other? Because in your situation, you did a little bit of -- you did both.

RP: Of both, yeah. I would say that certainly none of the officers monitored. If they ever did, I've forgotten about it. Maybe it was just before, and yes, there were some in our group who I think monitored only.

INT: Okay. Did you find [11:00] that if you weren't getting information yourself, in an interview, that there may be other coworkers who were better with a certain type of individual, or you might try again with someone else?

RP: Not that I remember. There could have been and maybe should have been. But I don't recall any incidents like that.

INT: Do you have any other interrogation questions or anything?

INT: So in summary, you basically were learning on the job? Is that a fair assessment?

RP: Right, right.

INT: And do you think over time you got better at what you were doing?

RP: Oh, certainly, most certainly. I'm sure the first time I was a little bit nervous.

INT: That's what I was just going to ask. Do you recall your first interrogation?

RP: No, no, I don't.

INT: You don't? Okay.

RP: But then it gets -- it becomes a routine [12:00], and you learn things, and you pick up things.

INT: Did you ever think that prisoners might have been playing you, and feeding you false information?

RP: Oh, I'm sure it happened.

INT: Would you make the judgment --

RP: For what purpose, sometimes I don't know.

INT: Would you make a judgment of "Oh, I don't think they were telling the truth here." Or would that be up to whoever was going through the actual --

RP: No, we would do evaluation after interrogation, we'd quite often say we don't think that he's entirely truthful. That's sort of a gut feeling that you get. Maybe he was evasive, and he was trying to deceive me. There were various reasons for them not to tell the truth [13:00].

INT: And how did this post-interrogation evaluation go? Was it just a short debriefing? Were there officers involved?

RP: Yeah, we would write a short report --

INT: Okay.

RP: -- on our interrogations. And give a little character, as far as the 24-year, 25-year old soldier is capable of doing so, judging someone. And then it would go out, I guess, to the evaluation section. They -- again, they had other skills and expertise.

INT: That's about all I had for the asking more questions about interrogation. One thing that we didn't really talk about yesterday, and I don't know if you're aware of or even noticed included in these notes, were you aware at the time that there was another interrogation center in California [14:00]?

RP: Yeah, I read that in the this note on Tracy [14:06] --

INT: Yes.

RP: I was very, very faintly aware there was something like that out there. I don't know how

or who told me. It may have come up in a conversation or something, but I knew nothing about them.

INT: Okay.

RP: And I assumed that those would be mostly for Japanese prisoners.

INT: Our understanding is that's the case, although there were apparently a number of Germans who went through Tracy, [14:41] as well. And I was wondering -- you may not recall this, if any prisoners went to both camps, if there was ever a case --

RP: I don't know.

INT: Okay.

RP: I assumed if they were Germans, that they were culled from POW [14:57] camps that were located in the west [15:00]. Certainly I don't know of any German prisoners captured in the Pacific. I don't know why they would have flown them from Europe to California. But who knows? The Army does things, they're not always rational.

INT: Do you recall, were there -- yesterday you were saying the majority of the prisoners would be selected from the front lines in Europe and sent directly to Fort Hunt [15:34]. Were there ever cases where they took prisoners out of POW [15:40] camps, prisoners who had already been detained and then decided --

RP: Yes, there were.

INT: Okay.

RP: Yes, there were. In some cases, they were prisoners who had become very active pro-Nazi, and were trying to [16:00] persecute anti-Nazi [16:02] prisoners.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: And we brought them over for interrogation, so to get rid of them where they were.

Some of them actually set up the equivalent of a kangaroo court [16:17], a Nazi [16:20] kangaroo court in the POW [16:22] camps.

INT: I'm not understanding this. You're saying in the earlier camp, before they came to Fort Hunt [16:30], the pro-Nazis [16:32] would --

RP: A few.

INT: -- might try those who were anti-Nazi [16:39].

RP: Yeah.

INT: And then what was the upshot of it? Who went to Fort Hunt [16:43], in that case?

RP: The pro-Nazis [16:48]. We brought in just for questioning some of the ones who were being, quote, tried, unquote. But generally who were [17:00] the instigators, who have been brought in for questioning and then probably transferred someplace else. Probably Camp Alva [17:10], Oklahoma.

INT: What did you hope to learn from these people?

RP: Well, their motivation. Maybe the names of others who were participants. It varied.

INT: So it was mostly to keep order in the prisoner of war [17:27] camp from where they came from?

RP: Right, right.

INT: As opposed to any information on Germany or on the war front?

RP: There was -- certainly didn't want any pro-Nazi [17:35] proselytizing in the camps. Most of the POWs [17:41], I think, aside from being away from their families, were quite happy to be in them, in POW [17:50] camps. They were out of danger, and God knows, so many of them facing possible transfer [18:00] to the Russian front, because the danger was extreme. And that the food was better, probably medical treatment was better, and

so forth. So they were fairly satisfied. And a lot of them were farmed out to farms, to work on farms. So it wasn't that bad a deal for them, except of course you're away from home, and your family.

INT: We had talked a little bit yesterday about the stoolpigeon [18:40] program. And I believe, had you mentioned that you recall how there was one incident, a particular incident, where a stoolpigeon, something bad had happened to him?

RP: No, I don't recall. It may have. But I can't give you any particular [19:00] incident.

INT: Okay. Okay. Another quick question, did you ever get the sense that anything that was being gathered from 1142 [19:11] was later used in the war crimes trials?

RP: I don't know.

INT: Okay. So there -- so anyone, say, Nazis [19:24] from the camps in Europe, were any of them brought to Fort Hunt [19:29], or were they detained in Europe?

RP: You mean the Nazis [19:39] who had been in concentration camps?

INT: Yeah, who were running the concentration camps?

RP: None of them were brought to 1142 [19:49].

INT: Okay.

RP: No, those who were caught, usually at the very, very end of the war, and then they were put into local special [20:00] camps, I imagine.

INT: Okay.

RP: And, of course, there were a lot of local trials.

INT: There were never any sorts of -- any trials held, not war crimes, but no trials of any sort held of prisoners at Fort Hunt [20:19]?

RP: No, no.

INT: Okay.

RP: It would have been illegal.

INT: Right.

RP: No, it just didn't happen.

INT: What -- speaking of that aspect, what -- do you have any opinions about what's going on today, and what's in the -- seems like it's in the news almost every day now, with the current situation in Guantanamo Bay [20:47], and similarities and differences between what went on at 1142 [20:54]. Is there any -- do you have any feelings or opinions on this?

RP: Oh, of course I have opinions, having gone through a little bit of [21:00] that, yeah. But there is so much equivocal. I don't feel that the majority of those that are being held deserve a lot of sympathy. Maybe there are a few innocent ones there, but the rest certainly don't deserve many tears to be shed. They wouldn't do that if things were turned around. They would be happy to torture Americans, and so forth. On the other hand, I think it hurts us abroad and gives us a bad reputation, I think. I think we should always be on the side of what's absolutely correct. And we may not agree with the Geneva Convention [21:55], every one of its aspects. But I think it's better to go [22:00] along with it than to be branded as people who transgress those rules. I'd rather be on the side of making mistakes and being a little bit lenient, although I don't like the idea. But I think for our good, for our reputation in other countries, I think it's a good idea.

INT: Do you think -- I know this is a difficult situation to put yourself in, but do you think that the techniques as we hear about them that are used for interrogation today, should they be more like what you were doing at Fort Hunt [22:52]? Or do you think there's a place for

what they're doing now?

RP: It's a difficult question to answer. We didn't deal [23:00], as far I know, with any real war criminals or people whose whole purpose was that of a terrorist, of killing innocent people and torturing people. Those are not the people we had as far as I know. They were soldiers, some were ardent Nazis [23:24], and deserved a good kick in the rear end. But I don't think that any extreme measures should be used, and things like that.

INT: Was it your opinion then or even now that any aspects of what you were doing at 1142 [23:47], for that whole program, was either against the Geneva Convention [23:53], or didn't exactly fall into line with it?

RP: Well, it was on the borderline [24:00]. There wasn't supposed to be a secret camp. And the International Red Cross [24:06], if they knew about it, were never informed about it, actually, by us. They never came to visit. But even if they had come, they wouldn't have found any grievous activities there. Although maybe they could cluck with their tongue you're not supposed to isolate people like that. But generally, at the very, very worst -- it was a very, very mild transgression of the Geneva Convention [24:45].

INT: Okay. That's all I have for specific questions about Fort Hunt [24:54]. Sam, do you have anything else before we move on to going through names and people [25:00]?

INT: Over the course of your 38 months at Fort Hunt [25:07].

RP: My what?

INT: You were at Fort Hunt [25:10] for approximately 38 months, did you say, or --

BB: I think it was more like 33 months. Just short of three years.

INT: About, if you had to guess, and you've been thinking about this history for a while, how many people do you think you may have interrogated over this period of time?

RP: Sam --

INT: Hundreds?

RP: Yeah, maybe a hundred. Probably not many more. And some of them were barely interrogations. They were short questionings. Maybe there were a few more. But 100, 150, possibly.

INT: And that's strictly just interrogations? That's not including just --

RP: No, the monitoring, I have no idea [26:00]. I mean, I might monitor maybe five, six, or seven rooms at a time. And they were wired through that -- if they spoke, a light would turn.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Would show up. You could sort of zero in on that room. Although often it was just a snore. A noise is a noise, whether it's a snore or somebody speaking.

INT: That's interesting. So some sort of light would come on --

RP: Yeah, yeah.

INT: -- if any noise was registered. And so you -- would you then immediately switch on that room?

RP: Yeah, yeah.

INT: Were there ever times where there were multiple lights on?

RP: Oh, yeah, sure.

INT: And did you ever not have enough monitors? Would you be short staffed --
[talking simultaneously]

RP: Well, I think you had to make a judgement; this is interesting, or this is just BS, you know [27:00]. That was up to you as an individual. Occasionally, we did miss

something, I don't know. But you couldn't have a monitor for every room.

INT: So at any given time, there was how many -- was there just one monitor for all of the prisoners? Or were there more?

RP: Oh, no, no, we had -- there were -- in the Honeysuckle Lodge [27:27], we probably had up to a dozen at the same time, listening in.

INT: Could you adjust the volume or anything? Or was it just one standard?

RP: I think we could, but I don't recall.

INT: And how sensitive were the microphones? Could you hear a quiet conversation, could you hear whispering?

RP: We could hear whispers, but we couldn't always understand them [28:00]. For that day and age, I think it was a -- it was pretty advanced.

INT: Did you say --

INT: I'm sorry, Brandon. So that if there were 12 of you monitoring, were you assigned a specific series of rooms to listen to in the camp?

RP: Sam, I think it was a certain number of rooms each one had. There may have been some overlap. I don't recall that.

INT: Did you say yesterday that you recall that there was at a time multiple prisoner compounds?

RP: When some of the huts there were --

INT: Sure.

RP: -- there would've been three or four, even. In some of the rooms, and I can't say this for sure, I think there were sometimes three or four prisoners. But as a rule there were two [29:00]. Two to a room.

INT: I'm sorry, what I'm asking is, were there multiple facilities? Was there one area for prisoners here, was there a first compound that was there when you were there, and then was a second one built? Was there any construction?

RP: Well, there was one originally, and I think the second one was built for the purpose of embedding the microphones. So that was a new area.

INT: And so the older --

RP: And now you're asking me whether the old one was maintained and used. But I have to -
- see, I don't know.

INT: Okay.

RP: I don't recall. I'm not sure.

INT: Do you know if the old one ever had microphones in it, or just the newer one?

RP: I think only the newer one.

INT: Okay. Okay [30:00].

INT: This is probably unfair, and it's a very broad question, but could you comment maybe on whether you feel that you were effective? Whether the program was worthwhile?

RP: Oh, I definitely think the program was worthwhile. If I was personally effective enough -
- I hope I was, but I don't know. But it's -- I think this is the crux of all intelligence: you may have a miserable month, you may have 29 days of just getting nothing but useless information. But the one useful item you get that one day will make up for all that.

INT: Similarly --

RP: That's -- you're looking -- like the guy looking for gold, you're looking for the [31:00]
nugget. You're panning for gold all that time and getting nothing but junk, but you may get a nugget in there.

INT: Hold your "pan" for a second.

RP: Okay.

(End of Tape 4A)

(Beginning of Tape 4B)

INT: Similarly, again, it's a very probably overly broad question, but if you had to rank the effectiveness of the monitoring program versus the direct interrogation program, was the great majority of information received from one or the other?

RP: Well, I can only answer that with that the monitoring effort helped and aided the interrogation quite a bit. That's the best answer that [inaudible]. We provided them with, you know, with little leads, again with little nuggets of information that would help the interrogator get the information he needed.

INT: So as an interrogator yourself [01:00], you must have been fairly familiar with the monitoring results from, say, the previous nights or weeks? How did that --

RP: Yeah. Sometimes you would have nothing. Quite often it was nothing there. But then again, there might be information which helped you.

INT: How would you get that information? Would the monitors be talking to you, or would you be filing a report?

RP: Sam, I think through written reports. Before you go in to interrogate somebody, you do have a folder on that person, and that would be in there.

INT: Do you have a feeling for how long it took you to prepare for your interrogations?

RP: Not very long. It might depend on the individual, but probably little more than a cursory look at the folder, and reading the folder five, 10, 15 minutes, that should do it. Plus, generally you're familiar with the individual, at least [02:00] in some way, it didn't hit

you completely cold.

INT: So I'm curious, and again, this is a personal question. But you learned on the job. Was there anything, though, in your background or in your, sort of, character that, sort of, had prepared you for being in this job? I mean, you were sort of selected because of your linguistic skills.

RP: Yeah. I don't know, maybe the Army had some background information on me that they liked. I'm a curious person. But otherwise no, no, I had no background in either police work or interrogation or anything similar to that. Nor did any of the other guys that I know of.

INT: But in the situation, just, again, personally, you'd probably have to be fairly gregarious [03:00]. Were you -- growing up, did you have free interactions with --

RP: Oh, yeah. But, no, you didn't have to be gregarious to be an interrogator. Some of the guys weren't gregarious at all, and they were good interrogators. But you should have at least an interest in people. That's my opinion.

INT: And then finally -- and I'm sorry, Brandon, [inaudible]. You had sort of said that the general layout between an interrogator and an interrogatee is the person who is being asked questions thinks that the interrogator knows more information usually than they know.

RP: Yeah, that's true worldwide, of course.

INT: Is there any other sort of ground rules or basics of asking -- having an interview that you sort of took in pocket, when you went into an interview, which [04:00] --

RP: I can't think of any. It all depends on, of course, the more knowledge interrogator has about the individual or their situation, this individual was involved in, his background,

the better it is. It helps when you ask more intelligent questions. That's about it.

INT: Did you feel -- talking about background information, did you feel sometimes that you didn't know exactly what was going on in a particular battle, or tactics?

RP: It wasn't just battle information. If you -- when this guy came from a particular area of Germany, if you knew something about that area, you could talk to him about his home town, or about things of that nature where you both had some familiarity, made it easier [05:00].

INT: Would you ever speak really specifically -- you mentioned about knowledge of towns, about, say, something like bombing results? Would you try to figure out how accurate air raids had been, or -- because you've mentioned that you'd do a lot of work in trying to judge their morale. Did that take into consideration the air campaign against --

RP: Oh, of course.

INT: Okay.

RP: Yeah. And it devastated most of them. Although again, a lot of these POWs [05:32] hadn't been home on furlough for a long time. They had to rely on this information through the few letters they had from home. And a lot of the bombing went on really more in 1944, fairly late [inaudible] devastating type [06:00] of air campaign. They didn't know, but it was -- it affected morale in families, and in turn would affect their morale.

INT: How closely did you all follow the war day by day? Were you expected, as a member of the interrogation team, to know much more --

RP: Well, I don't know that it was expected or not, Sam, but we very naturally -- it was just by instinct, by own interest, we certainly followed the news on a day by day basis. We

had radios going in the barracks constantly.

INT: Were you getting any sorts of information that a normal --

RP: No. No, no.

INT: -- member of the public?

RP: No, we didn't get any intelligence briefings from the Pentagon [06:53]. Certainly not as NCOs [06:56] or enlisted men [07:00]. No, but we had radios going that had the news going pretty steadily in the barracks.

INT: Were you ever asked while you were at 1142 [07:14] if you'd like to go to Europe to act as an interrogator there? Aside from what happened later with Nuremberg [07:22], which we'll talk about later?

RP: I and a couple of us actually, went to the Pentagon [07:27], we asked to be transferred to Europe.

INT: Really?

RP: We were turned down.

INT: Do you recall who went with you, to ask?

RP: No.

INT: Okay.

RP: I forget. But we did ask, and I guess we felt a little guilty about being at the home front. And we were very -- I would almost say abruptly turned down. We were needed where we were.

INT: And what was your motivation for wanting to [08:00] go overseas?

RP: I think just a feeling that I wanted to be more in the thick of it. I wanted to do my part a little bit more.

INT: Did that seem to be a common feeling amongst the interrogators?

[talking simultaneously]

RP: I don't know. I'm sure some felt, and others were just as happy to be right there where they were. But it's not saying that I was unhappy, but I thought it would have been -- I wanted to be where the action was.

INT: Looking back on it, would you say -- how would you rate your overall experience at Fort Hunt [08:40]? Would you say that it was a good experience?

RP: Absolutely, yes. It was a good experience from what I did, it was a good experience from the friends I made, and just learning knowledge of human beings, [09:00] it was a good education. Sam is pregnant with a question but --
[laughter]

INT: No, I don't want to enter your line of questioning.

INT: No, I'm ready to move on to the names of people, so if you have anything else --

INT: I guess Brandon will touch on this later, I think. But as the sort of the horrors of the Holocaust [09:37] became apparent, and you were still at Fort Hunt [09:43], was there some difference in how you felt about all the prisoners of war [09:50] that were there?

RP: Not really. But the Holocaust [09:55] was something that was almost expected [10:00]. It was a progressive thing, from light discrimination to more discrimination to persecution, and then the concentration camps, and then the actual Holocaust [10:16]. And needless to say, we felt terrible about it. But certainly none of the people whom we were questioning, none of them were involved in the actual Holocaust [10:32]. They may have committed crimes in France, or in Belgium or even in Poland, but generally these were just plain soldiers, good and bad, both.

INT: Are you really saying that the discovery of the death camps in Germany [11:00] and Poland came as not a surprise?

RP: To whom?

INT: To you.

RP: Yes, and no, both. I was horrified by it. Certainly I guess it affected me emotionally, to a certain extent. But it wasn't that surprising. One thing, as I said, leads to another. And that's what finally happened.

INT: Did you get -- do you believe that there were other interrogators there at 1142 [11:42] who also lost maybe family members in the Holocaust [11:47]? Do you recall if there were?

RP: I don't recall, but I'm sure there were. If they didn't lose immediate family, they lost, they lost others. Aunts, uncles and so on, cousins [12:00] and what have you.

INT: But you -- do you recall any specific incidents of people --

RP: No.

INT: -- finding out, other than, obviously, in your own case?

RP: No, I think we kept a lot of these personal matters pretty much to ourselves. And actually people in those days had been practiced at catharsis. The people who -- today your problems are your own problems, and you don't necessarily visit those upon others and those around you.

INT: So this was not a general topic of conversation between you?

RP: No.

INT: You wondered what had happened to such-and-such --

RP: No, no. That was our own personal tragedy, our own personal problem [13:00], which

we did not necessarily want to share. And I don't think they wanted to share with us.

That's not what -- we weren't there for that purpose, certainly. And also it just -- everybody has their own problems, and don't bother me with yours.

INT: But you've lived through our time, and this is a little off-topic, but you've lived -- your life spans this era where now everyone tells everyone everyone's problems.

RP: [affirmative] I still don't.

[laughter]

INT: You don't think it should have been different, or in retrospect, that maybe things couldn't have been different?

RP: I don't think it would've helped if I'd told everybody about my feelings, and moan and cry and whatnot [14:00]. It certainly wouldn't have helped my parents. I don't think it would've helped me, and it wouldn't have done anybody else any good.

INT: Any other thoughts? I was going to move on now to talking about some of the names of people --

RP: All right.

INT: --that you recall. But is there anything that you feel in the overall scheme of things about Fort Hunt [14:29] that we may have missed?

RP: No, I think we've covered it pretty thoroughly.

INT: I agree.

RP: We did a pretty good job of getting to all the different aspects. The physical aspects, people, POWs [14:47]. I can't think of anything else.

INT: Okay. Okay. Well, then, let's move on to the names. And maybe the first thing we'll do [15:00], if you don't mind, is maybe that photograph actually.

RP: Oh, yeah.

INT: If we can go and reach that for you.

RP: Okay.

INT: Is -- yeah, and if you want to look -- in fact, I don't know if we have a copy as well, or if we can follow along with you, or if we can point in the camera or something who we're referring to.

INT: Yeah, I've never done this before.

[inaudible commentary]

INT: I've never done this before.

INT: Do you need more cord? [inaudible commentary] [16:00]

RP: There are some faces I recognize, but I can't put a name to them.

INT: So yeah, if you just want to -- if you want to just start by going through and who you may recall in there.

INT: [inaudible]

RP: You want me to point to people?

[inaudible commentary]

INT: Yeah, if you want to go through --

RP: First [17:00], I'll start at the bottom row.

INT: Sure.

RP: And the second from the left, I think that was Hans Wolfe [17:12], but I'm not sure about him. This -- again, I'm not sure, but I think it was a kid named [Robert] Hoppe [17:20], H-O-P-P-E.

INT: Okay.

RP: Who was a German-American from the New York area. This is Ernest Salomon [17:29]

INT: He looks like about the youngest guy there.

RP: He was pretty young, yeah, yeah. I think this was Sergeant [Walter] Duevell [17:38], and I don't recall what his job was. This, John Vought [17:48].

INT: And you had mentioned a little bit earlier about him. Now he was kind of the -- if there had to be a father sergeant --

RP: Yeah, so, mightily, mildly authoritative [18:00].

INT: Had he been in the military before World War II [18:04], do you recall?

RP: I'm not sure. Maybe he got in pretty early during the war.

INT: Okay.

RP: But on the roster this was a private, and here he's wearing staff sergeant's stripes. Well, no, no, no. This young guy was a -- I think he's the one who came from a small town in New Hampshire. I can't think of the name. Very pleasant guy, not German-speaking, I know for a fact that he didn't. But he may have been in a clerical position.

INT: Okay.

RP: That's all on the front row. The second row, I really don't know anybody here [19:00] except between Vought [19:02] and Duevell [19:03] is Pierre Bader [19:04].

INT: What's his last name again?

RP: B-A-D-E-R.

INT: Okay.

RP: That's me. And next to me --

INT: Could you point to yourself again?

RP: Yeah. That's Charles DeTray [19:20].

INT: Okay. Do you remember anything about him?

RP: He had -- I don't think he was a Swiss citizen; he may have been. But his family owned a rather large denture factory in Switzerland, and I think in Germany, too. I think they were fairly comfortably off. This is a poor picture of Carlo Weiss [19:49].

INT: Oh, is it? Okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: And you had mentioned yesterday you believe that he was from the New York City area?

RP: Oh yeah, he lived up in Riverdale [20:00], and --

INT: Could you point to him again?

RP: Right here. He was born in Italy in Trieste. Then the family immigrated in 1940 to the UK, where he went to private, what they call public school. Then they sent him to New York, in a beautiful home up in Riverdale, overlooking the Hudson, to give him a very nice family. He was a good friend of mine. That's Alex Dallin [20:38].

INT: Oh, okay. And he's one of the ones who would dress up as a Russian?

RP: Yeah, yeah, he became a professor at UCLA. He died about, I would say, about two years ago, three years ago.

INT: Okay.

RP: This I think his name was Reinhard Philip [20:57], I think. Don't know much about him, except [21:00] he used to get mail from Guatemala, some connection to South America.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah. This is a very familiar face, but I can't put a name to it.

INT: Okay.

RP: He wasn't an interrogator. I think he was part of the O.B. section, the Order of Battle

[21:26] section or the Evaluation Section [21:30]. That's Colonel Bliss [21:31].

INT: Could you move the picture down?

RP: Down?

INT: Yeah, good.

RP: That's Colonel Bliss. And I think that's Captain [Orion] Adams [21:42].

INT: And are they the only two officers in that photo?

RP: As far as I know, Brandon.

INT: Okay.

RP: The rest I can't identify in that row. The next row, starting here again [22:00]. I'm sorry. I don't know anybody. Then the last row, the third from the left is, that's John Pierre Bauer [22:24].

INT: Okay.

RP: One of the Japanese guys. And then the rest, I don't know. Except I think this was -- his name was Kiefer, Alex Kiefer [22:34].

INT: Okay. Do you remember anything about Bauer [22:38] or Kiefer [22:39]?

RP: Well, yeah, we were pretty good friends. He came from the New York area, and he was one of the youngest, I think he was the youngest of the group. He was -- his family had immigrated to France, and then -- he spoke very good [23:00] French, and then they came to the United States and settled here in New York, where his father was in the more or less wholesale food business. Import-export.

INT: And what about Kiefer [23:18]?

RP: Kiefer, I know nothing about him. I think he was a German-American, but I don't know where he was from. He was, if I recall, sort of a loner. Nothing wrong with that, but he

didn't mingle very much. That's about all I can come up with. Except maybe I missed -- maybe this was Erwin Lachman [23:48]. Doesn't really look like him, but maybe it could be.

INT: One more time, sorry.

RP: All right. Right here [24:00].

INT: Thank you.

RP: And I'm looking at all the rest, see if I can come up with anybody else. My eyes aren't as good as they used to be. Oh, that could be Lachman [24:19], I'm sorry, I don't remember -- yeah, I'm sorry, I don't think there are any others I can identify necessarily.

INT: Do you recall anything about that photo being taken? When it may have been taken, or even where?

RP: I remember it was taken in '45, '46 actually [25:00]. But I don't recall what room this was.

INT: Is that --

RP: We didn't have a gym, as far as I know.

INT: Is that air conditioning ducts, around where you see the -- it looks like there's ductwork running through there. And that's why I was wondering if it could've been one of the buildings that was air-conditioned. But it seems like a rather high ceiling.

RP: Yeah, I don't recall. I really don't know. But maybe some of the others might. That's about all. So there must have been a lot of them from the Evaluation Section [26:00].

INT: Okay. Yeah, speaking with Wayne Spivey [26:06], several of those folks in the bottom right-hand corner are from the Evaluation Section [26:12].

RP: Oh. Is Wayne in there?

INT: No, he's not. He left, which also supports this being taken in early '46, he was mustered out in December of '45, and he's not here. But that's a fellow named Ralph Jackson [26:26]. And that is a fellow named Arthur Whelchel [26:31].

RP: Oh, yeah. Whelchel, he wasn't in the Evaluation Section [26:37], was he?

INT: According to --

RP: Whelchel, I think, was a Master Sergeant.

INT: Oh, really?

RP: I think he was the post Master Sergeant. Nice guy.

INT: That's him there, in that corner. Because Wayne [26:53] had a number of photos of himself, Whelchel [26:56] and Jackson [26:57] all together.

RP: Yeah [27:00].

INT: Do you think anybody in that photo could have been from the X [27:20] Program?

RP: I don't think so, but it's always possible. But I don't know why they would've brought them in. Maybe they had their own pictures taken. And security conscious as they were, I doubt it. Yeah, I think that was Erwin Lachman [27:56] [inaudible] [28:00]. But I don't know why they took the picture, and I don't know where it was taken.

INT: All right. Well, I want to go over these -- a couple of these other pictures here as well.

RP: Okay.

INT: But I think we need to change tapes.

INT: Yes.

INT: So --

RP: All right.

INT: --we're going to take a brief, two-second pause here, do those, and then try to cover

everything else in the next hour.

RP: Yeah. All right. Okay.

(End of Tape 4B)

(Beginning of Tape 5A)

INT: This is the morning of September 15th, 2006 with Fort Hunt History Project with myself, Brandon Bies, as well as Sam Swersky here with Rudy Pins of Fort Hunt [00:18], and we're concluding our series of interviews with him, and I think we'll go ahead right now through some of these other snapshots that you have here. They aren't necessarily of Fort Hunt, though, I guess, one of them is. So why don't we talk about that for just a few seconds.

RP: This first one is. This is one of the huts where some of the VIP members were put up during that time. This was taken in 1951 or 1952, by which time the huts had been -- this hut had been converted into a restroom area [01:00]. And there I'm on the left with Gustav [01:07] and Maria Hilger [01:08]. Gustav Hilger [01:11] was one of our guests at the camp at the end of the war. He had been a prominent diplomat, the number two man at the German Embassy in Moscow where he had served from actually 1917 until the Germans marched into Russia in '41. Then he was returned to the foreign ministry in Germany. He was captured by us at the foreign ministry evacuation area in Austria, and we had him as a prominent civilian internee. He was very cooperative. He gave us a lot [02:00] of information. Eventually he worked as a consultant for the U.S. Government and lived in the Washington area until about 1954, '55, I would say. And I maintained contact with him during that time. And then he returned to Germany very briefly. He rejoined the diplomatic service and retired and died about 10 years ago.

INT: And from what you recall when you were there in the early '50s was that one of the only remaining structures?

RP: I believe it was, yes.

INT: Okay.

INT: And were there any other opportunities after World War II [02:56] where you met people that were detained at the camp?

RP: No [03:00]. No, I didn't.

INT: Okay. We can go on to the next one if you'd like.

RP: All right. The next three all deal with another civilian, more or less, civilian internee, although he was actually a general, and that is General Hiroshi Oshima [03:25], who was the Japanese ambassador to Berlin. He was one of the instigators of the Japanese-Italian-German Tripartite Pact [03:39]. He was a very ardent Nazi [03:43] sympathizer. He's here with his wife. I believe that's his wife. He's also shown with the Hungarian Ambassador, later Foreign Minister [Döme] Sztójay [03:57]. This is the Hungarian Prime Minister [04:00], Hókov [04:02] [phonetic], and I believe this is a Papal Nuncio [04:05]. And the occasion was the memorial service for the Count [Duke] of Aosta [04:15]. The count of the Aosta had been named King of Croatia by the occupying Italian forces, but he never even made it to Croatia, and died in an accident. He died actually in internment, I believe, in East Africa.

INT: And how did you come across that photograph?

RP: This was one of many pictures given to me by the son of Heinrich Hoffmann [04:44], who was Hitler's personal photographer, whom we used in Nuremberg [04:53] to identify a lot of people, and he [05:00] then gave me a whole bunch of pictures, just as a matter of

courtesy.

INT: And again, one person in the photo was interned at Fort Hunt [05:14]?

RP: Yeah, this was General Oshima [05:18] right here.

INT: And you mentioned that he liked brandy?

RP: He liked brandy, almost consumed a bottle a day.

INT: And would you provide that?

RP: We would provide that because this was a matter of diplomatic courtesy. He was not really a prisoner. We had to treat him very gingerly.

INT: Was he asked any questions at all during his stay?

RP: There were questions -- yes, but there were not interrogations. The difference being they were not forced, they were informal [06:00], and I didn't -- personally I did not partake in these, this was more some of the high officers.

INT: Do you hear the results at all?

RP: I don't recall. Then we move to a couple of other pictures that I have of Oshima [06:22]. They are very similar. Here's Oshima in more or less his glory with Foreign Minister [Joachim] von Ribbentrop [06:35] and with the ambassador to Japan and another German Ambassador von Rintelen [06:44]. [unintelligible]

INT: Do you know when that was taken?

RP: This was taken I would say in about '43 [07:00]. This has a little CIA [07:04] marking because I gave the original to the CIA. They automatically marked it. This was another Hoffmann [07:14] picture, and here's one more. Here's Oshima [07:19] again. That's the head of the legal office of the foreign office, a man named Gauss [phonetic] [07:27]. Here's Ambassador Rintelen [07:29] again. You saw in the other picture. This is again

the Hungarian Prime Minister Sztójay [07:37] and here's another German ambassador. I believe that that's [Heinrich Georg] Stahmer [07:43], he was the ambassador to Japan.

INT: All right, great. Well, that's fantastic. Why don't we go through now the list of some of the names, and if there's anyone in this list that we haven't already talked about in the photo [08:00] --

[inaudible commentary]

INT: One second, Mr. Pins. One second please.

RP: Oh, all right. There was --

INT: Sure, if you want to go ahead, and just any name that you see that rings a bell.

RP: Adolf Wulff [08:58]. This is a second lieutenant [09:00]. I think I knew him, who was a captain. I think he was an interrogator. Paul Sapieha, [09:10] listed as a captain. I only recall Sapieha [09:20], he came from a very prominent Polish family. I think one of his family was a cardinal and another one was a prince. They were a prominent Polish family. Paul Neuland [09:36]. He was a captain, I think. I knew him as a major or a lieutenant colonel, one of the officers. I have good vibes about him, I don't remember very much about him otherwise. Gus Ringwald [09:54]. Gus was one of the good old boys of the Rhode Island Gang [10:00]. If I'm not mistaken, I think he was in charge of the mess hall and the mess operations. He took care of himself very well. [Newton] Holbrook [10:15], a very good person. Very intelligent. He was a first lieutenant. Again, I think I knew him as a major. Definitely made a very positive impression and such. There's Walter Pilz [10:38], there's someone on the list of people. I remember the name, but I can't give you much further information about him. Beverly Clarity [10:52], I didn't know that his first name was Beverly. He must have had some other name that he used. I

knew him as a sergeant [11:00]. He came from a university background, a professor and faculty. I forget where. Leslie Klieforth [11:16], we talked about him before. I won't go any further. Arthur Sharp [11:22] was sort of a colleague, I believe, of Clarity's, also, came from one of the universities. John Vought [11:35] we talked about. Walter Duevell [11:42]. Again, I don't know what Duevell's assignment was. I don't think he was an interrogator or monitor activity area. He might have been, but I think it was [12:00] more administrative.

INT: Okay.

RP: Who else do we know there? A whole page, oh yeah, Alex Lachman [12:12], a brother of one of our guys. A very personable lieutenant. Zenas R. Bliss [12:20] we've discussed before. Fred Kalmus [12:25] was a young lieutenant who was very nice, very pleasant guy. He was an interrogator, as far as I can remember. I think he, after the war, he was in the hotel business. Leon Halle [12:44] -- Herman Halle, known also as Captain Leon. It was probably his middle name. Notice the notation behind his name, it says excellent interrogator [13:00].

INT: Oh, really?

RP: He probably was. He was a pretty nice guy, a little bit full of himself, but basically a nice guy. From the Maryland area, and later on I only knew that he was the president of the Germany Philatelic Society. And he died about three, four, five years ago I would say.

INT: Okay.

RP: So basically a nice guy.

INT: How did you find out? You mentioned that you knew he passed away in the last few years. How would you hear -- had you been corresponding with them off and on?

RP: No, maybe read it a little bit someplace. With Halle [13:47] I was a member of the same philatelic group, and of course in the publication. I have never been in touch with the man. I meant to be in touch with him about P.O. Box [14:00], but I didn't. Herbert Holsten, [14:03] this is a lieutenant colonel. He was a pretty good guy. And here's someone named Augustus Soule [14:18], and I think he was a brother of someone with the same name. They came -- I don't know where they were from. Apparently it was a fairly prominent family, but I don't recall. Most of them are gone. Let's see. Here's Arthur Whelchel [14:43], we discussed him. Wayne Spivey [14:49]. Larry Schuette [14:51]. Schuette was a -- he may have been in the Evaluation [14:55], I don't think he did any interrogating. He was a [15:00] -- I think he was a German-American directly from the Yorkville area of New York.

INT: Okay.

RP: No. Some of these names have been sort of cut off.

INT: Yes. Unfortunately, that's a poor photo copy.

RP: So maybe I would have recognized some if I had the entire name. I didn't mark anything of this last. They were all -- these are all late arrivals. July and August '45. Ernest Salomon [15:51] is on it. Arno Mayer [15:53] is on it. Oh yeah. Walter Lehmann [15:56]. Actually Walter Lehmann was with me in Nuremberg [16:00].

INT: Oh, really?

RP: Yeah. As far as I know, he was either from the St. Louis area or went to school there. What is the University there? Washington --

INT: Washington University

RP: Yeah. He and Henry Kolm [16:17] and Peter Weiss [16:19]. But Walter Lehmann

[16:25] was at Nuremberg [16:27] with me. In fact, we took a couple of little trips together. And that's about it. I see all the Japanese on this roster. Oh, Roman Bernaut, [16:45], too. Roman was an interrogator, a very bright guy. Had a Russian background. A rather interesting background [17:00], but I don't want to discuss it on tape.

INT: Okay. As we're packing up [phonetic].

RP: A very nice person, a very good person.

INT: And I'm sorry to jump right into it, but since we are running low on time, we probably got 45 minutes left or so, I wanted to spend the last little bit talking a little bit about your experiences in Nuremberg [17:26], but also starting off a little bit, though, we discussed a little bit during lunch yesterday, and we weren't recording then, about you growing up in Germany, and you mentioned that your father had been in the First World War [17:41]?

RP: Yes.

INT: And what if anything do you know about his service in the First World War [17:47]?

RP: Well, he was an officer on both fronts, east and west. And I don't know if he was in the cavalry, but I know I saw [18:00] pictures of him on a horse in uniform. What they call a white horse these days. So he served almost a full four years, I believe. He got married during the war.

INT: Oh, really? Okay.

RP: My brother was born during the war.

INT: Okay, okay. And you grew up in a fairly small town?

RP: A very small -- a little county seat, sort of backwoods area you might say in Westphalia, eastern Westphalia.

INT: And you mentioned you believed going to school that you thought you were the only

Jewish student in your class?

RP: Certainly in my age group.

INT: Your age group, okay.

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay, but you were --

RP: Or even close to it.

INT: But that had no impact on who your friends were and what not?

RP: No, none.

INT: Okay [19:00]. And was your family particularly religious at that time?

RP: No.

INT: No? Okay. And so then you had spoken about how you came to this country. Could you get in a little bit more detail about how that worked out, how your parents were able to work that out to send you to this country?

RP: Well, they heard about a program where the U.S. Congress had created based on 1,000 children, I believe between the age of 8 and 16, for visas to come to the United States and stay with families in America. I was one of the lucky ones.

INT: And the family that [20:00] -- were you paired with this family or was this a family that your parents knew?

RP: It was both in a way. They'd known them slightly, and also [unintelligible] and through this whole program, I was paired with them, and it was a good choice. They were good people.

INT: What were their names?

RP: I don't want to say.

INT: Okay, that's fine.

[inaudible commentary]

RP: Some of the families might not want to.

INT: What about your brother? He left at that time.

RP: He left a little later in 1937, '38, and then immigrated over to Palestine.

INT: So would he have been in his late teens at that point?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Was that by his own choice or did your parents --

RP: Yeah, I think by his own choice, both with the approval of my parents [21:00].

INT: And he lived in Israel for the remainder of his life until he passed away?

RP: Yeah. He travelled a lot, too, but spent some time, especially, in the U.K.

INT: Okay.

INT: In the months leading up to your leaving Germany were there family discussions, preparations?

RP: Well, how much discussion do you have with a little 13 and 14-year old? Certainly there was some.

INT: Did you understand why your parents were doing it?

RP: Oh, yes. There were more and more rules, which would have made it -- [unintelligible] it would have made it more difficult for me to stay in school. They wanted me to get a good education. The general feeling was that the whole Hitler [21:57] business would blow over in three, four, five years [22:00], and I would come back then.

INT: Did you and your brother have discussions about it? I mean, you and your brother, did you have discussions?

RP: No. Brothers who were three years older, don't communicate that much with their younger brothers. And again, we were a family that, communication was good, but we didn't emote. It was the nature of our family.

INT: Were you able to correspond with your parents, you know, going into the late '30s and early '40s--

RP: We corresponded regularly until Pearl Harbor [22:48].

INT: Pearl Harbor. And were they before Pearl Harbor attempting to get out of Germany?

RP: Yes, but not quick enough [23:00].

INT: Do you have any idea of the means that they had tried to get out?

RP: Well, Sam, the normal ways of trying for visas. It was the only way. In those days you didn't just pick up and travel. You needed a visa to go almost any place or to stay any place. You could go to France on a tourist visa, but after two weeks, if you didn't go home, they kicked you home, if you didn't have a proper visa. Things are much more relaxed today.

INT: You were saying that it was difficult to get a U.S. visa?

RP: I'm sorry?

INT: You were saying yesterday over lunch that it was difficult to get a U.S. visa.

RP: Oh, definitely.

INT: And you were trying to explain why that might have been.

RP: Well, this was still at the tail end of the Depression [24:00]. Jobs were scarce, and what jobs there were they wanted to save for American citizens. They didn't necessarily want to have a lot of foreigners taking jobs away from them. So unless you came with a trunk full of money from [unintelligible] they weren't that anxious to have you.

INT: This struck you as being, just -- you accepted that, I mean, that was understandable to you? You were 13 or 14.

RP: I was 14 years old, Sam. I didn't think much about those things. I had the usual 14 age old problems with school and so forth. That's what concerned me in those days.

INT: At any time during this period when you're still in Germany did you -- I mean, all the children would have been celebrating Christmas. What was Christmas time when you were growing up?

RP: Christmas was Christmas [25:00]. [unintelligible], but we did have a tree. Kids gave gifts around town like that. No matter whether it was a religious idea or not.

INT: So you didn't feel separate from the rest of --

RP: No.

INT: Were you treated any differently by the kids as the Nazis [25:25] came to power?

RP: Not to my knowledge, no. I had my number of friends who came to our house and I went to their house, and we played together. My brother did as well.

INT: Was the Nazi Youth [25:45] --

RP: And never the two shall mix.

[laughter]

INT: Were there any Nazi Youth [25:53] activities?

RP: Oh, yeah. The Nazis [25:56] had [26:00] their -- all kinds of Hitler Youth [26:01], they made sure was it was active [unintelligible]. Some of my friends belonged to the Hitler Youth. But the Hitler Youth [26:11] was really in those days a politicized Boy Scout activity. These kids were -- well, most of them, there may have been exceptions, most of them were there for the activity, going camping or marching. And that's the only time I

felt differently because I was not permitted to join. But if I were, I probably would have. This didn't mean that a 12- or 13-year old was suddenly an ardent Nazi [26:47]. They didn't think about it anymore than I did. They sang the songs they told them to sing, you know, and so forth.

INT: Did you keep up with [27:00] your friends once you moved to the United States.? Did you ever send letters to your friends?

RP: Actually, no, I didn't. I think in the back of my mind I knew that it might get them into trouble, especially as things got worse.

INT: And you were saying yesterday at lunch a little bit about what happened to many of your friends. Presumably they joined the German Army or were forced to join.

RP: Oh, yes. Mine was one of the prime -- when the war broke out, we were all 19. So this was the idea. Everybody was drafted. And a great number of them served on the Russian Front where they were killed. A few survived. I met up with, well, I remember three of them that I met up with after the war [28:00].

INT: Did you have other family around Germany?

RP: We had uncles and aunts and cousins and so forth. Some got out, some didn't. Most of the rest were killed in the Holocaust [28:16], but some managed to get to Australia and South America.

INT: I'm going to go ahead now to fast forwarding to after the war in Nuremberg [28:35].

RP: Okay.

INT: How did you find out that this thing called the Nuremberg Trials [28:44] was going to be at? Was it assumed as soon as we found out about the horror --

RP: It was in the news that there had been the treaty among the allies before the end of the

war, I believe as early 1943, I'm not sure, [29:00] that there would be a trial, and then more of the details just came out. Then there was this whole part of keeping up with the news. And then it actually happened in '45.

INT: And so was this something that you volunteered for or were you asked and selected?

RP: I would have volunteered if I had known how, but as it happened in May '45 I was approached by the same officer, Major Rath [29:36] [phonetic], who recruited me for 1142 [29:39], and asked me if I was interested in joining the prosecution team in Nuremberg [29:45] as an interrogator. And he mentioned German history and all that, and I jumped at the opportunity, although I was aware of the fact I would be postponing [30:00] the rest of my college education.

INT: But there was a little bit of a gap there between when you were asked and when you actually did go.

RP: The processing is the usual bureaucracy, and the Army bureaucracy, especially, with all the clearance and the passports. There was a lot of communication between me and them, and finally the orders were cut in August that year. Obviously I came too late for the major trial or I think I came at the very end of it.

INT: Okay. And so when exactly did you arrive in Nuremberg [30:45]?

RP: I arrived in Nuremberg -- I don't know exactly -- the very end of August of '45.

INT: Of '45. Okay.

RP: Wait a minute, '46, '46. I'm sorry [31:00]. Yeah. The trial was coming to an end, but there had been no verdicts yet.

INT: So to go back and correct the dates. Were you approached by that major from Fort Belvoir [31:14] in May of '46 or May of '45?

RP: May of '46.

INT: '46. Okay.

RP: Sorry about that. I said '45. I misspoke.

INT: That's fine. And so how did you get over there? Did they fly you or did you --

RP: No, there wasn't that much flying being done except for urgent cases.

INT: Right. I wasn't sure if that was considered urgent enough or you had to take a steam ship

--

RP: No, no. I was just another body to be transported. I went on boat called the Henry Gibbins. It was a U.S. Army transport used mainly to transport dependents of soldiers who came.

INT: One second [32:00].

(End of Tape 5A)

(Beginning of Tape 5B)

INT: So you were saying it was mostly used to transport dependents?

RP: Dependents of officers, I guess, not NCOs [00:10], who were being stationed in Germany and Europe during the war. It was a ship. It wasn't a troop transport. It certainly wasn't a luxury liner either. I remember I slept, I think, in an area with 12 other people. So it was not a private cabin.

INT: And as you mentioned yesterday, at this point, technically you were a civilian?

RP: Yes.

INT: You had been mustered out.

RP: Oh yeah, at my request I was mustered out and came over as a civilian with the U.S. Civil Service [00:49], civilian grade.

INT: What were your first impressions of arriving? This was your first time in Europe after the war [01:00]. What were your initial impressions about what you were seeing?

RP: Well, my eyes were wide open, of course. We landed in Bremerhaven, and there was this contrast. We were received by an Army brass band, and then put on a really luxury train, which the German name for it was Rheingold Express. It was, well, let's see. It didn't have the normal seating. It had sofas and couches and easy chairs. It was a very luxurious train that served very good food, and here we were traveling through this totally devastated area in Bremerhaven, almost every house in ruins.

INT: And this would have been a full year after hostilities had ended?

RP: Yeah. Yeah, it didn't look like very much had been done, if anything, by that time [02:00]. We made various stops. At each stop there was another brass band. Not for us, [unintelligible] to Nuremberg [02:12], but this was for the dependents, soldiers who were welcoming their wives, what have you. We didn't matter. When we finally got to near Nuremberg [02:23] we were housed in a pretty bad place, like a DP camp. It was the usual Army foul up, where to put us. And then a group of us scheduled for Nuremberg, I think, on our own we were near Nuremberg [02:46]. We somehow got hold of some type of vehicle. There were no taxis. And went to Nuremberg to a hotel where we knew it was meant for Americans. Talked our way into it [03:00].

INT: And when you arrived there, what were you told that your role at Nuremberg [03:09] was going to be?

RP: Oh, I was hired as an interrogator. So that's who I reported to and that's what I did.

INT: Were the interrogations similar to what you'd been doing at 1142 [03:23] or was it a completely different style? Was it much more public?

RP: It wasn't public, certainly, but in special cases of people who had been indicted, there was always a lawyer present; for people who were already on trial when we interrogated [Hermann] Goering [03:40] or Ribbentrop [03:41] or any of those people who had been on trial, the lawyers were always present.

INT: So who were some of the people that you interrogated?

RP: Personally I did interrogate Goering [03:52] once. I interrogated [04:00] Governor-General [Hans Michael] Frank [04:01], Governor-General of Poland. I had -- basically I was assigned the foreign office case, and had a lot of the German ambassadors. The Deputy Foreign Minister Ribbentrop [04:22] had already been hanged. So a lot of those people. I did some duty trips, field trips to interrogation centers. I interrogated a man named Horthy, Miklós Horthy [04:41], H-O-R-T-H-Y, who was the Regent of Hungary [04:47]. And then was later on had a change of heart and turned against Hitler [04:54] more or less. I interrogated him. In Hungary [04:59], I interrogated [05:00] people who were in the prison and the former SS [05:09] Chief who had been sent to Hungary [05:13]. And I interrogated the former prime minister of Hungary. And then I was invited to an execution of the [unintelligible] of the head of the Hungarian Gestapo [05:32], at the [unintelligible] jail. I also interrogated a man named Dieter Wisliceny [05:38]. I interrogated him in Bratislava in his jail cell, where he had already been sentenced to death. He'd been one of [Adolf] Eichmann's [05:50] deputies. I interrogated a number of other Eichmann-type people, people who negotiated [06:00] for Jews in Hungary [06:03]. One of my main subjects was a man named [Edmund] Veessenmayer [06:12]. He had been sort of the all-powerful ambassador and special plenipotentiary of Hitler [06:21] in Hungary [06:21], and supervised the deportation of -- at least indirectly the deportation of

all the Jews in Hungary [06:30] to Auschwitz [06:32]. So I was trying to get him connected to that as much as possible.

INT: What was that like for you? I know we've been asking lots of questions about emotions, but given that you had recently found out that you'd lost your parents, did you find that difficult, or did you find it rewarding? What were your --

RP: I think maybe rewarding is a good word, yes. By that time [07:00], this was like a year or two afterward, the emotions had subsided. They were not feelings, but emotions. This was a pretty technical, factual type of investigation. The man was not a pleasant person. Not many of them were. For example, another person that I interrogated was a man named Stuckart, Wilhelm Stuckart [07:29]. He was the Undersecretary of State for the Interior Ministry and one of the technical authors of the Nuremberg Laws [07:39], among other things. So they were both rather unpleasant, self-pitying people for whom you couldn't have very much sympathy for them. But they were treated properly; besides the lawyers were present [08:00]. And I found it -- I did find it rewarding and interesting. What I did not find rewarding was the rather mild sentences they got.

INT: So many of the people you were speaking with were not sentenced to death?

RP: Exactly.

INT: Okay. And did you feel that they should have been?

RP: Well, I think a person who is either directly or indirectly in charge of sending thousands and thousands of people to their death, I think they deserve a death sentence or at least a lifelong prison sentence, not seven or 10 years.

INT: Is that what a common sentence would have been for many in charge?

RP: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RP: And some of them even served a shorter period. They were pardoned after the German government took over. It was a political move, but that didn't make me very [09:00] happy because I'm a firm believer that the guilty people should be sentenced harshly and the innocent people should be left alone.

INT: Did you ever interrogate directly anyone who would have been involved with your parents and what camp they went to?

RP: No, no.

INT: Okay.

RP: I think I probably I should have recused myself as they say from that, but it didn't happen.

INT: Were you shocked at some of those things that you were hearing?

RP: We were all shocked at what happened. No more, no less. After you hear what happened in Auschwitz [09:57], there isn't anything that can shock you much more [10:00]. It's more of the same.

INT: Did any of them --

INT: But you were putting people's faces and the actual characters who were carrying this out.

RP: Well, none of whom did the actual shooting or hanging. These were administrators, executives who ordered or passed on the orders to do these things. They were much too, I would say, cultured in their own opinion that they would dirty their hands on the actual murder, execution, but equally guilty.

INT: So you're saying that they basically [11:00] didn't seem to have any human feelings for the people involved. It was just more numbers or categories?

RP: Probably not. This is -- it comes down to individuals. I don't think that many of them did

or they wouldn't have been in those positions very long.

INT: Did any of them brag about it? Did any of them seem proud about what they had done, you know, completely un-repentful [sic]?

RP: No, they were more -- it was more of a denial process. They were all, "I didn't do anything." "It was a great order from Hitler [11:46]" or there's always "My family would have been hurt," and so forth and so forth and so forth. The only bragging that occurred, and I didn't do the interrogation [12:00], I sat in on it, was a man named Otto Ohlendorf [12:04], who by the way was an economics professor, who was in charge of special execution squads in Russia where he admitted to directly supervising the execution of 90,000 people. When Hitler [12:26] asked him what about the babies, he said, "Well, the babies grow up to be adults. We had to get rid of them from the beginning," so they did.

INT: I take it he was executed?

RP: Yes. He was. I doubt whether or not -- there were a lot of war crimes trials outside of Nuremberg [12:52]. War crimes trials affected the individual concentration camps. The [13:00] British, the Germans, not the Germans. The British, the French, I think the Norwegians, I'm not sure, the Poles, all had their own war crimes trials dealing with individual camps where a lot of people were executed. And it's even a possibility there were a few of them who were executed who should have gotten milder sentences. But in Nuremberg [13:28] I don't think anybody, anybody got a sentence which was too strict or too strong. Actually, a lot of them were people who were let go or were acquitted or given light sentences who should have really been punished much more severely.

INT: How did these interrogations take place? We've spoken a lot about how they happened at Fort Hunt [14:00]. You said there would be lawyers. Would there be lawyers from both

sides there?

RP: In effect, we were the lawyers for the prosecution. I have represented the prosecution. I would have a stenographer with me and sometimes a prosecuting attorney, but most of the attorneys did not speak German. That's why they needed us. Sometimes they would sit in on it, and sometimes somebody else from the so called Evidence Division would sit in on it. And, of course, there would always be guards in the room.

INT: And was this similar to Fort Hunt [14:43] in that you were told what questions to ask? Was there somebody higher up or were you just told to find out --

RP: Oh yes, not every specific question, but the assistant prosecutor [15:00] would sit down with us or sometimes they'd send us a folder and say, "We need to know -- we'd like to know more about this, about that," and so forth. This was a much more formal type of operation than 1142 [15:16], and actually was significant.

INT: So you were acting more on this as a translator than as an interrogator or were you partnered with the --

RP: No, no. I acted as an interrogator, not as a translator. Translating was done by somebody else. No, as I said, there was a stenographer present, her notes would then go to a translator. They would translate the interrogation. They would more or less summarize it, which I did in the first few weeks as I got acquainted with the process, I would summarize the [16:00] interrogations into English, and then they would go back to the prosecution, to the attorneys to be used as evidence or what have you.

INT: Would you yourself ever be called to testify?

RP: No.

INT: Okay. So it was just the information that you gathered.

RP: Yeah, there was no reason. The closest I came was when I went down to see Admiral Horthy [16:25] and some of these people in Hungary [16:27], I would take statements from them, and I had to sign the statements, and they would submit it to the prosecution and used by them.

INT: You mentioned that there was one other fellow from 1142 [16:44] who was there at --

RP: Yeah, Walter Lehmann [16:46] and Warner Nash [16:48]. But Warner Nash, maybe he - those two were like a team, like twins. I don't know whether Warner Nash [16:57] was at 1142 [16:59] or not [17:00]. I think he may have been, but I don't see his name any place.

INT: Although, we may have missed one of the pages that we didn't copy. Were their roles similar to yours at Nuremberg [17:15]? Were they acting as interrogators?

RP: Yeah, they were a little bit younger. They may have done more of the summarizing than interrogating. I forget. Nice guys.

INT: Was it intimidating whatsoever to talk to some of these folks, like Goering [17:34] for example? Or were you experienced enough with Fort Hunt [17:38] that you felt fairly confident with what you were doing?

RP: On one hand I was experienced enough and I was really -- I wasn't intimidated. I was very interested, to me it was like a historic moment. Who ever thought of Rudy Pins from a little town in Germany would be sitting across the table from Hermann Goering [18:00] and questioning him and Hermann Goering would be asking him for a cigarette. That was pretty impressive as far as I was concerned.

INT: You mentioned that some of the folks that you spoke with, Goering [18:19] being one of them, when you met with them, had already been sentenced to death.

RP: When I talked to him he hadn't -- no, he hadn't. The trial had ended, but there had been no verdict so far.

INT: So what information were you trying to get from him if his trial had already ended?

RP: This was information we were trying to get about his relationship with the foreign office, people in the foreign office, what he knew they were responsible for from his point of view and so forth.

INT: And was he actually speaking about this or --

RP: He spoke very freely. He was very talkative, he was very [19:00] -- almost amiable, very self-confident, absolutely self-confident. I can see where in his heyday, he made quite an impression on people, especially foreigners. He could hold his own with anybody in a conversation and so forth, no doubt about that.

INT: And you mentioned yesterday that while you were there you took the time to go visit your hometown?

RP: Yes.

INT: Can you describe that visit a little bit?

RP: Well, this was in the winter of '46, '47. Again, there was no transportation. And I had to hitch a ride with an Army truck going up into what was then the British zone. And I'd been in touch [20:00] with a few people. They had been friends of my parents and so forth. I had loaded up a whole, they call it a barracks bag -- are you familiar with that? All kinds of goodies: cigarettes, soap they need, blah, blah, blah, all of this. We made a stop in Hannover and somebody stole the whole thing out of the back of the truck. I was devastated. Anyhow, I guess I had a few little things left. I got to my hometown and there were no hotels. And the town was actually occupied by the Belgians. I stayed with

them in their officer quarters, which -- however, were not heated. It was the dead of winter, bitter cold. Then I guess they provided me with a car [21:00] and a driver. And I drove around and visited some of my parents' friends and back to my old school, just had a good old fashioned visit, distributed, I guess, a few goodies that I had left, which weren't very much. I stayed about, I don't know, maybe two days, that's about all.

INT: You had mentioned that at one point you went to the actual home or apartment where you had lived at one point?

RP: Yeah, there was a -- I forget who was there, but I didn't go inside.

INT: Okay. We only have a few minutes left. Is there anything else that you'd like to say about your experiences at Nuremberg [21:58] and if you even wanted to relate them [22:00] back to Fort Hunt [22:01] whatsoever?

RP: No, except that both of them I think -- I learned from both of them; I learned about human behavior, and certainly they were impressionable experiences. And they're something that's with me for the rest of my life.

INT: Is there any particular component of Nuremberg [22:30] that really sticks out in your memory?

RP: Well, the utter destruction of the town, of everything in it. Almost not a single dwelling that I remember. There were a few that were housing American personnel that had been repaired and redone, but otherwise most every structure [23:00] had been affected by it. And by the time I left, not much had been to do to correct it. It wasn't until after the currency reform in '48 things suddenly picked up and there was reconstruction.

INT: And did you ever visit any of the camps? Did you have any reason to visit any of the former concentration camps?

RP: Not until much, much, much later. I went up to a camp you probably never heard of called Neuengamme [23:32], outside of Hamburg. I had intentions to visit. I did go to Auschwitz [23:41], but way later in '93. I was in Berlin and a couple of my friends from work, we took the train down to Krakow and went to Auschwitz [23:54].

INT: What camp where your parents killed in?

RP: I wouldn't even call [24:00] it a camp. It was just in the town of Riga, Latvia.

INT: Okay, okay. And real quick before we ask you a few more questions, when did you leave Nuremberg [24:13]? When did that --

RP: January of '48 in time for the spring semester at school.

INT: And was that by your request or had everything --

RP: No, things were still going on full speed, and I was enjoying my experience. I was going to stay on or even going into the military government, but I knew if I didn't get back to school soon I might never, so I did.

INT: And did you finish your school on the GI Bill?

RP: Yeah. Big deal, good deal.

INT: We got about five minutes left exactly, and I'm sure Sam has some questions.

INT: What kind of reception did you get in your hometown?

RP: Good. It was a [25:00] good reception everybody that I met. Invited to their homes.

One of my former teachers took me home and showed me the grades that I had gotten in English, which weren't that good.

[laughter]

And I visited old neighbors, who had seen my parents in their last days at home and so forth. It was a basically -- one of my old school friends had become a doctor, was a very

nice, very nice person, so --

INT: Did they talk to you about what had happened to your parents?

RP: I don't -- not really, no. There was no need to. We all knew what happened. They knew what happened. I knew what happened. There was no point in rehashing this [26:00].

INT: Did they express any sort of remorse or sorrow?

RP: Sorrow maybe but no remorse. They didn't do anything. A couple of them had been anti-Nazi, but certainly were not pro-Nazi [26:19]. They certainly didn't have any hand in sealing their fate.

INT: Do you think anyone in your town felt guilty?

RP: Oh, some probably did. We had one guy who was -- he was hanged as a war criminal at one of the concentration camps. Was a sergeant in the SS, I didn't know him. He lived about three houses away from us. He was at that time probably about 10 years older than I was. [27:00] To me he was just another adult. I paid no attention to him. He came from a pretty good family, as a matter of fact.

INT: You said there were certain things that you'd come away with, lessons that you had learned from what had seen in your town as well as in Nuremberg [27:15], but you didn't say what the lessons were. You said they made an impression on you, but you didn't say what the lessons were.

RP: The impressions were made by -- made on me by Post Office Box 1142 [27:24] and by Nuremberg [27:26], no particular impressions of my hometown. My hometown, fortunately, it was almost untouched by the war. The people I met were good people, got along with them fine; there weren't any problems. As I said, at one point my brother and I were citizens so there was no gnashing of teeth, Sam [28:00]. Things had happened that

were sad and tragic and we all knew that. They did and I did. There was nothing at that point to do about it.

INT: Not even to talk about it?

RP: We couldn't rend our clothes or what have you. They didn't talk about it, no. What possibly, what could they say? Sorry it happened?

INT: We have one minute left, and then that's all, folks.

RP: Well, thank you very much.

INT: You're -- thank you very much. This has been extraordinary, yesterday and today, and I can't tell you how helpful this will be for us, and how we'll [29:00] certainly keep you involved and informed.

RP: Yeah, especially if you get in touch with more people who know about it.

INT: Absolutely.

RP: And hopefully I'll be around for a little while.

INT: And if we can arrange a reunion, would you be interested in trying to come?

RP: I might be, yes. I wouldn't come down for Texas, I don't think. This is a very out of a way place and involves changing planes twice and all that, but I'll certainly come down from New York unless something physical were to happen to me that I couldn't.

INT: We're going to try to do something as soon as possible.

RP: Yeah, [inaudible].

INT: Well, you've been absolutely fantastic. We can't thank you enough. So I think we'll -- [30:00].

[end of transcript]

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