

Carl DuBose Oral History Interview

PETER RIESZ: Here, today is June 27th. It's 1:40 in the afternoon, the year 2000. I'm Peter Riesz recording for the Military Order of World Wars. We're at the home of Carl DuBose. Good afternoon, Carl. How you doing?

CARL DUBOSE: Fine, fine.

PR: We're just gonna talk a little bit about your military career. By the way, you -- Carl, what's your middle name?

CD: L. Initial only. (laughter)

PR: L only. Nothing else.

CD: [Back?] in the day, it was [Louis?] and my mother put it on my birth certificate.

PR: Oh, okay so you're Carl L.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Tell me how DuBose is. Capital "D" or small "D"?

CD: It's capital "D," yeah, and a little "U" but a capital "B."

PR: Okay, and a space between the two?

CD: Yeah. Yeah.

PR: Okay. (laughs) Just to get it officially correct.

CD: It's French.

PR: Oh, yeah. Francais. Where were they from in France?

Do they have any idea?

CD: Oh, yes but not really the place. The DuBoses came to the United States around the 1600s. They came to South Carolina because they were Huguenots and they were --

PR: Oh, yeah, the French Huguenots.

CD: They were dispelled by France, actually, by the Catholic Church because the Huguenots were sort of Protestant.

PR: Oh, those were terrible [back then?].

CD: (laughs) Yeah. And they were actually [lorded?] people that had estates, but they had to give up everything and come -- they [settled?] with their church in South Carolina but spread, though. They spread to Gonzales, Texas where I'm from in the 1800s, early 1800s.

PR: From Carolina.

CD: Yeah, from -- and you know the Texas Revolution was 1836. They [watched?] it there and [staggered farms?] along the Guadalupe River.

PR: Oh. When were you born?

CD: I was born in '22, 1922, August 7th.

PR: August 7th?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Okay, and where?

CD: In Gonzales.

PR: In Gonzales?

CD: Yeah. I spent the first 17 years there. I went to high school in --

PR: Where did you go to grade school?

CD: Gonzales had two grade schools. I went to one called [Central Ward?].

PR: [Central Ward?]?

CD: Gonzales is a small town. [Central Ward?] and --

PR: Okay. This might be that lady coming now. I'll just switch this off. Okay, [Central Ward?] Elementary School and --

CD: Yeah. [Central Ward?] Elementary and Gonzales High School. They had one high school and --

PR: Okay. When did you graduate?

CD: In those days, they had 11 grades and I skipped one, so actually I got -- got out of school when I was 15.

PR: Oh! My Lord. What year did you graduate?

CD: 1939.

PR: '39. What'd you do then?

CD: Yeah. Actually, I was 16, 16 nearly. Then, you know, there weren't any jobs in '39 after the Depression.

PR: Bad time.

CD: Time, tough time. I got a job at seven dollars a week, or one dollar a day is what it'd amount to. So finally, I went to -- I went to Southwest Texas and started the college.

PR: When did you start there?

CD: I started there in '40.

PR: '40?

CD: Yeah.

PR: June or September?

CD: No, in the summer. I had [let out of?] school a year and I got, saved up a little money, but my father and their family were ranchers and they had -- they were buying a ranch so they had no money. And I got enough money to start school, but (clears throat) it only lasted about a year and then I went to Minnesota, was a beekeeper, and stayed -- when I was 17. Stayed about, only one summer, there in 1941.

PR: When did you go to Southwest Texas?

CD: In '40.

PR: Oh, and then you --

CD: I done stayed a year up there and then --

PR: Okay, and then you ran out of money and --

CD: (laughs) Yeah, ran out of money.

PR: Yeah. Went up as a beekeeper helper in Minnesota.

(laughs)

CD: Well, you know, they had -- these people had
(inaudible). [Erickson?], he had -- a Swedish guy --
he had bees in the valley and they would make nuclei,
little small colonies of bees, and he had 800 on his
truck and he and his wife stopped in Gonzales, picked
me up. One afternoon, he said, "Do you want to go?"
I'd been corresponding with him and -- because I took
the bee journal. We had bees, my brother and I. I
had one brother. And (laughs) I'd been corresponding.
He asked me, "You want to go to Minnesota?" I said,
"Okay." (laughter) I got about two pairs of khakis
and two shirts and I threw them in a bag and took off,
at 17.

PR: With a truck full of bees.

CD: Yeah! He colonized them. We drove straight through
to Red Wing, Minnesota.

PR: I'll be darned.

CD: I stayed up there a year. There were two other young
boys working for him. Had bees all over Minnesota,
and [Iowa?], and parts of Dakota.

PR: Uh-huh. That was good bee country, huh?

CD: Oh, wonderful. Wonderful. They had lots of clover up there. Made beautiful honey and we shipped it to -- hauled it by truck to Chicago, and Minneapolis, Saint Paul. Had a -- we worked bees in shorts, no shirt and --

PR: You knew how to handle them.

CD: -- during a clear day, when the weather was good, if it was cloudy and inclement weather, you had to put on clothes and masks, you know, because the bees would get mean. We had [them?] all the time. Then I came back to college in 1942. Well, in 1941 we had Pearl Harbor. And at the time, you see, I would be about 19. So I -- earlier in '42, about June of '42, I volunteered for the Air Force.

PR: You came back to school, though, before that?

CD: Yeah. I went back to college.

PR: What semester did you start that up?

CD: I got home from Minnesota in December and I started in January back to college.

PR: Of '42.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Right after Pearl Harbor.

CD: Then it was a -- oh, I guess, a while before they -- you know, you had to have two years of college to be a

pilot. I wanted to be a pilot in the worst way. It's all I could think about. You see, in Gonzales, the people -- the [old?] boys who used to fly out of Randolph, the old time pilots, they all graduated from Randolph. And they would have blue and yellow airplanes and they would fly in the clouds above me at home. I'd be behind the mules or something, plowing, and I'd see them. I said, "That must be wonderful up there." And so that's what I wanted to be. So in '42, I volunteered, but it was early in '43 before they called me because they had a backlog. But you had to take a test.

PR: What did you do? You stayed in school, then?

CD: Yeah, I stayed in school.

PR: Okay. So in '42, they -- in June, you could volunteer.

CD: Yeah, first I volunteered for the Navy Air Force because some friends and I had taken flying in college, one course, where we actually flew the little Cubs [in Tailcraft?]. And I loved it, so we went to Austin and volunteered for the Navy Air Force but I got home and my father said he didn't want me in the Navy. (laughter) He had premonitions about the Navy.

PR: The Navy, yeah. (laughter)

CD: And so he wouldn't sign it. He had to sign it for me because I was underage. So my friends got in. One of my real good friends got in the Navy Air Force and was killed trying to land on an aircraft carrier in training. His name was [Moore?]. But then I went to the --

PR: You must have thought your dad was pretty smart about then. (laughter)

CD: Well, I went to San Antonio and volunteered for the Army Air Corps. It was Army Air Corps at that time. You had to take a test. I scored high on the test, did well on the physical, got in. You had to have 20/20 eyesight, you know, no colorblindness, and they were rigid.

PR: Now, that was in June of '42 still.

CD: Yeah. And I was accepted then.

PR: They accepted you to the program.

CD: They said to stay in college till we called you.

PR: Okay. They didn't swear you in or give you a serial number or anything like that?

CD: Yeah, yeah they did.

PR: Oh, really? But just not on active duty?

CD: Well, you know, I don't know. Know what, I guess they didn't because -- well, I had a number. I sure --

they did. Yeah, they swore us in. They swore us in and then they just didn't call us to active duty. We were in. We were in.

PR: What was your serial number? Do you remember?

CD: Oh. 1-8-0- something, 1800 was a volunteer. But see, after I'd gotten my officer's commission, I dropped the old --

PR: Oh, yeah. That changed then. Okay.

CD: -- serial number. So I don't have that memorized. (laughs) And I can't think of the other one right now, but I know it real well.

PR: When did they actually call you, then?

CD: Last of February.

PR: Of '43, now?

CD: Of '43. And I was put in Class 44-A. No. I was supposed to graduate in '44. But then they called me up and took me to Santa Ana, California to do basic flying. And there --

PR: Where did you report in in Texas here?

CD: San Antonio.

PR: San Anton--

CD: Yeah.

PR: And they ship you out to --

CD: They put me on a train in San Antonio and shipped me to --

PR: Santa Ana?

CD: -- Santa Ana, California. There was a bunch of people from Louisiana, you know, and other places, going. The same thing. A whole trainload of them. I remember the -- got out there, and I was in basic training, Class 44-A, and had Captain [George?] of National Guard was our CO. A hundred and fifty cadets in the squadron. Drill, you know, it was everyday drill, and go to classes, and (laughs) he was a character. But they came in and they took, out of the class 44-A, they took 150 cadets and moved them up to 43-K. And I reckon they did that, they wanted to see if they could crash the [literary?] part of it, shorten it, and they put us in an experimental group, 150 of us.

PR: Oh, which would've graduated you a month earlier?

CD: Yeah, well it was actually about a month earlier, yeah 43-K instead of 43-A -- 44-A. (laughs) As luck would have it, I was marching one day and this captain came down. He said, "Mr. DuBose." I said, "Yes, sir?" "What in the hell is wrong with you?" And I said, "Nothing, sir." He said, "You've got spots all over

you. Get out of here immediately." (laughs) Well, I had German measles. I felt bad but I didn't know it. You know, and I was real sick for three days, and I missed a heck of a lot of intellectual training, you know. The school was concentrated. They began to concentrate on us. But I made it all right, and I graduated well.

PR: They left you in that 43-K?

CD: Oh, yes.

PR: Oh, okay. What would you do -- now this is basic training.

CD: Yeah, basic training in Santa Ana.

PR: All classroom and physical stuff?

CD: Oh, well all classroom except the PT. PT was very rigorous, you know. They had obstacle courses. They had running and they had drill, very intensive drilling. You couldn't believe this. Now, that squadron, the whole squadron of us, 150, special students picked on the -- I guess what we made on the scores and something else. But of those hu-- we never, we all [waited until five final?] cadets out there in Santa Ana. We always won first place on Sunday on the march.

PR: No fooling.

CD: Every Sunday we won.

PR: First squadron? (laughs)

CD: Our squadron won first place. Isn't that odd?

PR: You probably took pride in it.

CD: Well, that and they really selected the people that were in there.

PR: Yeah. Were you in -- lived in barracks, then?

CD: Yeah, barracks. Big --

PR: Standard military barracks? Big parade ground in the middle?

CD: Cut your hair down, you know. They wanted it real short.

PR: Yeah. Yeah. What time did they get you up in the morning?

CD: Oh, about 4:00 I think.

PR: Four?

CD: Lord knows. (laughs)

PR: You had to -- you stood retreat every morning or reveille?

CD: Reveille and retreat at night.

PR: Yeah, parades now and then?

CD: One weekend -- of course, you had to get your hair cut every Friday.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: They (inaudible, overlapping speech) --

PR: They'd just --

CD: Anyway but --

PR: They'd just march you down.

CD: They took us out to the beach one weekend, one Saturday. Sunshine, you know, we all got red as lobsters. (laughter) I got dirt all -- sand all in my hair and I couldn't get it out. The barber cussed me out because he cut the [long you grinding the?] shears down!

PR: You're wrecking his shears. (laughter)

CD: I'll never forget that. But we got out of there and then you had -- primary flying was Thunderbird II in Phoenix, Arizona. That was a [steer one?], that yellow plane up there, a [Tugan too?].

PR: Oh, yeah.

CD: [Fire plane?].

PR: Now, was there any flying in your basic?

CD: That's the first flying, first time.

PR: Was in this?

CD: Yeah.

PR: In Arizona.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Californ--

CD: After you finish the basic -- basic training was only fundamentals [then I was gonna?] fly.

PR: Oh, okay. How long did that last, now?

CD: Well, it was supposed to last six weeks, I believe, or so. Mine didn't last half that long.

PR: Okay. Where did you go to in Arizona?

CD: Thunderbird --

PR: Thunderbird?

CD: Thunderbird II. They had Thunderbird I at [an old base?], and Thunderbird II, which is -- was at Scottsdale, which is now a big settlement, you know. I might've mentioned it -- doing basic training, they selected who would be pilots, who would be bombardiers, and who would be navigators.

PR: During the basic?

CD: During the basic training. They did have psychological exams and other factors. One of the factors was coordination. One of the things they had, for example, is they'd have a disc like on a [picture?] record player. [They'd put that on?] and you'd hold it, the thing on that (inaudible) but the thing that you're holding on, they would [bind?] up, you know, and break contact. So you can't bash down on it and you've got to go around, and then the thing

doesn't go at a -- in other words, you score on that, and you score on putting things together and -- and they (laughs) -- while you'd hold that thing on the disc, there's some guy yelling at you, and cussing you out, and trying to scare you, and all those types of things. But then they gave you a psychological exam and I almost flunked that (laughter) 'cause I was too green, too -- too naïve, really because he expected me to be [mad?] at the world. (laughter) They [lied?] he had his [apes or?] but what -- then they, one third of them went to the navigator school, one third to bombardier, and the rest of us pilots.

PR: That was during that basic, few weeks of basic.

CD: Yeah. Awful lot of just (inaudible).

PR: Thunderbird was at Scotts--

CD: Yeah, Scotts-- Thunderbird as Phoenix, which Scottsdale is a part of Phoenix.

PR: Oh, okay. That's right.

CD: And then we flew in the Yellow [Peril?] there.

PR: When did you get there, do you think? Any idea?

CD: Well, I've got those little books.

PR: Can you look up those dates sometime?

CD: Yeah, I can. I sure can. I can tell you what --

PR: We'll just leave --

CD: That would be --

PR: That's okay. You can --

CD: Yeah. About in April, I guess, or May or -- getting hot, I know that, because one of the things we had to do in the Thunderbird was -- you know, it was out in the desert, and mountains all around, and we'd get out, and flying, and loads of little mountains, and awful rough weather. You know, the thermals -- thermals in the summertime on the desert.

PR: Turn it around?

CD: For a small plane like the Stearman, the one that we had. I know I had a -- my instructor was a Hollywood movie actor and I don't know his name, but he was a minor actor, not a major actor.

PR: Yeah, civilian.

CD: Civilian. And the one that we were flying, he said, "I'm going to land this thing. Let's land out here on the -- let's just land out there on the dune."

PR: Oh, really? (laughter)

CD: Yeah. Left the engine running, you know, and got out and said, "I need to go to the bathroom." (laughter) He gets me out there behind the airplane and says, "You've flown before." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Well, you didn't say anything about it when you

enlisted." "No, I didn't." (laughs) I wanted to keep that secret. Well, that's all he said. We hopped back in and then flew off. I don't know whether he went to the bathroom or not, but he wanted to ask me. And then when I finished my flying, there were -- the check pilot was a lieutenant, first lieutenant or second lieutenant. Second lieutenant. And he thought he was God, you know, because most everybody was civilians. But for three days -- his wife was late and having a baby. And for three days, he wouldn't tell anybody whether he passed the [check route?] or not. So I didn't know and neither did my instructor, or no one else, that that guy rode with us for three days, whether we passed or whether we flunked out of flying. But on the third day, I found out.

(laughter)

PR: You finally found out.

CD: You know, they were flunking about 50% of them.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: Oh, yeah. From flying. They even flunked people from American Airlines who'd been pilots for years.

PR: No fooling'. Huh.

CD: They said they couldn't fly the Army way.

PR: Well, that Stearman, did that have an Army name? P-T,
some number?

CD: Oh, PT-17, I believe.

PR: PT-17 Stearman.

CD: Yeah. They called it the "Yellow Peril." Yellow
Peril. But it was a wonderful --

PR: They were nice planes, though.

CD: Oh, yeah, wonderful airplane. You could do a lot of
acrobatics with them, you know, and we did a lot.

PR: How did they start you out? Was this an established
base, by the way, with barracks?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah, this was --

PR: Okay. How did they start you out with your flying?
Tell me a little bit about --

CD: Well, you had six or seven hours of dual time, then
you had the solo.

PR: With the instructor?

CD: Yeah. And he would take you up --

PR: What would he do? He'd take off and --

CD: Yeah, you'd take off and he'd take you up --

PR: -- show you a few things?

CD: -- and he'd do turns, you know. Then the second ride,
you'd do maybe Pylon Eights around, you know.

PR: He'd let you do some?

CD: Yeah. Oh, yes. He would let you fly quite a bit, but -- and then you didn't get into acrobatics for the first eight hours. You'd do a lot of landings. And, you know, you land in the desert. Our runway was dirt.

PR: Oh, really? Not (inaudible, overlapping speech)?

CD: It's in the desert, all dirt. And when you would land, the Stearman would ground easily. It's that kind of an airplane. It just would -- if you'd land it and didn't keep the right rudder on it, it would turn on you and go like that and spin.

PR: The ground --

CD: You knew your -- yeah, the ground, it would --

PR: Turn around and around.

CD: Yeah, and sometimes a different wing would run [in the way?] and usually most of the cadets got flunked out. So you had to watch that pretty closely. My [biggest thing?] is I hadn't gotten that (inaudible). When we had the [chow?], we'd glide up. You know, cadets all line up. They're usually in shorts. Hot. Man, it was hot. No air conditioning anywhere. There was a little mountain canary that would get in line with us everyday, and cadets would try to slip him food.

Little, little donkey, you know. He stayed in the barracks the whole time!

PR: What'd you call him?

CD: Mountain canary.

PR: Mountain canary?

CD: Mountain canary.

PR: I never heard that a donkey --

CD: He just loved us (laughter) because we would slip him food, and nobody, nobody ran him off.

PR: Did he go along with the mess hall? Was he there before?

CD: Oh, he was always at the mess hall. (laughter)

PR: Yeah, your mascot.

CD: Another thing we had, it wasn't [swimming food?], but didn't get to use it except for late at night. We had cross-countries. And I loved, I loved to run. I wasn't fast but I had an endurance because I'd been raised on a ranch and was tough. And a lot of them couldn't make it. Yeah, I think he ran us about five or 10 miles out in the deep sand.

PR: Hiking?

CD: Running.

PR: Running!

CD: Running. Fastest you could run. It was cross-country. It was cross-country. You know, you pace yourself and you didn't make it. But in deep sand and shorts, no shirt, nothing. Hot sun, 110 degrees. But I, you know, I did all right. I'd come in one of the first few.

PR: Did you like your flying right from the start?

CD: Oh, yeah. I loved it. Because I had been flying, so. Then I went to basic flying school in --

PR: Now, how did he solo you?

CD: Hmm?

PR: How did your civilian tell you could solo and do it on your own?

CD: Well, first you got about eight hours. By then, if you hadn't made it, you probably flunked out. He said, "Okay, you're gonna take off." And so, you know, there's no ground air radio. So you just take off. You'd do what he told you to do, going and make some turns, and come back and make a landing.

(coughs) That's what I did.

PR: You do [it all off the grid?]?

CD: I didn't ground loop. (laughter) That's what everybody's afraid of on that solo. You know, you

were apprehensive when you -- even though I'd flown, I was still appre--

PR: All the cards are on the table.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Where'd you go after that, then? They call that "primary training."

CD: Primary and then secondary --

PR: Advanced?

CD: No, secondary was in the BT-13. I don't have one of those. It's a single engine plane, looks like the AT-6. The AT-6, you know what that looks like?

PR: Yeah.

CD: Well, the second [wing?] is there. Looks kind of like a fighter plane, but --

PR: Yeah, Joe [Canyon?] has one out here.

CD: Yeah. Yeah. Well, the BT-13 is the same as the AT-6, has less power, and fixed landing gear. Fixed landing gear.

PR: Did it have a name? Vibrator?

CD: Yeah, Vibrator. (coughs) The Vibrator, I believe.

PR: [Volkan?]? [Volkan?]? Or Vultee?

CD: Vultee.

PR: Vultee Vibrator, yeah. I've heard them --

CD: I can't remember all this stuff, yeah.

PR: When did you start that now, and where?

CD: Well, I think primary was probably about eight weeks or nine weeks. Then I went to (inaudible) Taft, California which is at Bakersfield. Bakersfield is north of Los Angeles, between Los Angeles and San Francisco, pretty close to the coast, but it's dry country.

PR: Yeah, behind the [front rain?].

CD: I think there's a valley there that they raise a lot of produce in now. At Bakersfield, I did real good. I was kind of a hot pilot. We had teams on -- and [cop?] had three squadrons, and we'd have final thing was [cop would tell you?] to win the squadron. One group would fly in formation, one once. Another bunch would do acrobatics. Another team would -- my, the team I was on was shooting landings, and we shot landings for the final day at -- for a competition. They had a place out there in wide-open places with a barbed wire fence on one side and a barbed wire fence on the other side, and the field in between. Now, you're supposed to come in and land as quickly as you can on the -- over the fence, touch down, and take back off and not run into the other fence. (laughs)

And I did that real good. I graduated from there and then we went to -- at that time --

PR: Did you have an instructor or civilian still?

CD: Oh, yes. Yeah, the instructor would show you various things.

PR: Okay. More advanced, though.

CD: Oh, yes. Mostly acrobatics. Formation flying.

PR: How about teaching you how to cra-- emergency situations, if you lost power --

CD: Oh, yes. That was always part of it --

PR: Would they show you things like that?

CD: -- too. Especially in those days, those small planes, you could pick out a field to land in. You couldn't do it with a jet, but we could, and they showed us that. They had night cross-country and when you do that solo, it's kind of scary because you get lost, you know. It's hard to find anything at night. There were no radio beams [farther in?]. It was all by dead reckoning.

PR: Holy smokes.

CD: And they had radio beams, but we didn't -- we didn't use radio beams to come in.

PR: Were you divided into squadrons? How many in your group?

CD: By squadron, I guess it would be about 50, about 50.

PR: Okay, and they break those down into smaller groups per instructor?

CD: No, no.

PR: How many students would each instructor have?

CD: I would think about 10. I can't remember exactly, Peter.

PR: Would you fly just out of the main base or were there [auxiliary?] bases?

CD: Yeah. No, they -- at Bakersfield, I don't think we had another base. No, we didn't have another landing field.

PR: About how many hours did you put in in Bakersfield, do you think?

CD: I guess about 100.

PR: A hundred? Wow.

CD: Quite a bit.

PR: Did you still have ground classes out --

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: -- of the classroom?

CD: Very, very intensive.

PR: Navigation and --

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: -- communication and --

CD: Lot of learning. That's the problem with that BT-13. One of the worst problems was that, you know, when you're coming in for a landing, you see you're gonna be long. Well, what you do is slip, slip the airplane, that -- kick the rudder one way, and the ailerons the other way. Instead of flying straight, you slide. Then you can cut your glide down a lot. But every once in a while, one of those BT's would spin in if you're not careful with that. And they killed some people. They killed two airmen while I was out there. I guess they killed one at every place I went to by training.

PR: Crash of some sort?

CD: Yeah, some -- this, I know we were up and this guy and his instructor spun in and it killed him. So as soon as we landed, the deal was you had to go right back up. They didn't want you to get afraid. So they sent you right back up so you couldn't hear too much. (laughter) Then you come back down and hear the results. I had books, well I think I can find them, but a book -- they have a manual for each school you go to.

PR: Oh, really? I'll be darned.

CD: Yeah. And that shows me and my instructors, good pictures. Then I was -- at Bakersfield, we had to choose whether we wanted to be fighter pilots or bomber pilots. You know, it was an interesting thing. You know, all this training I'd been doing, there was a guy from somewhere but name was Goering, a blonde, good-looking German guy. And he was always with us, but there were always people interviewing him, Secret Service. Well, he was Hermann Göring's nephew.

PR: You've got to be kidding!

CD: And they didn't leave that guy alone. And you won't believe this, but he went to every place I went and we ended up by chance in Molesworth, England flying bombers together.

PR: And he was doing missions on our side?

CD: Yeah! And he was just as loyal as he could be. He's still living out down in Phoenix, Arizona. He makes some of our meetings every year, every once in a while.

PR: That's fascinating.

CD: He's done real well financially. But over the -- they tried to get him to become a spy, and they were afraid that he wasn't gonna be loyal. Now, why they sent him to Germany, I'll never -- to England to fly over

Germany, I'll never know. They couldn't stop that, couldn't they?

PR: Because all of Japan, all of the Pacific --

CD: Do you know what they did? Now, this is the truth. The old boy that flew with him is still alive. His name is Jack [Reicher?] and he lives in Boise, Idaho, and he was -- when he was going through, he was flying B-17s already. He was flying the B-17s at -- on the gunner range here in the States but he really was a fighter pilot and they put him to flying those B-17s. And then when they got to Molesworth, they assigned him as a co-pilot for Goering. Now, we all packed 45s but they -- his instructions were to shoot Goering if he landed in Germany and fly him out of there. That was his instructions!

PR: Is that right? (laughs)

CD: That's what they told Jack. They said, "You watch him." Can you believe that?

PR: No.

CD: Jack swears it was true, and I know it is. But Jack flew about 14 missions with him and then Jack got his own crew because Jack was co-pilot at that time with Goering.

PR: With Goering. They finally trusted Goering or some--

CD: I guess they finally trusted him because --

PR: That's amazing. (laughter)

CD: Ain't that something?

PR: Now, how did they decide who became a fighter and who a bomber?

CD: Well, you had to give them a preference. I don't know what -- preference doesn't usually make a lot of difference to the military, but I preferred bombers. And I'll tell you why, because I was a little bit big for the cockpits in some of the fighters, like the pit [to bump?] the head, and I thought, "I'm going to be cramped in there."

PR: Well, that's what Joe [Van Dyke?] says. He says the tall guys became bomber pilots and the short guys became fighter pilots 'cause the cockpit space problem.

CD: Yeah. But there were some friends of mine at basic who were as tall as I was who became P-38 pilots. I understand the P-38. I had plenty of room, and so did the P-47. But I don't know, I just kind of preferred the bombers, and that's what I asked for, and then I went to -- I [decided on?] for the final training and the old plastic B-- AT-17, the --

PR: That's the --

CD: Real slow airplane.

PR: More powerful engine, though.

CD: No. Much (inaudible). They had two twin engines.
They were twin engines. Twin engines.

PR: Oh, okay. Oh.

CD: AT-17s, but they had the [fabric?] wings.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: Yeah. They had an AT-11 that was -- had solid wings.
They used that for training bombardiers and
navigators, but the AT-17 has less power, but went
down to Douglas and so we're spending a lot of our
time on [s vert?] flying and --

PR: Was there a name to that base? Just Douglas.

CD: Douglas.

PR: Douglas Field?

CD: Douglas Field. Right on the southern tip of Arizona
right next to Mexico.

PR: Oh, yeah.

CD: Way down there.

PR: By the Chiricahua.

CD: Yeah, the Chiricahua (inaudible).

PR: That's big bird-watching territory.

CD: Oh, is it?

PR: Oh, yeah. (laughs) Chiricahua --

CD: Oh, gee, it's hot out in that [way?] and you're right close to --

PR: Yeah, really that's world-famous for bird-- as much as Texas is.

CD: Is that right?

PR: Yeah. A lot of birds pass through there and get tracked there.

CD: And they had the two (pause) copper bells, the flames at night of those big mills, you could see. So we didn't have trouble getting home. (laughs) You got up north and hop around on a [cold chase?] and we'd fly [estimates?] a lot. You'd start coming home at night. If you get a little lost, you just look down there and that big old fire is burning, making that --

PR: Smelter?

CD: Yeah.

PR: How did they break you into the bombers, then? You --

CD: Well, then you were sent to --

PR: You were proficient enough to fly real well to get into the bomber. Would you have a --

CD: Yeah. You were sent to a bomber transition school. In my case, B-17 training.

PR: Now, what'd you do in Douglas, though?

CD: Just for that B-- AT-17.

PR: Oh, just learn -- that was like advanced --

CD: Like you did a lot of instrument flying, a lot of cross-countries.

PR: Was this a military instructor now?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yes.

PR: But the others were civilian instructors you had.

CD: Well, not in -- no, not in -- in basic flying, they were all military. Just for primary. Just for primary, civilian.

PR: Oh, okay. Okay. So advanced, you just learned the technique of it and having the two [power plants?].

CD: Yeah. We learned to fly better, but you know, that thing really, it was a twin-engine plane. (coughs) I'd been used to flying single. So a twin-engine plane has different characteristics. You know, you taxi it different and all those things. It's different so we had to learn the twin engine. But the AT-17 really wasn't much of an airplane, I'll have to admit. But then we went to Roswell, New Mexico and had what's called a B-17 transition with learning to fly the B-17. And that's where I --

PR: How did they break you into that?

CD: You rode with an instructor.

PR: Were you co-pilot for a while? Or --

CD: Yeah, we were co-pilot with an instructor. Instructor would take out a couple of you and then let you fly a while, and the other guy fly a while, and then come back down and then --

PR: Oh, I see. Golly. What did that feel like, going from these little, little bitty things to that huge thing?

CD: Well, not a whole lot different. It was the four engines that made a lot of difference, but really it wasn't hard for me. I didn't have a problem. You didn't have very long to learn. They spent a lot of time on [s curves?], lot of time on cross-country, and a lot of time on formation, lot of time on landings.

PR: Was it more flying there than ground instruction?

CD: Yeah, yeah. Quite a bit more.

PR: Was it still pretty military, march [to progress?] and all --

CD: Oh, it was very military, always military. Always.

PR: What's the name of the base there, just Roswell?

CD: Roswell. At that time, it was just Roswell. I think they renam--

PR: Was that a large base, a lot of barracks?

CD: Yeah. It is a big --

PR: Big, paved runway here?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: Must be for that big bomber.

CD: They had the three in New Mexico; Hobbs, and Roswell, and Carswell I believe is the other one. Three of them. And all of them are B-17 bases.

PR: Now, when you flew this thing, who would be a -- the pilot does certain things, but you have all these engines and I think there's a -- there's an engineer or something on --

CD: Not on a B-17. B-17, pilot and co-pilot, that's all you need.

PR: No kidding!

CD: Yeah.

PR: Well, how did you handle all these engines, the --

CD: No problem. No problem.

PR: Co-pilot would help you if they were having a power problem --

CD: Actually, if he wasn't there, you'd make it just fine.

PR: Really?

CD: Yeah, you could --

PR: No kidding.

CD: You could fly it by yourself, no problem. Actually, my co-pilot, he was a teed-off guy who wanted to be a Peashooter pilot. (laughter) Little old guy.

PR: Peashooter, you call them?

CD: A little old guy. Actually, he got caught on Pearl Harbor as an enlisted man, and they gave those guys the opportunity to volunteer for flying school. And he did, and he got to be a pilot, but when he graduated, they didn't need any more fighter pilots, so they assigned him to be as a co-pilot. They didn't give him any big-time [treks?], any big -- so it's my job to train him how to fly the big plane.

PR: Now this is at Roswell still?

CD: Yeah. No, I didn't pick him up till phase training, the next step.

PR: Okay. Roswell -- now how did you feel the first time you went around to land that big (laughs) thing? Was it scary or --

CD: You know, I don't --

PR: Just took it in stride?

CD: I don't have any remembrance of being afraid in that B-17 at all. It's a little ominous but not much, really.

PR: How long were you there, then?

CD: Oh, I guess really -- it looked like about a nine-week stay everywhere I went, a nine to 10 week stay.

PR: On each of the steps?

CD: Yeah. I got all the steps.

PR: Okay. So this was transition, and then when -- where after transition?

CD: Well, from there you were assigned a crew and they go into what they call "phase training" and mine was Pyote, Texas.

PR: Pyote, Texas.

CD: Pyote, Texas [not far from?] Monahans. You know where Monahans is?

PR: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

CD: It was just out there in the west Texas desert, nothing there but --

PR: Close to Marfa, though.

CD: Yeah. Well, it was --

PR: Which was no--

CD: The nearest town was Monahans and --

PR: Oh, okay. I've seen that name somewhere.

CD: Yeah. It's about 5,000 people at Monahans. Nothing out there.

PR: Anything at the Air Base now? Is that all deserted?

CD: No, no. No, they closed it. I think they made something else. But they had sandstorms.

PR: That was your advanced bomber.

CD: Phase training.

PR: Phase training.

CD: Well, you get your crew and your co-pilot. You train the crew in gunnery, you know.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: The gunners, you spend a lot of time with the gunners shooting at targets. You spend a lot of time with bombardiers to practice bombing, and you spend a lot of time with the navigators practicing navigation. So really, the pilot is just trained as crew is what it amounts to.

PR: Yeah. Would you fly together in formation too?

CD: Oh, yes. We flew in formation.

PR: How many in your crew now?

CD: Well, there were 10 at that time.

PR: What was the crew composed of?

CD: Well, they had the pilot and co-pilot, the navigator, bombardier. That's four.

PR: Were they all officers?

CD: Yeah. Then you had the top card gunner who's a -- he called himself an engineer. You had the ball turret

gunner. Two waist gunners, a tail gunner, and that's five, and a radioman. A radioman. He, on the B-17, he had a little room to himself, you know. When we went to just get a little ahead, wanted to get ready to go to England, I'll tell you this in a minute, but they told us they were only gonna have nine crew members. They were cutting back one of the waist gunners. So we had a little guy from New Jersey who was our waist gunner, and I had another guy from Detroit. But the guy from Detroit and all the rest of them were real good friends, but the guy from New Jersey, they hated. They all hated him because he wouldn't -- when it came time to fill the airplane with fuel, or do things like that work, he wouldn't -- he wouldn't do it, you know. He was hard to make do it. So we got to Bangor, Maine and we're going through the line, checking out, getting ready to go overseas. Well, he claims his grandmother was sick or something, so he had to go home on emergency leave and so we just canceled him off our crew. (laughter)

PR: Is that right?

CD: Now, that leaves us with two waist gunners. Both of them were six feet tall and if you tried to get in that ball turret, you ever look in the ball turret of

a B-17, a six-foot man can't get in there. But the guy from California got in there and he made it.

(Peter laughs) He wanted to be with us. He wanted to stay with us. I understand that little guy finally made it overseas with another crew or something but --

PR: Different bunch?

CD: We never saw him again and we're happy of it.

PR: So with this phase, how -- when did that last till?

CD: Well, this is in '44 now. I was about May, and this article here will tell you about one of the things that happened at phase training. Let me show you here. (pause) [Provided?] the first -- it'll talk about what happened in phase training, and I'll tell you about it now. The last thing we had was an all-out mission down here to south Texas, and we were flying north of here, come down to Victoria, circle back to Roswell!

PR: (laughs) No kidding.

CD: To land -- or to Pyote, Pyote -- to land. Now, you're supposed to be out of gas or pretty close to it. It's also at night because it was daytime down here.

(laughs) By the time we got out there, it was dark.

So just before I get there, they're calling everybody and saying, "You can't land in Pyote. Sandstorm."

And you know, we would have sandstorms. I'd go to sleep in my barrack to wake up with that much dirt on top of me.

PR: No fooling.

CD: If the door is open, you know. I'd just go to sleep and it'd blown in, and I'd be asleep. But anyway, so they told me to go to Hobbs or Roswell. We're heading towards Hobbs and they don't have the lights on at night! And I can't see them. I'm trying to land (coughs) so I decided to go to Lubbock, and I do, and I get them to turn their lights on, but I'm already out of gas. Just barely made it. (Peter laughs) I had the crew stand by the door. I said we -- if our engine quits, you're gonna bail out.

PR: It was not for (inaudible). Y'all had parachutes?

CD: We would have but we -- we made it. We made it into Lubbock. But I got -- I made (inaudible) in there but, you know, they wouldn't let us come home for a whole week, and I know what happened. A lot of those people who went to -- and I heard this by rumor -- a lot of those people who went to Roswell and Hobbs couldn't find the base. They landed in that lake out there. There's a big lake out there. I can't remember the name of it right now, but some river.

PR: They crashed?

CD: Yeah. They got in -- some of them [ditched?] in the lake, some of them crashed.

PR: A lot of them got killed, you think?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: I'll be darned.

CD: You know, in those days, nobody said anything about what bad was happening 'cause the media (laughs) couldn't get a hold of you.

PR: Just took it in stride.

CD: The military kept --

PR: Didn't talk about --

CD: And before he showed up, he was shot or something, but there was some bad things happening because otherwise, they would've let me come home the next day. They wouldn't do it. I couldn't go. I couldn't fly my plane home for a week.

PR: They just kept you there in Lubbock.

CD: Yeah.

PR: When did you get your wings, by the way? Do you remember what day you got your wings?

CD: December the (pause) --

PR: We can look that up.

CD: You know, it --

PR: That's when you got your officer's number too.

CD: December the 7th of '43.

PR: Really? And you got your new serial number and you got, well Second Lieutenant, I guess.

CD: Yeah, 0-7-6-1-8-0-5.

PR: All right. There you go.

CD: (laughs) I knew that when I --

PR: Oh, yeah.

CD: But then after this, after phase training --

PR: Now, were you in phase with just your crew, or did you have a bomb group starting to form up together?

CD: No. No, it was all independent.

PR: Just independent planes going to who knows. Some of them went somewhere and another one somewhere else. Okay. And after that --

CD: There'd be -- we'd get our orders. We had to go to [Kearney?], Nebraska.

PR: [Kearney?], Nebraska. By flying or by train?

CD: Well, we went up there on a train.

PR: Oh, okay.

CD: And we get up there and --

PR: Your whole crew, now?

CD: Yeah, me and my crew. We're a unit now, and there were some other crews that went with us. Get up

there, and they said, "In two or three days, you'll fly an airplane to Ireland." Brand new B-17. I said, "Oh, boy." (laughs) I won't have to go on a ship. Some of them would go on the old ships and things. But at that time, they were carrying a lot of B-17 -- ferrying a lot of 17s over. I've got this story. They have a lot of interesting stories. I've got it in there, the (inaudible) said there's a cold front in Iowa. You've got to fly through that night.

PR: This is out of [Kearney?]?

CD: Out of [Kearney?].

PR: Oh, okay. What happened when you got to [Kearney?]?

CD: Well, we just stayed three or four days then they give us a plane.

PR: They assigned you a plane.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Brand new.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Did you have a chance to take it up and --

CD: Oh, no.

PR: -- try it out?

CD: No. (Peter laughs) [They didn't go?].

PR: How did they get -- how did they think that -- how do you think that plane got to [Kearney?]? Was it manufactured and ferried down?

CD: Oh, they -- you know, they had women ferry pilots and a whole lot of women fer-- they probably ferried it over there.

PR: Okay, so prob--

CD: Out of [Boeing?] out of Seattle, I imagine, or --

PR: Were there a lot of planes there at [Kearney?]?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

PR: Same crews picking up a new plane.

CD: Yeah, but they wouldn't stay there long. You know, that was just a jumping off center, and I don't know why they jumped off of there. I don't know.

PR: Some of the guys went to Kansas. Topeka --

CD: Might have.

PR: Yeah.

CD: But it's quite interesting that they said, "Well, you'll have a little cold front," but what you do, the cold fronts have holes in them. This is the nighttime. I get on to Iowa and I see the cold front, but I don't see any holes so I just (laughter) start in and Peter, I'm gonna tell you. That thing threw that B-17 upside down! You know, it's got a wheel

that you guide it with. You can take that wheel and slap it around, and it didn't do any good at all. We [went?] a tornado or huge thunderstorm.

PR: No fooling!

CD: But that old B-17 is so tough, that finally it just got out and flew on its own, you know? (laughs) It would go, but on the other side!

PR: You think you were actually upside down some of the time?

CD: Oh, yeah. The hell, there's no question about it. I was upside down at times.

PR: Why did they have you flying at night?

CD: Well, so we'd land in Maine in the daytime, I guess.

PR: Oh, you were, to fly from --

CD: Eight hours, about an eight hour trip.

PR: -- Nebraska to --

CD: Maine.

PR: To Maine.

CD: Bangor, Maine.

PR: Bangor, Maine.

CD: We get to Bangor. This is the first of June, '44. We get to Bangor. It's colder than hell. They got -- we're gonna sleep there that night. They gave us one

little thin blanket. (Peter laughs) I'll never forget that.

PR: First of June.

CD: I bet it was (laughs) two degrees below zero. I never [felt such?] cold all my life. I started to get out on the airplane, crank up the engine. (Peter laughs) The next day we go to Newfoundland, up the coast. That's about a three or four hour flight in a B-17. B-17 makes about 150 miles an hour.

PR: Hundred and 50?

CD: That's about all. And we got to Newfoundland --

PR: Where in Newfoundland?

CD: Bangor. No, Maine -- no, not Bangor but Bangor, Maine.

PR: Not Goose Bay?

CD: No.

PR: Okay.

CD: I want to say [grand pass?] or --

PR: Is that in here?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Okay, well as long as it's --

CD: Let me see, just a minute.

PR: That's all right.

CD: That worries me a little bit.

PR: (laughs) Some of them went to Goose Bay, Labrador and then Reykjavik. But you went to Newfoundland.

CD: I didn't put down where in Newfoundland, but I can look it up. It was a big center there where they had everybody -- they were flying across the North Atlantic. What they would do is put -- [bombing?] tanks in the B-17 holds 800 gallons, and that would give you about 10 to 12 hours of flying. And it took about 9 to 10 hours to cross the Atlantic. They said, "You're going at 15,000 feet at night because the navigator can do celestial navigation and he can steer you." I said, "Fine." But we cruised along at 15,000. They said, "There'll be a little cold front. Don't worry about it." When I get over on the cold front, it was not a little one. It was a real big one and I didn't have my [pistol tube?] heater on. There's a little, little switch here on the left. The [pistol tube?] is a thing that sticks out and gets the air pressure into it to tell you how fast you're going.

PR: Oh, I see.

CD: You don't keep the heat on all the time, but I should have. It froze. No air speed. Now, here you're flying a big old bomber in solid clouds. At the same

time, the wings were loading up with ice. Now, the B-17 had the little rubber bumpers on the front that would bump off the ice, but the rest of the wing was metal. And you know, it would all -- only bump that off on the leading edge. But here we are flying and that ice is collecting on my wings, which is gonna make me stall and crash. So what I did, I put the -- I still haven't gotten my direction on the [gyro?] that'll tell me the attitude of the plane. I didn't lose that. I just lost my airspeed. I don't know how fast I'm going, but I increased my pilot settings. I pointed the nose down a little bit and I had the [alt?] temperature that would indicate the altitude pretty well. It was at 100 to 200 feet. At 1,000 feet, that [pistol tube?] thing was -- wings began to throw off the ice because we got down to warmer air, and the [pistol tube?] came and thawed out. And at about 500 feet, we broke out. (laughs)

PR: Phew.

CD: But the danger to that is, now I found out later that some of the pilots went over it and they had to go about 30,000 feet to get over that thing. Now, I couldn't go over it because I had my [pistol tube?]. The airspeed was gone. If I had done this, I'd have

stalled out and -- you know, they lost a lot of planes flying the Atlantic. They never say anything about it. They lost a lot of crews. Well (pause) --

PR: Certainly --

CD: It's about this time or oh, about -- see this, it took me 10 hours. About six or seven hours, or eight hours into it, the sun comes up in the east. And my navigator's celebrating down there because years later, now this -- he didn't tell me this when we were flying across. He said, "Carl," he said -- and he's the only one in my crew still alive. He lives in Pennsylvania. (laughs) He said, "Carl, I couldn't do celestial navigation." (laughs) And he, "and the stars, they're always giving me headaches all night long." (laughs)

PR: He was glad to see the sun up ahead of you, then.

CD: Yeah, he -- he --

PR: Come out to (inaudible, overlapping speech).

CD: He could -- he could navigate on the sun all right. He could do that.

PR: Yeah, yeah. But he didn't know the nighttime.

CD: And then they had a radio station in Ireland, but the problem with that is the Germans were bending that radio station, bending that beam around so that you'd

just fly right on into Germany. They got some of them to do it.

PR: No kidding.

CD: So if you just ride entirely on that radio beam, you might end up in Germany.

PR: No fooling. They could override it, huh?

CD: No, they could do it. They would --

PR: Where did you end up at the end of that flight, now?

CD: Nutts Corner. Nutts Corner, Ireland. Nutts Corner.

PR: How do you spell that?

CD: N-U-T-T-S, C-O-R-N-E-R. Nutts Corner. And that's another thing --

PR: This is Northern Ireland?

CD: Yeah. (laughs) When I got there, it was raining cats and dogs. You couldn't even see the land and you -- if you -- in those days, only -- we had to do an instrument landing, but they had a radio beam. The radio beam sends out [in?] on one side, (inaudible), on the other side, (inaudible). Now, I already -- and in the middle, there's a hum. (makes humming sound) You know? And so if you hit the inside, you've got to turn to the right, and [get to the other side?]. So you got on that beam, and you come down, and every so often they have a -- a beam that tells you how far you

are away from the base. So you hit that -- if you hit that, that tells you. You should be at a certain altitude when you hit that thing, and it's hard to keep it on this beam because all you're going by is sound, nothing. There's no indication and --

PR: Yeah, [air play?]. This is in your headphones.

CD: Yeah. But you know, I got -- I had all the crew looking out. I said, "When you see that runway, you tell me," and I think we were about three feet off the ground before because it was solid rain. It was just pouring. We landed in that rain. (laughs) Never was so happy in my life.

PR: This is after 10 hours in the air.

CD: Yeah.

PR: And you're all dog-tired.

CD: Yeah, and you really can't -- you can't fly on estimate. Like in those days, you couldn't do very well with that kind of landing.

PR: Thank heavens.

CD: You were just lucky. Then we went from Ireland, they carried us over to Molesworth.

PR: Oh, okay. That plane, you left there and someone else picked it up at that point.

CD: Yeah. Yeah, after that, I didn't fly it anymore. I was -- we actually went across Ireland on a bus, got on a ship, and went across the Irish [isles?].

PR: In Belfast? From Ireland?

CD: Yeah, I think.

PR: And crossed over the -- to England?

CD: To England. I don't know where we landed, but I know we got on a train and a whole bunch of us -- you know, when we were in Ireland, we stayed on a RAF base, English base. And you talk about primitive. We slept on boards, you know?

PR: Really? (laughs)

CD: Yeah, they gave us a -- the officers had two-by-sixes bound together and a blanket. That was it.

(laughter) Fed us a little bit.

PR: They have a mess for you? Some sort of food?

CD: Yeah. Yeah, some food. They had a big fence around it. I guess the reason was, there were a lot of Irish girls outside that fence and they would talk to us, but we couldn't get to them. (laughter) It was right on the coast. We could look out the fences, a huge bluff there on the Atlantic Ocean. It was cold. This was mid-June. By June 6th, I think.

PR: Still cold. Now tell me, Carl, how about your ground crew? You don't have a match ground crew until you get to your final base?

CD: No, no. No. After I get to Molesworth, I'm assigned to a squadron. There were four squadrons there. I was assigned to the 427th.

PR: 427th Squadron?

CD: Yeah, there were three squadrons originally attached to the base; 379 and 360, 359th, and the 427th came in. It was an odd-numbered one, but we were four squadrons.

PR: And that was the 303rd Bomb Crew?

CD: Yeah, 303rd Bomb Group, the 1st Bomb Division.

PR: 1st Bomb Division?

CD: The division was a triangle. You know, it's a triangle on the tail. "E" was Molesworth, which is our base.

PR: That's first?

CD: That's the 303rd Bomb Group, the 303rd Bomb Group.

PR: Oh, okay. There were three in the -- in the 1st Air Wing, then?

CD: Yeah, three of the -- three, three groups.

PR: What's the next thing above the 1st Airwing?

CD: Well, division -- well, they --

PR: 8th Air Force?

CD: They really didn't have air wings. They just had 1st Division, 1st Division. They didn't have any wings.

PR: This was under the 8th Air Force, though?

CD: Yeah, 8th Air Force had divisions and groups as well.

PR: Okay, 1st Division and then the three groups under the 1st Division, and there were three -- three divisions.

CD: No, there were more than three groups. I don't know how many groups were under the division. Peter, I can't say. I know that there weren't many divisions.

PR: Now, where was Molesworth near? Do you remember?

CD: It was about an hour's ride on the bus north of Cambridge. Cambridge is about an hour north of London, and it's a part of England called Anglica, A-N-G-L-I-C-A, the central part of England, a very pretty part. Most of the bases were in -- on the coast.

PR: Yeah, East Anglia, a lot of them.

CD: Yeah, we were in East Anglia. And most of them were on the coast except the 1st Division was in the middle.

PR: Yeah. How many bombers at that base now in your -- in your group?

CD: Well, we would fly high, low, and middle squadrons at 12 each, 12 -- normal 36. So we could put up anywhere from 36 to 70 planes at a time, but normally we would put up about 36.

PR: You'd rotate the missions in?

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: Within the squadron?

CD: Yeah. You didn't fly every mission.

PR: Yeah. Okay.

CD: And also, your plane would be down a lot to get --

PR: Now that -- when you got there, you got assigned a plane. Could you name the plane or was that --

CD: Well, no --

PR: -- [one of its?] names already?

CD: That's one of the interesting things. You'd get there, you'd just -- if you were low on the totem, I can [place up?], you were a [replacement?]. And these old boys been over there since '42. Most of the '42 people had been killed. A few of them had gone home, and a few of them were in management. But the people that had been there, they had a plane, and the new one came in, they'd give you the old beat-up clunker that nobody else would fly, and that's what I got for a while.

PR: What was your first plane? Do you remember the name?

CD: No, I can't remember. I know I've got a story in there about one of them they gave me, about the third or fourth mission. Well, the first two missions, another guy flew as my first pilot. They didn't want you going over there alone. And he was a -- I still see him at all our meetings. He remembers me.

PR: Really?

CD: Yeah, he was a -- he was [really?] with the RAF. He's a real nice guy. But he, threw him in a couple of missions. (laughs) The first mission we went out on, you know, my crew's kind of young and really young kids is what they were, and they started seeing all that flak and fighters and stuff, and they started screaming over the intercom, and he's shouting at them to just be quiet. (laughs)

PR: Settle down. (laughter)

CD: Yeah. Settle down, be quiet. It was a good thing to have somebody like that.

PR: Oh, yeah. Now, he went up on the first couple missions with you?

CD: Yeah, first couple missions he went up.

PR: He was the pilot and you were the co-pilot?

CD: Yeah, yeah, my co-pilot [would?] stay on.

PR: Yeah, just till you got -- saw how things went.

CD: Yeah, and then I started flying my crew [over?] on my own.

PR: Yeah. Do you have a list of the missions you flew?

CD: Yeah. I need to refine it some.

PR: Yeah, look through that, spiff it up.

CD: I'll tell you what, it's not perfect because I -- what I did, I went in my [form?] to see what -- I had all this in my logbook, Peter, a nice logbook. And I had a picture of my -- I had a girlfriend in [Leeds?], a beautiful picture. But don't tell my wife that.

(laughter) And I have a lot of memorabilia in my (pause) footlocker, and I had -- about southwest Texas, I was going back to college after the war, and I got a job in a kids' dormitory, sou-- at a [Baptist?] academy. And these were junior high kids. Well, I'm in class one day with a pair of khakis, dirty khakis and shirt, and the kids had burned it down -- dormitories down, and everything I had in it.

PR: You've got to be kidding.

CD: Well, they didn't do it on purpose.

PR: Yeah. You lost all your logs and everything?

CD: I lost everything. All my memorabilia, my log -- my logbook's the one thing I want.

PR: Oh, yeah.

CD: And a whole lot of memorabilia. I don't know why I had it but I had a coffee can full of flak that I had saved, and I had that up there with me. I don't know why but I couldn't even find much of that. And [there was a good Baptist?], I'll never forgive him for this, he said they applied for insurance. They said, "Carl, we're gonna give you 300 dollars." I never got that. I never got anything.

PR: No kidding.

CD: (inaudible, audio cut out) He let me have his clothes, and so I had some clothes, but I never got anything.

PR: Isn't that something? You think the Baptist [had it?].

CD: Yeah. (laughs)

PR: I'm gonna stop and have you show me where this base is. Base was --

CD: Where is Cambridge now? It should be down in here further.

PR: Yeah. Your base was near that --

CD: Yeah, Bedford. We could get to Bedford pretty quick by going south.

PR: Okay, so you were a little north of Bedford.

CD: Yeah, we were a little north of Bedford. But I can't remember. I thought we were more in the central part of England, but we weren't.

PR: No, you're pretty center. Yeah. Here's where a lot of the bomb --

CD: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

PR: -- [squadrons?] were over here.

CD: Most of them over there. We were the furthest this way.

PR: Oh, really? So you had more to fly, then.

CD: Yeah. Yeah, we did.

PR: Coming through here. Maybe -- no, there's Coventry.

CD: Yeah, but that's no--

PR: Leicester. Where's Cambridge gone to? That's a good-size town. Anyway, so that's where you flew. All of your missions were out of there?

CD: Yeah. Out of Molesworth.

PR: Yeah. (pause)

CD: Molesworth was a little town with one pub and one store. That's all they had, and I don't think it'll be on that map.

PR: And was this base built just for the war or was there something there?

CD: Yeah. No, they built that but the British had it built.

PR: Okay. They'd been at it since '40.

CD: That's quite interesting, the history of that base, Peter. (pause) You know, my wife, what she did with our stuff when we got back -- they had about --

PR: From over there?

CD: Well, they had a map of the base. You see, what happened to our base, after we left they -- it's, really it was an RAF base. The Americans had it leased. They did not give us the land. In fact, the only land they gave -- the only land the British gave the Americans, you're gonna turn this [off?] now I guess, is Madingley which is a mili-- is a cemetery, huge cemetery.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: And that's a little north of Cambridge, pretty close to Cambridge. It's between Molesworth and Cambridge, and there's 7,000 Americans who were killed over there buried there.

PR: Airmen?

CD: They're all airmen, all airmen.

PR: That's one of our regular Battle Commission cemetery, then.

CD: Yeah. They actually gave that land to us (laughs) but that's all the land they -- Molesworth is, I was gonna tell you, they made that into a missile site.

PR: Oh, after you lef--

CD: During the missile times.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: It was quite interesting. You know, the protesters [got on it?] pretty bad. It's cruise missiles, American. But they were protesting that so bad so that British Parliament came in there one night and put a 20-foot fence around that thing, and it's a huge, long fence around that whole base. One night, and they boxed it. And they camouflaged the first missiles they brought in. They didn't know they were bringing them in. They took them apart and brought them in. And so they had the missiles on base, with protesters outside, and they were too late. But then there were the -- and they have those big places with the siloes where the missiles were. They're still there. But when they built that missile base, they tore up all our runways and everything we ever had except one big old (inaudible).

PR: Oh, yeah. You were telling me. That's where they had the reunion?

CD: Yeah. That's the only thing they have now.

PR: And they tore the runways and everything, then?

CD: Everything. It's no longer an air base. I think after they closed the missile site down, then the RAF used it for something, and then the intelligence center for all of Africa, all of Europe, all of Russia, all of that part of the world is based there at Molesworth. And it's Navy, Air Force, Army, and the Marines, all of them. They take turns running it. It's quite [well-oiled to?] coordinate. So you gon--

PR: So those buildings are still there?

CD: They built buildings for those people.

PR: Oh, they built --

CD: Yeah. And they continued to build. Now they have two bases that support these people at Molesworth. One is at Alconbury which is on the east -- east coast, and another one there. Those two bases support Molesworth but there are only about 2,500 military people there at Molesworth.

PR: I'll be. Is that fence still around the base?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: Is there no-- the big [iron?] fence? But most of the stuff inside of it is just fields now, grown up?

CD: Just (inaudible). Grown up but they -- it's very well taken care of. It's about 20 nice buildings, brick, beautiful.

PR: That must've been a job to tear that runway up, though. Weren't those really solid runways?

CD: Oh, yeah. Everything was gone. I mean, they tore every single --

PR: How do you spell Molesworth, now?

CD: M-O-L-E-S-W-O-R-T-H. Molesworth.

PR: Oh, okay. Okay.

CD: (laughs) It was just a little old place.

PR: Yeah. What was the weather like there in general? How many missions did you have, by the way?

CD: Thirty-five.

PR: Thirty-five?

CD: You wanna turn that back on? Is it --

PR: No, I got it on.

CD: Oh, have you?

PR: Oh, yeah.

CD: Thirty-five.

PR: Thirty-five? Did they count those first two with the co-pilot --

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: -- when you were with a co-pilot?

CD: Yeah. Yeah, those were missions.

PR: Okay. And then after that you rotated back to the States?

CD: Yeah. When I finished my 35th, they asked me what I wanted to do, you know, as the Army does, or Air Force then. Actually, we were Army Air Corps until probably '45, I guess it became -- or we were -- became the Air Force. They asked me what I wanted to do and I said, well, I wanted to fly a twin-engine bomber so I could have some fun flying, you know. They gave me a B-29.
(laughter)

PR: B-29? Are you serious?

CD: Yeah, that big silver one up there.

PR: You got to fly a B-29?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I trained --

PR: Where did --

CD: I went back to Roswell, New Mexico, you know. That's quite interesting.

PR: Oh. When did you leave England now?

CD: October 1944?

PR: October '44?

CD: Yeah.

PR: And came back to -- how did you get back to the States?

CD: Well, the C-54. I went to London and played gin rummy with some guys for three days while we're waiting for the weather. I got on the C-54 and flew to Boston.

PR: Direct?

CD: Yeah.

PR: No stops?

CD: No stops.

PR: That's a switch, isn't it?

CD: (laughs) Well, he did it. They were doing it all the time with C-54s. [It was nice?] and --

PR: Who was with -- who was on there? A bunch of guys that they're taking back?

CD: All airmen of some kind.

PR: Where'd you go from Boston?

CD: Well, we got on a plane -- we got on a train and I went home. No, I went to San Antonio and I was given a leave in San Antonio and then I had about a month's leave. And this is in October. Then I was -- went back to Santa Ana, California for -- it was a center where they reassigned you. And then in Santa Ana, I was assigned back to Roswell and B-29s.

PR: And then at [Raleigh?].

CD: And what's really interesting was in -- when I had B-17, my instructor was Second Lieutenant, and I'd go

back there, and he's a First Lieutenant now but he's still in the structure.

PR: He's still there?

CD: And everybody he has turned out has become a captain or a major except me. I was just First Lieutenant. (laughter) [Well really now?] I was just a First Lieutenant. I was so young and I finished my missions so fast. I flew mine in a hurry, and I only had two or three lead times.

PR: What's a lead time?

CD: Well --

PR: Busted missions?

CD: Yeah lead -- when you lead over one, you know you're not flying on the [way?] to somebody. You're leading the planes, leading the 6 -- 36 plane. (coughs) So he was pissed off. He said, you know, "Here I am, all these people coming by." He said, "I'm still in this, staying in. I can't get out. They won't let me out." He was an instructor in the B-29s, though.

PR: Well, he moved up a notch. (laughter)

CD: He got First Lieutenant. He had three years. Anyway, I -- after I got the 29 crew, well I learned how to fly 29s at Roswell. Then I was assigned to Davis-

Monthan Field in Tucson, Arizona and I picked up a crew, B-29 crew.

PR: How many on that crew?

CD: Nine crew. Nine members.

PR: Nine crew. I'll be.

CD: Soon you had a pilot, and co-pilot, and had an engineer. (coughs) He was also a pilot. He wasn't very happy because he wasn't doing any flying but -- and then a navigator, bombardier, and the gunners were all, you know, remotely controlled guns. "Scanners," they called them, pretty sophisticated.

PR: It wasn't in the turret? You ran it from the radar?

CD: The turret ran from a central station. He could run three or four gun turrets. One observer could -- had three or four guns, so he could bring all the guns to [bear?] at one spot.

PR: How would you find the target though? With radar or visual?

CD: No, he'd have to look.

PR: Just tell you --

CD: We had radar. We had radar in our part of the plane.

PR: But he'd just visually spot the target and then --

CD: Yeah. He wasn't -- it hadn't gotten that sophisticated yet. We had heated meals by the pressurized plane.

PR: Oh, it's pressurized? Oh.

CD: Pressurized, yeah. Heated meals.

PR: So you had a heated cockpit probably.

CD: Yep.

PR: Didn't have to wear oxygen masks and all that other paraphernalia.

CD: Well, yeah you wore them but for safety. Yeah we had pressurized. They were nice planes. I loved them.

PR: Where'd you go? What'd you do at Davis-Monthan, then?

CD: Well, I trained a crew and I had them completely trained, and the Japanese quit.

PR: (laughs) Was that an easy -- easy plane to fly?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: I mean, relatively?

CD: You know, it wasn't a taildragger. It was a nose plane. But I loved it.

PR: A lot of power.

CD: I did a good job on that.

PR: You loved to fly.

CD: Caught an engine on fire one time, about 15,000 feet. And there had been some B-29s blowing up from engine

fires. I wasn't too much aware of that but I -- but anyway, I said, "Well, we'll go in." You know, so I peeled off. I left a huge trail of smoke. It just, almost the whole sky was full of smoke. I came in and the B-29, you can't hurry them in. You've got -- on the base leg, you've got to be at a certain altitude on the -- on the -- downwind leg, you've got to be a certain -- then you've got to be a certain altitude on the base leg. Then you turn in. So I was just taking the heat and coming in, and I landed that [doggone?] thing but I taxied up to the ramp where we have -- planes were. The colonel was out there, the base commander. Oh, man. He was -- he was fit to be [tied?!] I couldn't understand the man. He was excited. (laughs) He said, "Lieutenant!" "Yes, sir?" He said, "You should've landed that plane, pulled it off the runway, and bailed out out there," and I said, "Well, I didn't think it was that bad." You know, I had engines on fire (laughs) in combat a lot of times and [bombing?]. (laughter) And then the really -- the B-29, the pilot can't see anything. So you can't see behind you. You don't know what you look like. You don't know what the fire looks like.

PR: Oh, I see.

CD: I put that doggone engineer back there and you're getting on a B-29, you got to cross through a little hole about 20 feet, all the way back. It's kind of dangerous.

PR: To get to the compartment in the back?

CD: Yeah to co-- where you could see the engines. I mean, you can't see them in the front. And he goes back there and looks and he -- he wasn't too excited about it, so I wasn't excited about it. I wasn't that brave. I just wasn't excited. (laughter) The colonel was so excited.

PR: Well, he was --

CD: He was expecting us to blow up.

PR: No kidding.

CD: And he was scared to death. [Otherwise?] yes sir.

PR: Damn. Do you have fire extinguishers? Do you try to put the flames out?

CD: No, you don't [put?] anything in the engines. No.

PR: It just burns itself out?

CD: Well --

PR: Well, you know, in the movies, they have fire extinguishers. You pull a level out of the --

CD: Yeah, in the modern planes.

PR: (inaudible, overlapping speech)

CD: In the modern planes, yeah. No.

PR: Nothing fancy?

CD: I'd got an engine on fire over [Lasich?] Germany, and the co-pilot wanted to bail out. That was number two, right over here, [by me?]. And the thing we couldn't feather it, and I had to drop out of formation, right over the target, right over [Lasich?]. Fighters were out there and the flak was terrible, and I had to drop down. The props started windmilling. First, it started breaking up. The engine started breaking up and throwing metal at me! Then it got to windmilling, but the fire finally went out. But by this time, the formation had gone off and left me. I was all alone in Germany. So I ask a radio operator, I said, "Call for help, fighter help." Maybe they'll come. They said they would. They never showed up.

We started home and dropped down from 30,000 to about 10 -- to 10,000. I had found a place to bomb. Bombed (inaudible) would count. I don't know what it was. (Peter laughs) And everybody's flying home real slow because I couldn't get much speed out of the old thing because the windmilled prop, three engines. (laughs) And all of a sudden, the sky turned completely black. I mean, they had a zeroed in, with any aircraft fire.

It looked like the way out -- I was trying to stay out of what I thought was the countryside, you know, rather than go over the cities.

I was headed home and I (laughs) and the [dumb?] navigator was -- first thing I did is soon as I got out of formation, I said, "Leo!" His name was Leo [Laherty?]. "Leo," I said, "What's [to?] heading home?" "I don't know!" He had the high voice. "I don't know, Lieutenant!" He says, "I'll figure it out in a minute!" I said, "Hell, I know I'm supposed to go west. I'm going to head west." (laughs)

(inaudible) And after a while, he gave me a heading but I guess, bless his heart, he'd get a little excited. (laughter) But you know, the way I got out of that flak, I did turn the thing up on its side and nose straight down, and then turned, and first thing you know, I was out. I guess I got out of their range.

PR: No fooling.

CD: They didn't shoot us down.

PR: A lot of the flak guns, by then, they had radar aiming, didn't they?

CD: Yeah. They did, you know, and we couldn't mess their radar up because we didn't have any way to mess it up. Like we did in formation, we could mess it up.

PR: Yeah, that flak stuff?

CD: Yeah. But --

PR: Phew. Was that the closest call you've ever had?

CD: Oh, I c-- I guess it really was. I guess it really was.

PR: You describe some of these in the [paper?]?

CD: Yeah, I did. I did that. And then, it was interesting.

PR: What would a typical day be like when you were assigned to a mission?

CD: Well, you get up about 4:00. You go get some powdered eggs, and powdered milk, and Spam, and it tastes terrible.

PR: [Stand up?] breakfast.

CD: And got on the bus, go to the mess hall, and come back. Then you go to briefing. The pilots go one place; the navigators, and bombardiers, and gunners somewhere else. They would brief you. Go into a room and all of you are sitting there, and my co-pilot (laughs) had bad teeth. It was a little old guy sitting next to me. I liked him all right, but he

would draw wind through the teeth, you know? (laughs)

He would get -- they'd get no --

PR: It's disturbing. (laughter)

CD: So I went to the d-- I wanted to knock him off his chair, but this colonel had come in. You'd have the target [hidden?]. Finally, you pull up the shade, and [brilliant?]. And we'd have our route. Never went in straight. Tried to fox them, make it look like you're going somewhere, and then turn, and then --

PR: Oh, I see. Finally end up over a target.

CD: Yeah, yeah. And everybody would "ooh" and "ahh," you know.

PR: Yeah. What would they tell you about it, then, in the briefing?

CD: Oh, they'd tell you where to expect flak and the IP, the initial point, the altitude, what kind of weather, a whole lot of stuff you need to know. And they had the various code names for each day, and --

PR: How would you use the code name?

CD: Oh, you weren't supposed to use a radio. So really, the -- if you had to call or something, you could use that.

PR: [Where would something?] be, to identify you as a [valid?]. Huh.

CD: Of course, the Germans knew that information. We went on anyways. They had wonderful intelligence. The first night I got there, they told [Lord knows?], "Lieutenant Carl DuBose from Gonzales, joining 303rd."
(laughs)

PR: Are you serious?

CD: No! (laughter) Kind of made you wonder, though.

PR: Isn't that something?

CD: That's [the thing?] they had. Those people were -- except for Hitler, we'd never beat them.

PR: That's right.

CD: We'd never beat them.

PR: That's right.

CD: They were sharp.

PR: After the briefing then, what --

CD: Well, you'd go out to your airplane. You'd all get in a Jeep, or everybody would get in a truck, and we'd get in the Jeep. Go out there and you pre-flight the plane, and load everything in.

PR: How'd you pre-flight it, now?

CD: Well, you know, there are certain things you check to make sure there's -- everything works, the (inaudible) runs. You'd go walk around and look to see if there's any obstacles.

PR: Physically outside?

CD: Yeah. Really not a whole lot you can tell. Then you had to pull the props through to make sure the [arm?] wasn't any lower if you pull the props through.

PR: Oh, really? You did that yourself?

CD: The crew did, yeah.

PR: The crew?

CD: Yeah, we -- the worst thing about pulling the props on the B-29, it was hard and they didn't like to do that. They really hated it. B-17, it wasn't bad at all. They would s--

PR: What [kind of oil?] in the lower cylinder? What -- is that a bad thing to happen?

CD: Well, I guess to my knowledge, I don't know exactly why, but the -- you know, the lower [cyl?] was not on the bottom.

PR: Oh. You mean there would be a [leak?] somewhere?

CD: All would go down in the -- you wanted to make sure it was all [propped?] up.

PR: Then you'd get on board?

CD: Eight or 10 turns each engine. Then they had a putt putt that started them, auxiliary power plant. It usually would start number one or number two. Number one.

PR: Number one? Which one was that?

CD: One on the far left.

PR: All the way out on the left?

CD: Yeah. Started it up.

PR: Okay. So they had ground --

CD: Yeah, auxiliary power --

PR: -- charger that it'd start your number one?

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: And then you'd start your engines off --

CD: Then your --

PR: -- the number one?

CD: Your generator's going [to start up?].

PR: And how --

CD: But you had --

PR: How about the ground? Tell me a little bit about the ground crew? Would they be the same guys all the time?

CD: They'd have a tent there by the [heart?]. What I was going to tell you about flying -- you asked me flying old planes. You know, when you first got there, they gave me an old clunker four or five missions.

PR: A clunker. (laughs)

CD: And nobody else wanted to fly it, and I'm sure I flew the [Witches 10?] and all those old -- they were F

models. The F model had a hydraulic supercharger. You know, hydraulic superchargers were not good like the -- the -- I was gonna say electronic ones that they came out with, with the G model. The G model had the chin turret. The F model didn't have a chin turret. And they had some F models still there when I got there. And on the third or fourth mission, they gave me an F model, and I got over Ireland. I got that in that -- the only time I [bartered?] a mission, but I tr-- you just move the hydraulic thing a little bit, and it changes your RPM an awful lot. But I couldn't control it. They were just running away. In other words, I would've as soon blown a [jug?] or [settled?] it. I got over Ireland and I was trying to regulate that thing, and I couldn't stay in formation, and -- the group leader's not supposed to say anything. He said, "You get in formation," and I couldn't do it, so I just went back home. (pause) It wasn't very long they were running any more F models there because they couldn't stay up with the G models.

PR: You need this when you're at those high altitudes?

CD: You have to have it. You have to have --

PR: You get enough oxygen to --

CD: You have to have superchargers, yeah. You have to have superchargers.

PR: And they were electronic after the hydraulic.

CD: Yeah, yeah. It had a little, little thing you'd turn.

PR: Yeah. When you got to a certain altitude, you'd turn that on?

CD: You regulate it. You can regulate it. With the old ones, you had a little thing you push.

PR: Like a throttle?

CD: Yeah. It's called a throttle like that. It wasn't wor-- well, it worked all right when they were regulated but just when I got one. The worst thing is, and I said this in that thing, I landed 5,000 pounds of bombs, a beautiful landing. I was proud of that. (Peter laughs) The colonel's out there and he says, "What in the world did you do not dropping those things in the North Sea?" And I said, "Well --

PR: You didn't want to waste them.

CD: Yeah, I didn't waste -- wasting a good landing. He didn't see it at all. (Peter laughs) All he saw was me coming home. He didn't want me coming home. But I told him, I said -- and they did not fly that plane anymore, real quick. But anyway, they gave me a new plane after about 10 missions, a new Jigger Rooche

number one, went down in July. And see, I started flying early July.

PR: That was one of your planes?

CD: That was one of my planes. The Jigger Rooche went down, Jigger Rooche number one went down, and they came in with Jigger Rooche number two. Now, the guy that named the planes, you could be the pilot, but this plane went to the crew chief first and he named it Jigger Rooche number two because he had names the first one Jigger Rooche number one, and he was from Louisiana. But I don't know what Jigger Rooche means, and he, you know, wouldn't tell me. (Peter laughs) But anyway, I got Jigger Rooche number two [permanent?].

PR: Couldn't even name it.

CD: No but it was a brand new plane, a G. And Jimmy [Stewart?] was the crew chief. He had four people helping him and they lived -- they were in a tent by the plane, and they were always there. So when you go out, you know, after the briefing, you drive out there. Well, there's Jimmy with his gang and they help you get everything ready.

PR: Now, he'd have it all gassed and armed?

CD: Yeah. He had it all gassed and armed and bombs, all.

PR: Bombs?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Ammunition for the guns?

CD: Everything.

PR: Ready to fly.

CD: What he would do is he would be out there to start the engines for you. I mean, to do the putt putt and start your engine. After that, he'd wave you goodbye, and he'd be praying you'd come back. By the way, after I left, Jigger Rooche number two went down and he had Jigger Rooche number three when the war ended.

PR: Oh, really?

CD: He lost two planes.

PR: I'll be darned. Huh. Did they keep them in pretty good mechanical --

CD: Oh, wonderful. Wonderful.

PR: -- shape?

CD: They were good mechanics. They'd been over there since '42. (coughs) A little bitty guy.

PR: Anytime after you rode a mission, you'd have a checklist, what things were wrong --

CD: Yeah, you would write up -- yeah.

PR: -- and the things you noticed, and they'd work on them?

CD: What I (inaudible), you know, I took three engines, I ran them almost full throttle coming home. I told Jimmy, I said, "Now, Jimmy, I've used these engines pretty heavy" but he -- he only changed out one of them. He had to change out one because it was ruined, and he changed out one more, but he left the other two in there. And he said they worked all right.

PR: I'll be darned.

CD: They had to -- first thing you do is patch holes. There would be 150 holes sometimes in them where the flak would go through.

PR: Flak, yeah. Did you ever have any of your crew wounded?

CD: No. Well, I got one Purple Heart but I'm not sure.

PR: One of your crew?

CD: I'm not sure he deserved it.

PR: (laughs) He might've done it with a --

CD: Those boys were pretty good. They could turn themselves in for the Purple -- what happened was, our bomb bay door was stuck on a target and wouldn't close. So this guy was a top turret gunner, our engineer, and he's a real good guy who -- I loved him. I said, "Go back there, [Jesse?], and crank up the bomb bay door." Well, what had happened, the

bombardier had taken a pee, and the urine had gotten in there in the ratchet. So while he trying to crank that thing, you could almost fall out where that crank is. Well, the thing came on and broke his arm.

PR: Oh, no kidding.

CD: Yeah.

PR: So he got credit for it.

CD: Boy, he got -- turned himself in for a Purple Heart.

I didn't turn him in. I didn't turn him in. He got himself a Purple Heart. (laughs)

PR: I'll be darned.

CD: You know it didn't hurt anything. He was injured.

(laughter) That's all -- no, I didn't have anybody hit by anything. Had some close calls.

PR: See a lot of fighters close by? You guys --

CD: Not many.

PR: -- shoot very much?

CD: [Wespotin?] and I refer to that in my little thing.

Worst mission we went on was [Wespotin?]. We went on two bad ones. See, most of the fighters were laying off American -- because they had such good fighter support when I got there.

PR: Was the P-51 there already?

CD: Yeah. It would go most of the time with us, but on [Wespotin?], what happened was the Germans had some [MEs?] high up in the air and they -- they engaged the P-51s. In the meantime, they sent 40 FWs and Messerschmitts. They came at us. Here we are, just 30 or 40 planes, three squadrons; high, middle, and low. They came up like this. And here these people are up here fighting, and just in 30 seconds or less, they shot out the entire bottom squadron. I was in the middle squadron towards the end. They shot out all but two of these people down here.

PR: Golly.

CD: That's 12 planes.

PR: Just like that.

CD: Just, yeah, like that. I mean, they shot every one of them down!

PR: Did they have rockets, do you think? Or --

CD: No, they didn't.

PR: -- throw a machinegun [with the cannons?]?

CD: They just came in. They came in so fast. Now, one of the guys who was (inaudible) in the war told me this last time we met, he said, "I told my pilot 30 seconds or more before they hit us, that they were coming. About 40 of them were coming." And he never relayed

that information to the rest of the group. Of course, the guy that did, he got killed. But my bombardier got a plane.

PR: Really?

CD: Yeah, he shot a plane down.

PR: I'll be darned.

CD: He got credit for a plane.

PR: Great. That's unusual. There weren't that many shot down by the gunners, were there?

CD: Well, see he was up there where he could see them all coming and what happened is one of them came a little bit too far and he shot him down.

PR: What was the other bad mission?

CD: [Morisburg?] and [Wespotin?]. Those two are where I really had a lot fighters. Now flak, an aircraft would get [so many times?] almost have to have [estimates?] to fly in it. The worst flak was around the Ruhr Valley. They protected the -- we had to go into Cologne, Essen. It was those cities. Berlin was heavily protected from flak.

PR: Now, the can of flak you collected, that's just stuff that had dropped on the plane?

CD: In the plane. Yeah. (laughter)

PR: Isn't that amazing?

CD: I had a coffee can full of it!

PR: Yeah. How big were the pieces?

CD: It was about that long, about like your finger.

PR: Yeah. Just like splinters were.

CD: In fact, several times, I would hear something go "bing!" You know, and I look over, there's a hole right here, and I look up here, there's a hole right up there. I don't know how they would miss me!

PR: Thank heavens.

CD: Of course, we had that flak suit on.

PR: You were in flak jackets?

CD: Some of them were flying -- yeah. Some of the men sat on them. They --

PR: Helmet? Did you wear a helmet at all?

CD: No, we didn't need a helmet.

PR: What'd you have in your equipment? You had a heated flak suit?

CD: Yeah. We kept both suits if -- the heated one and the sheepskin in case the electrical one went out. But we were lucky enough to be over there when they got electrical heated suits. Those people in '42 and '43 didn't have that.

PR: Oh. Were your hands heated too?

CD: No, we had gloves.

PR: Gloves? To run the instruments? They never froze up?

CD: Well, the gunners had trouble, you know, with the --
some of the gun barrels would get so cold. It's 65
below outside.

PR: Yeah. I know.

CD: Even in the summertime, it was cold outside.

PR: You're back up and starting in your engines. What did
you do after you started your engines and everything
was proper for takeoff?

CD: Well we --

PR: Would you have an assigned sequence and --

CD: There's no radio so you watch the tower.

PR: Or you set your watches or something, didn't it?

CD: No. Yeah, you had a time.

PR: [Head climb?] or something?

CD: You had a takeoff time but you'd watch the tower.
When the green flare goes up, everybody starts to
taxi. Now, there's 40 planes on the taxi out there
and the first in line, and they just line up one right
behind the [other?].

PR: Do you know a sequence, assigned sequence?

CD: Yeah but you just know if your thing is here, and
somebody else is here, he'd be going first. Or you
just kind of line up and then every 20 seconds one

takes off. They usually fly through about 20,000 feet of clouds and break out on top. They'd be -- your leader would be circling up there.

PR: Oh, okay. How'd you know his plane?

CD: Well, he's got the identification on him [to try and see?].

PR: Okay and that'd be the leader of that --

CD: And also, he'd fire flares.

PR: Okay. And you know to form up on him then --

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: -- in these different high to low, mid --

CD: I never had any trouble with that except one time and I told the general. One day, and I wrote about this in there, but I didn't really ride it like really [wild?] because I didn't want to offend the general. The general's still living.

PR: Oh, yeah? (laughter)

CD: And he's a good friend of mine. He lives in Arkansas. One day about noon, they had flown a mission that morning, but that noon, they decided to get the bunch up again. So they call us all out, no prior notification at all. And you know the airmen are already in the -- they're off at a pub and drinking beer and I don't know where I was. I think I was in

the [tea?] shop. That was the only place I could go. But anyway, they get us all out and they didn't give us a briefing, but they handed me a slip of paper that said I was to lead six planes and join the neighboring Kimbolton, which is the 379th Group, 379th over at Kimbolton, and join on with them. Well, come to find out, they didn't get everybody's planes loaded with ammo, didn't get everybody's planes loaded with bombs, didn't -- they didn't get everything ready and some of them didn't even have enough gas! And they all take off. (laughter)

PR: You're kidding.

CD: And I take off, and I get up there. I start circling. I couldn't see a soul. I don't know what our group did. Our group must've taken off too early. So here I'm out with six planes, nobody to tie onto it. I circled wide, and wide, and I said if I circle any wider, I'd get in those [balloons?] out over London. They had cables on [balloons?]. I get -- finally I said, "I'm just gonna go towards France. They must be gone by now." And I go towards France, nobody. I get across the Channel, over into France, or [halfway?] into Belgium. I've forgotten. I said, "Well, I've got to credit for this mission for these people back

here with me." Six planes. So I said to the bombardier, I said, "Sandy," and Sandy was a good bombardier. He always had a bombsight but they didn't always give bombardiers bombsights. A lot of times, they just made them toggle on the lead plane. But Sandy always had a bombsight, and he didn't have one. He said, "I don't have a bombsight! How am I going to bomb?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "I'll tell you what." In phase training, back at Pyote, we had gone down and he'd bombed off his toe. And they taught him that.

PR: What's that mean?

CD: He said, "If you just get me down low enough, I'll bomb off my toe," and okay. So we find an airfield, a German airfield in the edge of France. We go down there and we -- about 10,000 feet. Pretty dangerous, really. He bombs off his toe and we [clobber?] the place and come on home. (laughter) And you know, about the time we get ready to turn around, the whole 8th Air Force is behind us lined up coming in.

(laughter)

PR: You've got to be kidding! Oh, Lord.

CD: Yeah! I got [worried?], you know.

PR: You were supposed to meet up with them?

CD: Nobody said a word. And what I figured was they screwed up that mission so bad, they didn't want any-- they didn't want to hear anything about it. They didn't want to hear what I had to say at all!

PR: Give you credit. (laughs)

CD: I said, "Fine, give me credit for the mission." Yeah, you got credit.

PR: Yeah, [one's along?]. (laughter) What's it mean, "bombing off his toe"?

CD: Well, he actually -- you would stick your toe out there and aim it just like you would.

PR: And that's how you -- how you judge the distance. No fooling.

CD: Yeah (laughs) that's what he called it, bombing off his toe.

PR: I've heard that expression before. You bomb off a toggle. The lead bomber would have a bombardier and a sight and he'd -- he'd -- what did the toggle [mean?]?

CD: Well, if you're in formation -- now, when you're in formation, the bombardier takes over the plane if you're bombing. And he has -- we're on automatic pilot. The plane's on automatic pilot but he's got control of it with his bombsight. And when I had to stand there, he always used his bombsight and he

always bombed with -- I always turned it over to him. But later on, they decided that that was messing them up. They would -- everybody would bomb off of -- when the lead plane drops his, everybody would toggle.

PR: What does "toggle" mean?

CD: You had a little switch that would release all the bombs.

PR: Oh, they release the bombs?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Would the pilot do that?

CD: No, the bombardier would do it.

PR: Bombardier? Okay, that's a toggle switch --

CD: But they could have a sergeant in there doing that. They didn't have [to toggle from there?].

PR: Yeah, just watching that lead plane. Could you know the lead plane all the time? Were you close enough to see it easily?

CD: Well, some of them weren't quite that close but they can see it, yeah. Well, if they couldn't see the lead plane, they'd see the next one back, you know.

PR: See him drop.

CD: Once you fly, you fly three, and three, and three, and sometimes, you'd [part?] three here. That would be

12.

PR: Oh, okay.

CD: Then you fly another 12, and then another 12.

PR: The high, low, and mid.

CD: High, low, and mid. And the first one you --

PR: You all had the same target.

CD: -- had, the next one would be back a little bit, the next would be back a little further.

PR: You'd all have the same target, though.

CD: Yeah. But you see, the targets were big.

PR: Yeah. Could you stay in formation pretty much?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: All the way in and all the way out?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah, they insisted on that.

PR: Would you draw in tighter if you had a lot of fighters in the area?

CD: Yeah, yeah. You'd try to.

PR: Closer formation?

CD: But you know, those guys would -- they would do evasive action, the bombers, our pilots. Even though we're in tight formation, they'd see planes coming in on them, and you know, they'd twist and turn, and it did help, so. Also in flight, sometimes they'd zero you in. You could see they were tracking you. One would hit here, here, here, here. Well, you know

where the next one's going to hit. You're not going to be there if (laughs) you're smart. (Peter laughs) But most of the time, we stayed in pretty good formation. Yeah.

PR: But you had enough maneuver and leeway. You could turn a little bit.

CD: Yeah. Yeah.

PR: Did you ever see a lot of your planes -- your planes shot down close to you?

CD: Yeah. A lot of them.

PR: Just --

CD: Yeah.

PR: Would they hit the bomb [charge?] and blow up or gas tank?

CD: One of them -- well you'd see -- if they got a direct hit with an 88 in the wing or in the [fuse lodge?] in the body, and usually they got them in the engines, and either the engine or wing would blow up, or the engine would blow up. We saw a direct hit into a cockpit where the cockpit was on fire and the co-pilot tried to get out of those little old windows. You know, about like that. They couldn't. They didn't last five seconds. The plane had -- then you'd watch to see if anybody came out in parachutes.

PR: Yeah, could you see that?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

PR: Quite a --

CD: Now, I couldn't because I was flying in formation.

PR: Oh. Quite a few times, could they see the guys bailing out though and report it?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah. We actually had 800 killed in action. I think we had -- I don't know the numbers I've got. Nearly 2,000 prisoners.

PR: Oh, really? So that many made it down.

CD: So we had a lot more. A lot more people got out than --

PR: Yeah. Where would you bail out from if you had to bail?

CD: I'd have to go down. You had the, right below me was a door. When I'd get in the plane, I'd [chain?] myself up [this open?] and go right into the cockpit. So I could go right down out of it.

PR: That was your hatch to bail out.

CD: Yeah, hatch to bail out. And the bombardier and navigator had to go out there too, and the engineer. You could go out the bomb bay if it were open.

PR: Did you wear your parachute all the time, or you had it close by?

CD: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I wore mine all the time.

PR: On your back?

CD: It was on -- you had two parachutes. You had a chest pack and a backpack. I kept the chest pack on.

PR: Okay. Where was the backpack?

CD: I put it right by me.

PR: Right beside you?

CD: Yeah.

PR: And what, you'd put that on then if you had to go?

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: You would've strapped that in?

CD: Yeah, if you get time -- (laughs) got time. You know, the only reason -- one of the reasons I didn't bail out when that engine caught on fire, I was scared. I didn't want to. (Peter laughs) I didn't like to bail out.

PR: No, you didn't. You had --

CD: They had in the -- the Germans, at that time, the German civilians were killing Americans with pitchforks.

PR: They were mean.

CD: If the military got there first, they were all right, or the civilian police. But farmers, they were mad, and I couldn't blame them, you know. (coughs) But

actually, the Americans always bombed strategic targets until 1945. I was gone in '45. British always bombed apartment houses.

PR: Really?

CD: Always, always. They just, mass bombing. They bombed at night. They couldn't see anything. They never bombed industrial targets. They just bombed. But they never broke the Germans' will. They wouldn't have quit --

PR: Quite a production.

CD: -- if it'd had any kind of leadership at all. I don't know what [we'd do?].

PR: Yeah. Let's jump ahead again. You're in B-29s now. The war ended. Where were you when the war was over? Still in phase training?

CD: Well I was, you know, I had enough points to get out in Tucson.

PR: In Tucson. Oh, at Davis-Monthan.

CD: And the colonel had me instructing. They were bringing in Peashooter fighter pilots, colonels, and giving them some B-29 training. I don't know why they were doing that. The war was over. But that was my job. I was an instructor. I hadn't asked to get out. So one day, I go in and I tell the colonel, I said,

"Well, I think I'm going to get out." My old roommate, college roommate, was a lieutenant in the Marines and he got killed over in Hiroshima. He was written up in Life Magazine. But his wife came out to see me. She had a little boy, and she was telling me how great civilian life was (laughter) which was a mistake. It wasn't that great. But I said, "Colonel, I think I'm gonna get out," and he said, "You're crazy." So I told him. He said, "You're crazy." But I did, and I got out.

PR: When were you discharged?

CD: December of '45.

PR: December '45? From Davis-Monthan, or did they send you back there?

CD: Davis-Monthan. No. They sent me back to San Antonio.

PR: San Antonio? And you mustered out there?

CD: Yeah, yeah.

PR: Did you stay in the Reserves at all or did you --

CD: Yeah, I stayed in it. I stayed in the Reserves.

PR: How long were you in the Reserves for?

CD: Twenty years. I retired as a lieutenant colonel.

PR: Oh, did you?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Okay. What were you when you got out, now? Had you made captain or --

CD: Well, really I didn't have a unit. When I was in college, we used to go to San Antonio and fly. And they had a Reserves unit over there. We joined and we got to fly. I'd fly an AT-11. First time I ever flew an AT-6, I got to -- it was at Brooks Field.

PR: Really?

CD: And a bunch of AT-6s. I went in and I said I want to fly. And "Okay," he said, "There's a questionnaire. Would you fill that out?" Well, I filled the questionnaire out and they said, "Well, okay," he said, "Go out there and fly it." I said, "Nobody gonna tell me how to start the doggone thing?" (laughter) I go out there and there's a mechanic there, and I said, "Well, which one of these buttons do I [ask?] to get this thing?" He showed me. I started it up and taxied it out and took off!

PR: I'll be darned. It worked! (laughs)

CD: Well, it was kind of scary.

PR: That was in your Reserves time.

CD: Yeah.

PR: What would you, have to fly a certain number of hours or --

CD: Well, you -- no. To keep your flying status, you had to fly four hours a month.

PR: Four hours a month.

CD: On active duty. But in the Reserves, you just tried to fly all you could just to get time. But then after I came to Victoria -- you know, I had to get out of that San Antonio outfit, and they have a unit here in Victoria. And I was commander for a while. We went to [Berston?] Field. Really never had a legitimate purpose but we met, and we were available in case they called us out.

PR: Were you a unit?

CD: Yeah, I was a unit.

PR: So if they needed you --

CD: For a while, it wasn't unit. It was just people meeting and going to school, and I taught -- I was an instructor for --

PR: Oh!

CD: And some of those were instructors, and then John [Lee?] became commander when it became a unit. John [Lee?] was City Manager at one time.

PR: John [Lee?] was in the --

CD: Yeah.

PR: Was he in WW2?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Oh, I got it.

CD: Now, John [Lee?] was a good friend of mine so when he quit, he -- I asked him to make me commander. While I was commander, and the little general came down one mor-- in the [Berston?] Field where they took the unit up there for summer, two weeks. I remember a little general came down and he thought we ought to do things different so he took me off as a -- he's a cocky little devil. (Peter laughs) But you know, the Reserves were having a hard time. They really, nobody wanted them and there really wasn't -- now, it's a lot better.

PR: What did you do when Korea came along?

CD: Well, you know, they were taking B-29 pilots. They wanted them, and I was a principal at Bloomington High School at that time. (pause) And I decided that I didn't want to go, so I didn't request. They didn't ask but I could've gone easily, and I probably should have, but I'm glad I didn't, actually.

PR: Me too.

CD: B-29s, they were flying B-29s over there.

PR: So you just stayed in the active Reserves here.

CD: Yeah. I'd take two weeks [tour?] every summer, have a meeting about once a month. Retirement pay when you're 60 was pretty good. Not great, but.

PR: Is that when you got out?

CD: No. You have to -- I could've retired later, but I retired when I was 60.

PR: Oh. How many years --

CD: Twenty years of --

PR: Twenty years service?

CD: Twenty years of service. You had to have 20 years to get retirement.

PR: Oh, okay.

CD: Some of them went a little longer.

PR: Yeah. Did you stay in the same unit, the -- the 30--

CD: 303rd?

PR: 303rd the whole time, overseas there?

CD: Yeah, yeah. I was over there about less than a year.

PR: Do you have a discharge paper by the way?

CD: Yeah.

PR: That spells all that stuff out?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Medals, campaign medals, you do?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Were you over there around the time of the invasion,
or was that --

CD: I was over there -- you see, I was -- I started flying
that B-17 on June the 1st and I was flying the ocean on
D-Day. But after I got there, it took me a while to
get to the unit. But we did fly missions supporting
the ground troops several times. Several times.
Yeah. Here's a --

PR: You have to show me here. Oh, okay.

CD: Here's -- this is [Ettal?]. Now, there's a story
about a little dog over there that's written by a
woman recently, but this dog is not written up.
That's my crew. That's me, the bombardier who was
blown out of the plane; not mine, but another plane.
That's the navigator and the co-pilot, the little co-
pilot. This is the engineer, and the radio, ball
turret, and that tail gunner, and the waist gunner.

PR: Now this is -- is this just a picture or is this the
way you -- you flew?

CD: That's Jigger Rooche, you see?

PR: Oh, yeah. Jigger Rooche. J-I-G-G-E-R, R-O-O-C-H-E.
This is the second. This is your flight?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Outfits though?

CD: Oh, that's --

PR: Or is that just your crew?

CD: We got what they called A-2 leather jackets on. These are flight jackets -- flight clothes. This is Lieutenant [Leo?]. October the 4th, October '44. That's before he was killed.

PR: Does this crew stay -- they keep you intact pretty much of the time?

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Now, here's after my last mission to Münster, Germany. They always gave you scotch, a double shot of scotch (Peter laughs) when you'd land.

PR: Your last mission?

CD: They had me -- see, now I was flying. He [was our defense?]. That's the co-pilot. He, see he flew the other crews though. This guy flew with me that day. He flew with me, and he flew with me. He -- now I believe this guy had already finished, and this had already finished.

PR: You got your 35th altogether then, except for this guy?

CD: Yeah. That's where we were by the briefing room after the [third?] --

PR: Yeah. I'll be darned. That's --

CD: [We were allowed?] to take snapshots.

PR: Did that feel mighty good when you got down?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: Alive still?

CD: [Everyone was trying to see?].

PR: That was your tail marking.

CD: Yep. Here's my medal. Got that medal four times.

You know, they give you an oak leaf cluster. I don't have all my oak leaf clusters but I was -- I've got them somewhere.

PR: Air medal with the three oak leafs?

CD: Yeah, air medal with the three --

PR: Clusters?

CD: Yeah.

PR: And what'd you get the air medal for? Number of missions?

CD: Well, it's supposed to be a certain mission, but it actually kind of got to where they give them to you for a certain number of missions. This is the [thing?] flying across. They weren't giving them out to everybody.

PR: No. How'd you get that, now?

CD: Really about the same [way?]. They're supposed to -- the citation would say a certain mission but I didn't do anything great.

PR: Well you didn't --

CD: Then these are all --

PR: You did more than just nothing.

CD: No.

PR: Do you have the citation somewhere?

CD: It's on [the orders?]. I'm gonna have to find it.

These are the -- like the European and -- you know,
you had those medals. You've seen them. Your pin and
--

PR: [B-A, M & E?]?

CD: Yeah and this is air American and this is a victory.

PR: Oh, okay.

CD: So those three.

PR: Do you ever think you'd have those mounted?

CD: Well, I ought to.

PR: A lot of the guys have them framed or mounted.

CD: Yeah, I know. I know.

PR: There's some outfit that does it for you.

CD: I know.

PR: Do you have your discharge paper somewhere in there?

CD: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

PR: Is there anything else that -- I might put this
recorded off. The rest of the missions is -- the rest
of the missions are in your write-up. So is there
anything else --

CD: No, no.

PR: Anything else --

CD: Interesting?

PR: Yeah.

CD: I don't know.

PR: Interesting experiences, anything unusual? Oh! Did you hear any of the B-2s, B-1s go over?

CD: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah.

PR: Were they bothering you all the time?

CD: They --

PR: Did any of them ever come close?

CD: They hit mostly in London, but we had to go to air raid shelters once in a while.

PR: Really? The Germans never attacked you, though. German -- German fighter-bomber --

CD: No, they didn't have much control over those things. You know. Now, we were in -- I wrote this up, by the way, in that thing. Really, I wrote this as kind of a pleasant atmosphere rather than a tragedy. But we were in Saint Paul's Cathedral. You ever heard of Saint Paul's in London?

PR: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

CD: Got p--

PR: They have a --

CD: It has perfect acoustics.

PR: [Dave?] and I climbed to the top.

CD: Did you? Did you try the acoustics?

PR: Yeah, yeah.

CD: Well, we were up there trying the acoustics out, my whole crew.

PR: Is that right? (laughs)

CD: And we went to London two or three times, and while we were doing that, one of the little [bug?] bombs came in just at our altitude. We looked out the window, and I could almost touch that doggone thing. It was still going (buzzes) you know? It went right on by us and right past Saint Paul as it cut off. Went straight right into London, you know. A 2,000-pound bomb.

PR: Yeah. That's a huge [charter?].

CD: Made a huge hole.

PR: Did it shake you up, up there?

CD: A little bit. You know, Saint Paul was never hit [in the wreck?].

PR: I know. It's amazing.

CD: Isn't that amazing?

PR: They have that one picture in the Blitz with just destruction everywhere, and here's that dome just in the middle of all the flames.

CD: It was messed up a little in front and all that --

PR: How about B-2s? Did you ever -- were you ever there when B-2s came down?

CD: No. I never --

PR: That was more later on, I think.

CD: The thing that really -- about the B-2s, one would be flying over Holland going in. We'd see these big long streaks of the smoke going up, you know? Now for a while there, we didn't know what they were. They looked like they went up, as far as you could see, they'd go up.

PR: Like a contrail.

CD: Yeah.

PR: But up and down.

CD: Yes. Smoke or contrail, one of them. Then the thing would go up into London. Now, we'd see those things and they fired -- they fired rockets into our formation. They'd lay out -- lay out at a distance, and they were the first rockets developed, I guess, but they weren't very accurate.

PR: Yeah. Thank heavens.

CD: They didn't bother -- it didn't bother much.

PR: Did you ever see a jet?

CD: Oh, yeah.

PR: Really?

CD: The first jet we saw, he buzzed by a P-51 that looked to me like a doggone P-51 was [parked?]. (Peter laughs) I'd never seen anything like it in my life.

PR: Were you warned that there was -- that you might see this things?

CD: No. You know, they didn't bother to tell us all that good stuff. (Peter laughs) Of course, we'd come back and we'd tell them at briefing, you know. Of course they already knew about it, but -- no, they just made out like it wasn't -- but you know, that's really, I think, [Hitler?] cost him the war. He wouldn't let them develop those things.

PR: Oh, I know.

CD: Now, we did go up to Peenemünde twice. You could go up north [see it in?] Denmark, don't go over Denmark because it was neutral. And we'd go around Denmark, go into the East Germany, and there was an atomic energy base there, Peenemünde. That's where they were working on the atomic bomb. We went up there twice and unloaded big time.

PR: Yeah, big raid.

CD: Then, hardly come back. (laughs) See, you had to come back between Denmark and Sweden. All my crew said, "Lieutenant," they said, "we can make one of these engines burn up." They said, "We want to go to Sweden."

PR: They want to go to Sweden, yeah.

CD: And I don't know whether they were serious or just kidding, but (Peter laughs) I think they were serious. You know, people got tired of war.

PR: Yeah. That could be [old stuff?].

CD: I w--

PR: Did you have much leave time and chance to travel around? You went to London a few times?

CD: Oh, yeah. Went to London two or three times. I went to -- one time, we went to Leeds. Now, you're supposed to have a difference between airmen and officers, but in the Air Force, that was kind of hard to do. You know? You were a crew, and I -- they called me "sir" and they were respectful, but we went on dates together. I don't think the Air Force liked it, but everybody was doing it. We went up to Leeds, got on the train, went up there. Leeds was up in the central part of England. I got a new girlfriend up

there. Beautiful. Gosh, she was -- [Marl Fletcher?].

She was a nurse at one of the paraplegic hospitals, mostly foreign; Poles, and French, and people like that. But she had had her own business before the war. She was young. So I went up there about three or four times. I came home. I thought I was gonna marry her, but (Peter laughs) I didn't.

PR: [Things must have cooled off?].

CD: (laughs) [Lisa?] got a hold of me.

PR: Yeah. Did you get to London, then, several times?

CD: Yeah, several times to London. It was all Big Ben, you know, and all the --

PR: Yeah. How would you go, by train I guess?

CD: Yeah, train.

PR: Did you have shows, USO shows or entertainment at all?

CD: No, not much. Not much on the base. London was nice except they had a lot of air raids. They would wake you up and make you come out of the hotel or something.

PR: Was everything pretty much free? Would you have to pay for your rooms or was it --

CD: Oh, yeah. You'd pay for everything.

PR: Just like --

CD: Yeah.

PR: Would there be USO canteens and [things?] that you could use?

CD: Well, no the officers didn't go that much. I didn't. I guess they did. One time we were in London and somebody says, "We can get you a steak."

PR: A real, live steak?

CD: Yeah. Well, we go through three doors that you had to -- speakeasy doors, you know, had to be identified. (Peter laughs) Finally get in this room, pretty good size room, but everybody's eating horsemeat. (laughter) And it cost me a lot of money!

PR: Isn't that something?

CD: Leeds was a nice place. I really enjoyed that. We stayed in the hotels there.

PR: Was the whole countryside blacked out all the time at nighttime?

CD: Yeah. Yeah.

PR: The blackout? How often would you fly, by the way, at missions?

CD: Well, [I'm gonna say?].

PR: Not every day.

CD: I'll fix this up for you someday. Here's a list of my missions. See right in here, this is August 5th, 8, 10, 13, 17, three days down, and then here.

PR: Okay. Every two to three days almost it sounds like.

CD: Yeah. Yeah.

PR: I bet that would get you up through 35 in a hurry.

CD: They were gonna do away with the flak [blades?] so I went to the flight [surgeon?]. I told him we were flak-happy. We needed [to leave?]. And so he sent us to Scotland for a week. We got to go to Scotland.

PR: What do you call -- they called it flak leave?

CD: Flak -- R&R.

PR: R&R? Oh, really?

CD: We called it "flak leave."

PR: Flak leave, yeah.

CD: Yeah, flak leave, because that's all we were getting.

PR: How often would you get that?

CD: Hmm?

PR: How often would you get that?

CD: Once. Once in a whole career.

PR: Oh, okay.

CD: One time.

PR: One time.

CD: One time. They all had been getting them.

PR: Was there a lot of problems with psychology, some of the guys burn out before 35 and --

CD: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

PR: -- get scared of it, and they'd have to take them off the line?

CD: Yeah.

PR: Pilots or --

CD: Actually, I was pretty shook up and I never even talked about any of this for 15 years. Some people did, but I'd forgotten about it because I didn't -- I didn't want to talk about it. I didn't want to talk about it. I got -- I even thought about becoming a priest. I guess it gets to you. You don't realize it, you know. It gets to you.

PR: Yeah. What gets to you, just the strain of it?

CD: I guess so.

PR: Here you've got this mission, you might get -- all these guys that are getting shot down, and crashed, and killed, and -- and you've got to go into it and you come through it?

CD: Any time you get in that plane, you're gonna be shot at and you're gonna be hit. That's just about [every?] (inaudible, overlapping speech).

PR: Well, you know, I get that by inference talking to a lot of these guys that they -- well, [Milton Ceale?], you know [Milton Ceale?]?

CD: Yeah.

PR: He wrote a little book but I've never talked to him about it, but a little booklet. You get the idea that they -- they just got to a point, they were just so tense, they just -- they just almost had to send them home. They never admitted that that was why they sent them home, but I guess they --

CD: [Rob Brown?] had a pretty interesting -- he was a fighter pilot.

PR: Yeah. Yeah, I just talked to -- well --

CD: Did you get to talk to him? Because he's in pretty bad shape.

PR: Yeah, he can't -- I could understand some of what he says, but you know, not in discussion like this. If I had a question, I (inaudible, overlapping speech) --

CD: I didn't know how bad he'd got.

PR: Because it's -- the cancer's into his tongue now and (inaudible, overlapping speech).

CD: Yeah. Isn't that terrible? Terrible.

PR: God damn the sunlight. It'll burn you up.

CD: Now, we had -- [some refused to lie?].

PR: Yeah, well --

CD: Not really, though.

PR: How would they treat them, then? Try to rehabilitate them or just --

CD: Well, they'd try to make it look bad but they really -
- I think they didn't -- they just made it look bad
because they didn't want the rest of us to think it
was easy. I don't think they ever treated him very
mean. I really don't. I think they let him go on
out.

PR: Would they give him a desk job or hospital treatment
or --

CD: You know, I don't know.

PR: (inaudible, overlapping speech)

CD: I don't think the [pub side?] much what they did with
him. (laughs)

PR: Yeah. How about substitutes? Suppose he had a pilot
that went out for some reason. Would there be a pool
of -- (audio cuts out) by the way, you -- Carl, what's
your middle name?

CD: L. Initial only. (laughter)

PR: L only. Nothing else.

CD: [Back?] in the day, it was [Louis?] and my mother put
it on my birth certificate.

PR: Oh, okay, so you're Carl L.

CD: Yeah.

PR: Tell me how DuBose is. Capital "D" or small "D"?

CD: It's capital "D," yeah, and a little "U" but a capital "B."

PR: Okay, and a space between the two?

CD: Yeah. Yeah.

PR: Okay. (laughs) Just to get it officially correct.

CD: It's French.

PR: Oh, yeah. Francais. Where were they from in France? Do they have any idea?

CD: Oh, yes but not really the place. The DuBoses came to the United States around the 1600s. They came to South Carolina because they were Huguenots and they were --

PR: Oh, yeah, the French Huguenots.

CD: They were dispelled by France, actually, by the Catholic Church because the Huguenots were sort of Protestant.

PR: Oh, those were terrible [back then?].

CD: (laughs) Yeah. And they were actually [lorded?] people that had estates, but they had to give up everything and come -- they [settled?] with their church in South Carolina but spread, though. They spread to Gonzales, Texas where I'm from in the 1800s, early 1800s.

PR: From Carolina.

CD: Yeah, from -- and you know the Texas Revolution was
1836.

END OF AUDIO FILE