

Interview of Major General William F. Burns USA, retired
By Anthony Nicholas Delcollo
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Transcript of audio files 1 and 2

Anthony Delcollo: AD

Major General William F. Burns: GB

00:00 Beginning of audio file 1

AD: First as a legal formality, I have to ask, do I have permission to be recording you.

GB: You do.

AD: Okay. Can you please state your name, gender, age and date of birth?

GB: William F. Burns, Major General US Army retired, male, born 23 June 1932, 75 years old.

AD: Thank you. I would like to start by asking you some questions to structure a picture of your life experiences beginning with your early childhood, if that's alright. Where were you born?

GB: I was born in Scranton Pennsylvania.

AD: Did you grow up in the same place that you were born?

GB: No, uhm, we moved quite a bit. We lived in the Poconos for a few months. We moved back to Scranton in 1934 when I was 2 ½. Well, in 1935 we moved to Salt Lake City Utah, and came back in 36 and lived in Strasburg for the better part of the year and moved to Philadelphia in 37 and I started grammar school there in Minoa which is now Havertown Pennsylvania at Sacred Heart School.

AD: So where you there for the duration of your grammar school?

GB: I was there, we lived there until I went into the Army in 54. I went to, uh, finished 8th grade there, and went to La Salle College High School, and then onto La Salle College or what was then La Salle College.

AD: So, do you know why you moved around when you were younger, why your family moved so much?

GB: Oh yes. First of all it was the depression. My father graduated from Notre Dame in 29' and was a newspaper man so he had to go where the jobs were and then an uncle died in Park City Utah, was a prospector in the silver mine that [] in 1880, he died in 1934, and he was sort of the ne'er do well of the family. Nobody knew too much about him then

02:36

when he died my father was his executor since his father had just died and his father had been executor so my father went out for about six weeks came back, went out again, took the train, and we were there for a better part of the year while he settled the estate. And he went out in a very old Chevy coupe with a rumble seat and he came back in the biggest blackest 1936 Oldsmobile that he could find.

AD: I see. So, since you mentioned it I'll just ask it now before I forget. Uhm, do you know whether your, you said, does that mean he was estranged, you uncle? Was he fairly estranged?

GB: No, no, no, in those days, if you lived in Utah and your family lived in Scranton you didn't see them for decades. No, no, they wrote quite frequently. The first time he came east after 1880 was in 1929, at my father's graduation. And he wore the same suit that we wore west in 1880 so, that's why he was certainly out of style by 1929. But most people didn't believe he had any money. He left an estate of almost half a million dollars which in 1934, 35 was a king's ransom. No body had any money. Most of the family was pretty destitute in Scranton so my father came back and basically gave most of it away to both sides of the family [].

AD: I see. So did you have any siblings?

GB: Yes. I had three brothers, one two years younger than I who became a Christian brother, one who is dead now who was five years younger than me and one who lives out in Cincinnati now who is eleven years younger than me.

AD: Do you still talk to them frequently?

GB: Oh yeah, all the time.

AD: The houses that you lived in, did your family own them or did they rent them in general?

GB: It was a mix. My grand father was a saloon keeper and owned several properties. He had a saloon in north Scranton. We lived in a house behind the saloon for a while. The houses in the Poconos and Strasburg were rentals and then my father built a house in the Philadelphia suburbs as I said and owned that house from the beginning.

AD: So, what job did your father gain in Philadelphia to give you the stability to not have to move anymore?

GB: Well, first of all he had inherited money that had took up through the war. He basically was a freelance writer during that time. In 1940 he was right on the cusp of the

06:02

draft. He had three kids and was 35 years old and they initially drafted to 45 but not with three kids. But he got a job at the quartermaster general in Philadelphia, he was procurer of wind instruments for the army and he worked for an aircraft manufacturing company as their director of public relations [] and he was editor of a couple of their in house, internal publications and so forth.

AD: He must have been a fairly educated man then if was a freelance writer.

GB: Oh yeah he had a degree in journalism from Notre Dame.

AD: Oh. The house that you lived in, can you describe it to me, the one that you spent most of your early life in?

GB: Oh yeah, it was a very modern house as far as modern conveniences for the 30's. It actually had two bathrooms and a recreation room in the basement. It was a very pleasant house with a nice yard.

AD: Where did you sleep in the house? Did you have your own room?

GB: Well it depended. I did for a while until we had my fourth brother and there where two to a room. In 46 my father enlarged the house and closed in an upstairs porch and made another bedroom out of that so it was, either I was in with a brother or I was by myself.

AD: Who took care of what chores around the house and things like that?

GB: We all shared in chores. Since I was the oldest I got first crack at cutting the grass. We had a big hedge around the back yard [] and then my father had pity on me and got electric hedge sheers []. But everybody pitched in everybody had [].

AD: I see. So it wasn't that you had any sort of assigned responsibilities, it was just sort of everyone took care of things?

GB: Well, we each did different things. But generally until my other brothers where old enough I did the grass cutting. My father obviously did it before that. But he wasn't well after '48 sp [].

AD: While everyone was home, in the house together, did you tend to eat meals together?

GB: Oh yeah, all the time. We generally had breakfast together, walked to school so we came home for lunch, so the kids had lunch with mother and we always had dinner together. That was a family obligation.

AD: How far did you walk to school?

09:12

GB: 2 ½ blocks.

AD: How was the ambiance at these meals? Where you, where the children allowed to talk or was it?

GB: Oh yeah, in fact it was encouraged. My father was a great one for using dinner as an educational tool. He would ask questions like “what is your opinion of the divine right of kings?” Subjects of that nature. He had studied Latin for eight years so he’d ask a lot of questions in Roman History []. We were not required but were strongly encouraged to take Latin, so we did []. Anyway, dinners were very pleasant but you had to be on your toes.

AD: I see. That’s very interesting, very interesting. Did you actually take Latin in grammar or high school?

GB: I took four years of Latin in high school and three years of Latin in college and two years of Greek, plus French and Spanish.

AD: I’ll get into that more later. Who looked after you as a child?

GB: My mother was typical of the thirties. She was a homemaker. She had graduated from Mary Wood college in Scranton as a home economics [] She went to Bellevue hospital in New York and ended up with her certification in dietetics. Then she was head dietician for a hospital in New York when she was 20. She graduated from college at 19. Then she taught at Immaculata College in Philadelphia. They got married in 31 and she taught again at Immaculata after we were college and she also taught science in a high school []. But while we were young she was home and she was the person who took care of us. Back in the thirties we had a live in whatchya’ call a nanny today I suppose but [].

AD: So you come from a very well educated family then.

GB: Oh yes, my parents were the first the family to go beyond the third grade. But my grand mother sent all her three daughters to get advanced degrees and so forth.

AD: So, getting back to various aspects of your childhood, what did you do for fun when you were younger, what sort of toys did you have and things like that?

GB: When I was six, my father got one of these sets to make lead soldiers; this is long before we had the do-gooders complaining about things like that. I enjoyed the smell of lead, I used to sit in the cellar and inhale it. I used to play with lead soldiers, all sorts of games, we played cards; my father was a great pea knuckle and poker player, a lot of things of that nature. In grammar school you played baseball and football but I was never a great athlete, so I didn’t spend too much time on that.

12:55

AD: Was religion important in your family?

GB: Very important. Yeah, religion was very important. Both my mother and my father were very devout. It was sort of assumed at the time. It was never preached, it was just assumed that that's what you were going to do. For many years my mother was a daily communicant and my father of the old school where you went to communion once a month, went to confession the Saturday night before and that was it. But we went to Catholic schools though out until I went to graduate school.

AD: So, thus obviously you were Roman Catholic?

GB: Oh yes.

AD: You said your father was from the old school, did you tend to go to church as frequently as he did?

GB: Couldn't go to the morning mass because I had an hour and a half trip to La Salle, but they had a sort of communion service in those days before mass that was tied to the time of the trolley car which he had to be at []. Yeah, I generally went to daily mass and of course I was an altar boy so I [].

AD: You mentioned earlier that you liked playing with those toy soldiers when you were younger. Just out of curiosity, did you have any inkling then that you would go into the military or was it just sort of something that--

GB: In the early forties there was a war on, so all the boys would play war or play soldiers and all that, we marched around the neighborhood, what else is there to do when you're nine, ten years old? Yeah, I was a teenager by the time the war stopped [].

AD: Was there every any talk of politics in your family about the war or about things that were going on in the country?

GB: Well, yeah there was. I mean my father being a newspaper man by trade was involved with things like that a lot of his friends were and that was what they talked about. Scranton was and is still a democratic stronghold. Delaware County at the time was a republican stronghold so if you wanted to vote you voted as a republican, at least in the primary so he switched his allegiance. I was said in those days that the Catholic Church was the Democratic Party in prayer, not so any more but you know it was arranged for him to become a Republican. I remember during the election campaigns [] he would get the Philadelphia inquirer in the morning and which was a democratic paper and Philadelphia [] in the evening which was a republic paper, so he could see the whole range of thinking about candidates and all that. He sort of taught us to do that and not become enamored of a particular political party, to [] about the candidates and the issues and stuff like that.

17:00

AD: So even though he tended towards conservatism, he had taught you to be very open minded?

GB: Oh yeah, he was very open minded, very loyal to the church, which was sort of the sine qua non at the time, but at the same time he made you to think for yourself.

AD: What did you do for fun as a family, like going on holiday or something like that?

GB: We used to go to the shore very frequently. My grandmother and her two sisters still lived in Scranton, there were still relatives up there so after we moved to Philadelphia we would go up to Scranton probably once of month once every six weeks year round. Of course, that was a four and a half our trip in those days because there where no superhighways in those days. But starting in 1941 I would go up to Scranton. My grandmother and her two sisters and their two daughters got a cottage [] about fifteen minutes outside Scranton. They bought a college or built a college and they had us up first of all for a couple of weeks and then for [] which was a great boon during the war because you couldn't go anyplace, couldn't do anything. I was ten or eleven they'd put us on the train on one end and they'd meet us at the other end because you couldn't drive and you couldn't get new tires so if you blew out a tire you were dead in the water. But in any event we spent our summers up there actually until I went to college. To answer you question more directly, generally we took trips to the shore for a week. Sometimes in the summer time we went to a lake in the Poconos this is in the 30s for six weeks. We went to wild wood New Jersey for I think a month one summer, but that was basically what we did. My aunts and my grandmother took me and my next brother to one or a couple of trips to Williamsburg [] that was about the size of it.

AD: So you generally enjoyed these shore trips?

GB: Oh sure that right, but remember in those days people didn't travel that much. A lot of people never traveled out of the town they where born in. So we did in having quote "gone west" on the train and all that we where well traveled at that time by 10 or 11 years old.

AD: So, then it's safe to say by your estimation that level of mobility was unusual for—

GB: Yeah, for that time and that place yeah. People didn't move that much, we moved a lot considering what normal people did.

AD: What sort of things did your parents do for amusement and when they did these things was it more so together or did they do things independently of one another?

20:40

GB: No, they did almost everything together except when my father had business meetings or something like that. He didn't do too much traveling [] company at that time had a refinery in Marcus Hook Pennsylvania and a refinery in Toledo and he had to go to

Toledo on occasion I think once or twice a year. But they did most things together. Visiting friends, having friends over. Going to the movies. Usually when they went out to dinner, the kids were all taken. They didn't go out themselves that much until I was old enough to be in charge. They were basically home bodies, they didn't travel, they didn't go out too much []

AD: I think you mentioned that your father was unwell at one point in his life.

GB: Yeah, he was diagnosed with diabetes at 48 when he was 43 and died of it when he was 61 but was in the family, his mother had it [].

AD: So how old were you when he passed away?

GB: I was in Viet Nam, and I was 35.

AD: I see, so how did this affect the rest of the family? Was he still—

GB: Well, my mother died before he had. She had [] fever when she was ten so in those days that generally meant you had a bad heart and she died at 55 in 1961. SO my youngest brother was 18 at the time, but when my father died he was already in the army he went through ROTC [Reserve Officer Training Corps] at La Salle so [] he was in Korea at the time.

AD: So thankfully you were all pretty much—

GB: Oh yeah everybody was on their own.

AD: That's fortunate. You mentioned where you went to grammar school, you said you went to La Salle College? I mean pardon me, La Salle high school?

GB: Yeah, I got a, in those days the only scholarships were academic scholarships. A girl I went through grammar school with and I sort of vied for being first in the class, she was first in the girls and I was first in the boys. In our eighth grade year the eighth grade nun, which was common in those days, took three or four of the kids who she felt were scholarship eligible and we got special time to get ready for the scholarship exam. Which means we didn't have to go to civics we didn't have to go to health and we didn't have to go to some other stuff. And we had to take all of the exams. I remember during the last, final exams for senior year I hadn't gone to history all year, hadn't gone to geography all year and I got one question wrong on the whole battery of exams, that was "What does

FDIC the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation do?" and I had no idea so I got one wrong, but Jane got two wrong so, but she went to St. Leonard's Academy where she got 25:00

a scholarship. My wife also got a scholarship at St. Leonard's so that's how I met my wife through Jane who later became a Holy Child Nun. So I say I was willed to my wife by a nun. But Jane died about two years ago. She injured her leg playing football, she was the only girl on the 8th grade football team which was uncommon but not unknown, she got an infection in the knee and she got her leg amputated when she was about 40 [], but anyway that's how I got to La Salle High School. My father had told me that I was going to go to Saint Joe's with the Jesuits, because he thought the Christian brothers ran a low paid country club. He went to Saint Thomas College High School in Scranton, he graduated in 1925, and I think he was a playboy student and he thought they were to lax. The scholarship letter came, we were invited to go up to discuss it with the brothers, so my father said "[] brothers, we are going to go up there and tell them that you're going to Saint Joe's." We went up there and the brother who met us at the door invited us into the parlor, was still the brother's house, and they made a little small talk, and my father mentioned brother Augustine who was a cousin. They said "oh yes he's head of the Sociology Department at the college" so they brought Brother Augustine down and it turned out Brother Aluiscious taught Chemistry at high school and he had been principal of Saint Thomas when my father was there. So they came down and they brought out the bottle of Irish whisky and about an hour and a half later, there was much shaking of the hands and we left. And I said something to my father about well "I'm glad that's over with, now I can concentrate on the Saint Joe's exam," which was on Saturday. He said, what are you taking the Saint Joe's exam for, you're going to La Salle, what do you have against La Salle? You'd have to know my father to, so, yes sir! You know [laughs]; I'm going to go La Salle. So I ended up going to La Salle. The problem was of course it was an hour and a half trip by public transportation and that was a long haul, it was three hours a day to get there and back. But after a while when my younger brother started to go there, my father drove us and made his trip down to center city and we came home by public transportation. But it was still a long haul.

AD: So you didn't stay at La Salle when you were there in the dormitories or anything like that?

GB: No, no, no, this was pre dormitory days. The ones right across the street where built when I was a student, but I couldn't tell you anybody who lived there.

AD: So. Just to return, because I do have a whole section of question about that, we return to the issue of you elementary school and high school, what was the curriculum like while you were there?

GB: Well, quite different then the curriculum today. Grammar school curriculum was fairly rigorous. We had religion every day for 45 minutes. We had very good grounding in math, English, we had to diagram sentences in those days. There was a great deal of

memorization which turned out to be extremely useful because I still remember a lot of the answers I memorized. And not just catechism answers but a lot of other things. You 29:02

cannot divine multiplication tables you have to have them memorized because seven eights, unless you write down eight seven times or seven eight times you can't get to it unless you know that seven eights are ninety-three. Anyway, it's ah, and we had a fair amount of homework every night. High school we had three choices. You had an academic curriculum where you took a minimum of two years of Latin and a modern history. You had to take a modern language, and you had to take a math for four years. The science you had to take physics, chemistry and biology plus a lot of math, and then you had business, but that was what we considered the easy course, you took accounting and drawing and, you know, starrng out the window 101 [I laugh] and things like that. Anyway, the big difference between the Jesuit and Christian Brother's education at the time was that the Jesuits required you to take four years of Latin and one of Greek and the Christian Brothers only required you to take in the academic course two years of Latin. I ended up taking four years of Latin and Greek besides. And I took Spanish as the foreign language. The only choice I really had was between Greek and physics and I'm on a couple comities now for the national academy of sciences, and when they start wandering off into fancy equations I say, "gentlemen, just realize that when I was a senior in highschool, I had a choice between taking physics, high school physics or Greek, and I took Greek, and since then all science has been Greek to me," [I laugh] which gets a chuckle at least. Anyway uh when I you wanted to stop at High School.

AD: Yeah that'd be good. I think we'll get into the swing of things. So during your high school and elementary years you mentioned that you really didn't take to sports. What about any sort of other extra curricular?

GB: I was editor of the Wisterian, the highschool newspaper for two years. I was on the staff for about four years. I think my father would've been disappointed if I hadn't done that. I was involved in several other organizations on campus and the big problem of course was because of the distance. Extracurricular activities were obviously after school and if I stayed there until four thirty I wouldn't get home until six. [] And because I went to [] in the summertime, I lost contact with a lot of neighborhood kids and all that and I didn't do anything after hours.

AD: So did you have any favorite subjects or areas of study?

GB: Oh yeah, I enjoyed history. I enjoyed Latin. I tolerated math. I got good grades but I had to work at it. And I'm glad I took biology and chemistry. IN biology we had a teacher who as not a Christian brother which was very unusual [] for a non-brother to teach you. He was just back from war and he was not a very effective teacher. The other one was a historian and he was also just back from war and he was very good. So they sort of balanced out. You can't be a biology teacher with one lab a week and not control your class. He could not control [] class. So there was always a brother coming in a

stomping around. At the end of the [] year he left or was fired or whatever happened to you, let go.

AD: For the Latin courses and things like that, did they having you reading Aristotle or anything like that?

GB: In highschool the standard course the first year was basic Latin grammar. You read made up stories and things like that. Second year was Caesar's Gallic Wars which you had to read. Third year was Cicero and the fourth was sort of a mixture of Church Latin and some other things. In college it was [], the Church fathers. Senior year in highschool I had to take Greek and Latin. The brother had us take the Sunday gospel, which was the Sunday epistle in those days in Greek and it translate into Latin, scouts honor you would not look at the English translation, which was readily available. In general we didn't. Then Brother Pecky would take your Latin composition into the Latin class to compare notes to see how close you came to the Latin vulgate, which was good exercise.

34:30

AD: That sounds pretty arduous actually, Greek to Latin.

GB: Yeah, it's a lot of [] going the other way, I'll tell you. I have no problem following it [].

AD: Did you have any favorite teachers while in elementary school or highschool?

GB: Yeah, the eight grade nun, sister [], who later became the head of the order, was very good. The first grade nun was 19 when she got us as first graders. Just died recently, I kept in touch with her over the years. Each of the nuns in those days had particular characteristics. They were all big and dominating and scary but you see them twenty, thirty years later and they don't look half as scar. Anyway, in highschool there were several. The moderator of the newspaper, I was very close to him obviously because I had to work with him a lot. A number of the other brothers, they are just about all dead now [].

AD: How would you say they influenced you, if you could say that one or more of them imparted certain things to you that stayed with you?

GB: I think the atmosphere of the parish [] Father Higgy was very influential. Particularly with the altar boys in those days, he always had four or five boys in each class, he had 50 or 60 in a class, that went to a seminary. And I was being primed for the seminary I believe but it became obvious I couldn't make it, I was born with two thumbs and in those days you had to have perfect hands. I didn't so that sort of closed the Christina brothers from chasing me []. I think in the High School, Christian Brother's formation was very important in those days. I was at the High School annual communion breakfast, they put me in the hall of fame about five years ago so there was a communion

breakfast once a year and in each classroom they have the motto that we grew up with: “boys will be boys but La Salle boys will be gentlemen” so they still have it up there. I though things like that were passé but apparently they are not. And of course in those days the brothers where ah, well, if they couldn’t get to you one way they’d get to you another and they’d smack you around. A couple where sort of the major disciplinarians. They would look for you if they felt that you needed discipline and they would knock you down a few times [] got your attention.

39:29

AD: So they where pretty strict then, by and large.

GB: Oh yeah, that’s right. I am sorry to see the order decreasing so much in its numbers and effectiveness over the past years.

AD: What did it matter that you didn’t have perfect hands for going to the seminary? Why did that matter?

GB: Because, holding the host you had to have a perfect some. Now its not, I mean now I’m a Eucharistic minister. In fact, in St. Charles seminary, seminarians generally have off a couple months in summer, but they are not allowed to do any work which is manual labor in that could catch your finger in a machine. That was sort of the times.

AD: To return to the strictness of your teachers, do you remember any particular incidents where somebody did something and they got a particularly severe punishment, or did you every do anything and gotten into serious trouble?

GB: I never got into any, not in high school. We had Saturday night dances and Brother Goddalis Thomas was in charge. He was basically the bouncer and everyone wore a tie to the dance and you didn’t dance to close. There was obviously no smoking there was obviously liquor and bad language meant you got tossed out literally. I was in his homeroom, because of my weird schedule with the Greek, I was in the homeroom with the business students and he had them, because generally they were less-ruly then the others. I remember the first day of school he had the weekly schedule on the board. You had to fill out our own course card, and then you took it up and he looked at it and he’d sign it and send it to the officer or something. This one kid went up and stood there with his hands in his pockets. And the brother said “boy, are your hands cold?” And the boy says, “Yeah.” And he ended up three rows back. He slugged him, knocked him back. And he said now, “Help him up back to his seat. I just want all you boys to understand, I’m in charge. The Church is a dictatorship and I represent the Church, and you do as I say, or your going to have to have the same thing happen to you []. Anybody have any questions?” We didn’t have any questions.

AD: So then apparently it wasn’t very common for people to misbehave?

GB: No, no I mean it was a relatively homogenous group because most people came from Catholic schools in the archdiocese. Most people came from Philadelphia schools. During our four years there we had one black student, we had one protestant student, he didn't have to come to religion, he didn't have to come until 9:00 in the morning. And it was mostly Irish and Italian, a few Polish, a couple Ukrainians, this was the diaspora after WW II, but it was a fairly homogeneous group. We wore coats and ties most of the time, sometimes [] jacket. And it was all boys, there were no girls.

AD: Was it all boys just in high school, or both grammar school and high school?

43:44

GB: No, no, grammar school was boys and girls. We had 55, 60 in our class those days. That was not considered to be a large class and my wife was [] handled it very well. In high school it was all boys, in college it was all boys, there were no girls at La Salle in those days.

AD: Now, was that a policy that it was an all boy college?

GB: It was uncommon to have mixed girls and boys in a Catholic high school and it was uncommon to have mixed in a college. In fact I can't think of any Catholic College in Philadelphia that had mixed except Villanova had a nursing school. In those days there were very few males in nursing school at that time, that was a separate entity. [] That's what catholic college where (all boy).

AD: I'm assuming you had friends from school, and the fact that you lived far away, did that limit your interaction with them?

GB: That was the thing. I had more things in [] lake than I had in Philadelphia, because you had two concentrated months there with them. In fact about five years ago we had a party at the motel up there were we invited everybody []. Right now we are closer to people that my wife went to college with than the people that I went to college with because she went to [] which was fairly close to where she was living. The big problem was, in those days, transportation [] cars. So you met at dances and things like that. But you didn't []. The people who lived in Philadelphia basically were still attached to their neighborhoods. []

AD: Most of your friends were from the trips you took in the summer and things like that?

GB: That's right.

AD: Did you have any work outside of your school work during your time as a, like did you have a job or anything like that?

GB: Yeah, during college I worked summers at a Sonoco station. In fact, the second year I was the night manager which meant I was the only one there from midnight to eight. Before taxes I got 95 cents an hour which was good money in those days, because you got 75 cents an hour if you worked the day shifts. I did that for three summers. I did for a couple of weeks the summer I went to ROTC summer camp [].

AD: So you generally didn't have an after school job or anything like that?

GB: No way to do it.

47: 43

AD: Right, because of the distance. So, I don't know what Scranton was like, or the areas were like when you were growing up so this question might be odd, so did you think of an urban person generally or a rural person?

GB: No. Well, suburban. Not rural. I mean, we were, when my father built the house it was the first street of a new development and the development didn't go very far because people couldn't afford to build houses in those days. [] Things were sort of frozen for five or six years and we were out on the edge of farmland but it was really suburban.

AD: So how would you describe the neighborhood that you lived in during your times in grammar school and high school?

GB: By today's standards it was upper-middle class I would say. Most of the people were, well everybody was white collar or close to it. A few professional people. In the streets between us and Church there were blue collar people working so it was the next [].

AD: So as far as race, was it homogenous or was it mixed as well?

GB: There were no Negroes in Haverford Township in those days. Most of the people were []. In the closest six or eight houses there was one Catholic family besides us.

AD: So it was a rarity to have Catholics in the area?

GB: Well, I think the population was growing but most of the Catholics were Italians in South Philadelphia and Irish in West Philadelphia and they hadn't really started to move out. I remember when my father [] my parish to introduce himself to father Higgy, Father Higgy sort of doubted that it was a wise idea to build where he was building because it was three blocks from the parish and a lot of houses were closer. [] very narrow view of the world in those days.

AD: Was your family friendly with any of the neighbors, did your parents have any friends?

GB: Oh yeah! Well, the answer is yes, they were friends with [pause] several, the people next door, across the street. They were all professional people, the man across the street, it was 1945 now, was a retired Colonel Medic, in command of the Hospital at Fort Dix. He and his wife retied there [].

AD: Did your neighbors ever look after you or anything like that? Did any of the ever watch you while your parents had to do something?

GB: The woman next door was the school's first grade teacher and I think she did a couple times when went over there but not really [].

52:02

AD: So then, generally you mother did not have to work too much after—

GB: She didn't have to work at all! But she did, for instance, at Immaculata the head of the science department took sick, the nun, who she had known in 1930, 31. They asked her to come out and take the job and she did and she enjoyed it. This when was I was in college at the time. My brothers where in high school at the time.

AD: Where there any places your parents didn't let you go, or didn't let you be around, or was there ever an issue of "don't play with those children" or something like that? (in the neighborhood)

GB: No, that was never an issue. And there were a lot of places to play. There were woods on both ends of the street really. When we were small we weren't allowed to go by ourselves, but by the time I was nine, ten years old I'd go there all time. And then there was about three blocks away going the other way there was a field where we used to play football and things like that. It was unimproved but it used to be used as an airfield back in the 20's so it was flat and nice for football, I was just a grassy area []. A German who was a conscientious objector during the WWI and fled to Germany, he was brought back and thrown in jail for ten years, but he was quite wealthy, he had a big, we called it a castle, up the road. He became a recluse when he came back because he couldn't afford to go out because someone would hang him, because in those days conscientious objection was not considered pertinent. But anyway, but anyway, he couldn't very well object to kids using the field, but now it's a shopping center [].

AD: You mentioned that the kids would play football, and things like that, what else would you do with the other children?

GB: Well you played in the street, played with street rules, and that was about it. You know in the 40's, in the late 40's, people began to get tunnel vision so somebody would tell me, there was one girl with glasses who's father worked for RCA and he had sort of the first television in the neighborhood. It was one of those console things with a mirror at a 45 degree angle and a [] ray tube looked up, looked at the mirror to see the picture. The picture was about this big [the general gestures showing the small size of the

picture]. But she would invite the favored few over to watch television, it was only on one hour a day and half of it was a test pattern. But what they did was put the television in the palms of executives of RCIA or RCA to monitor the test patterns, but anyway that was a big thing to do.

AD: What does that stand for, that acronym that you used?

GB: Radio Corporation of America, it was a big radio company and it was like ABC, NBC, or CBS and all that. And they were the first ones in the Northeast to come out with television and it was as far as the signal transmitter would go, the network.

56:00

AD: Now that I've established a pretty good picture of your early life and your neighborhood and things like that, I'd like to ask you if it's all right with you some questions about your grandparents and your parents and things like that, get some family history. Where were your mother's and father's parents born?

GB: Both sides of the family were born in the United States. Generally there parents where born in Ireland everybody in the family down to our generation was of Irish extraction. My great-great-grandmother came from Ireland in 1853 on the steamship Olympic from Liverpool, right after her husband was hanged in Dublin as a terrorist. So she for some strange reason decided it was time to leave Ireland and came to the United States. All he did was blow up the royal Irish [] barracks with troops in them, so we have a long history of terrorism in our family [laughs].

AD: Was he part of the resistance movement?

GB: IRA. But anyway, my great-grandfather who was also William Francis was 9 or 10 years old at the time and they settled in Scranton, he married Mary Brenan. They both died in the last years of the 19th century. They had a number of kids, one of whom was my grandfather, who was born in 1870, 72, 73 some time in there. He married one of the three Henry sisters whose father Michael Henry was a stone cutter come over from Ireland. They only had one child, my father, in 1905. Well they had another one who was still born, but he was the only one who survived. My mother's family also came from Ireland. Her father was a clerk in a grocery store that was down Plymouth south of Scranton. He died of the flu epidemic in 1918. My grandmother had a third-grade education. He oldest daughter was born in 1900 and she was a, had just finished normal school in Strasburg, two years to be a teacher and she sort of supported the family when they moved to Scranton and my grandmother was a book keeper, sort of self taught book keeper [] in Scranton. She put the three girls through college. So the only grandparent I really knew was my grandmother, because my father's mother died in '25, he died in '33 when I just about a year old. There where a number of bothers and sisters on both sides of the family, my grandmother was one of 9 and so forth, so, there are a lot of cousins still around.

AD: So, of the one grandparent that you knew, how would you describe her temperament, did you know her very well?

GB: Oh! She was the matriarch of the family. She was in charge. She was a very wise, although not well educated woman. She was very conscious of this since her daughters all had advanced degrees. She wasn't particularly comfortable in anything other than family environments because she always thought that she didn't use the right language and so forth. She was the last that really spoke any Gaelic. Everyone once and a while she would come out with a Gaelic expression. Anyway, she was sort of revered in the family. She died in 1963. She was in charge, I mean she failed in her last years, but before that she was in charge.

01:02:02

AD: Did you see her often?

GB: Yeah, well we spent summers, and I said we used to go up quite frequently, and they'd come down for holidays and things like that.

AD: Do you know anything about what your grandparents did for leisure?

GB: Well, since my grandfather died in 1918 it was a different world. I don't think my grandfather ever drove a motor car, of course my grandmother did, she drove herself sometimes. I can't, I really don't know. Of course, my father's parents, he ran a saloon until prohibition so he thought it was immoral to break the law so he rented it out to another Irishman to run it for him [we both laugh] but they did a little bit of traveling for instance, In 1923 I think they went up to Canada, [], and my grandfather went out to my Father's graduation but that was after his wife was dead.

AD: So, was your, I'm assuming your grandmother was religious?

GB: Oh very, yeah. She went to mass everyday. Went to the family pew and met her sisters and brother there. She had one brother who was a doctor, one brother was a pharmacist, of the two surviving brothers. They would basically [] so she saw them quite frequently.

AD: That leads me into my next question. What do you remember if anything about other older relatives of your family, great aunts or great uncles and things like that?

GB: Well, her sisters on her side of the family, my mother's side, her mother had four living sisters. One was also a druggist who worked with her brother in a drug store. One was a two of them lived [] they were both basically house wives. On my father's side of the family he was an only child, so we really didn't have first cousins. But on my mother's side of the family, Dr. John had a son John who was a doctor, he moved to Dresden [] which is only about six or seven minutes from where we lived, so he was the family doctor. We got to go down, and they had one daughter who was my age now deceased. So we saw a lot of them. That's about it. There's nobody else left on that side.

AD: Where they cognizant of your achievements and where they proud of the things you where doing?

GB: Oh yeah, yeah. But, my grandmother's brothers and sisters where all dead shortly after shortly after I went into the army, they mostly died in the 50's. My grandmother was one of the longer ones to live, she died in '63, but yeah.

AD: So where there any other older people that were important to you as you were growing up?

01:05:23

GB: Well, my mother's two sisters. Of course they outlived her, the oldest was born in 1900 died in 1998 so she was 98 when she died. She was quite spry, in fact we have a picture of her with two of our grandkids playing on the floor here two weeks before she died. She was seldom sick, she was up in the hospital once and that's when she tripped and fell in New York when she was in her 40's. She was assistant superintendant of schools in Scranton, she started off as a guidance councilor and was on a number of boards and committees and commissions. But we where very close to her, in fact when her younger sister died 16 years before her, we saw a lot of her, did a lot of traveling with her, we took her to Florida []. She thought young too.

AD: Having covered that, I'd like to move on to your parents. I'd like to start with your father. You may have said it before but, when and where was he born?

GB: He was born in Scranton in 1905, went to a local parochial school, Holy Rosary, went to Saint Thomas College High School and then went on to Notre Dame. He wanted to become an engineer and had no real intention of going to Notre Dame. He was probably going to go on to Saint Thomas College which was sort of comparable to La Salle College in Scranton, run by the Christina brothers. In the summer of 1925 his mother just died so the family was in a little turmoil apparently. My father went fishing with a Priest friend of his and my father was taken along to row the boat. And he said in later years he said it was sort of like his life passing in front of him listening to the two of them talk. The priest was from Notre Dame, he was a Holy Cross father, and the priest said, "Why doesn't he go to Notre Dame?" My grandfather said, "Well that's a great school, why should he go?" It's a great engineering school and all that. So, my grandfather said, "Okay, let's send him there." And my father wasn't even consulted. So two weeks later he was given a bag with 300 dollars of gold in it which was to cover his expenses which was more than enough to cover a years in college in those days and he boarded the train to Notre Dame. And Father O'Hara met him. Father O'Hara was head of the division department at Notre Dame, later became the Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia. But anyway, my father, I don't know exactly what happened to engineering but he ended up in journalism. He really liked sports writing and sports as a subject matter, he roomed for two years with Red Smith who was a famous sports writer at the time and Red Smith and his wife were the god parents for one of my brothers and my

parents where god parents for Terrence Smith who was his oldest soon and has been on public broadcasting and things like that, he looks very much like my father. Anyway, that's how my father ended up going to Notre Dame and when he came out he came back to Scranton. But in October 29 the crash came and he ended up getting a job in the Poconos at a local newspaper for 13 dollars a week, which was not bad money then but it was bad money for somebody coming out of college but he was sports editor of the newspaper, and he did that basically and some other things. Well, then in 33 when prohibition was over and my grandfather reopened the saloon and my father [] then because there was no work and my grandfather died six months later and then as I said [].

01:10:19

AD: How would you describe his character and personality?

GB: He was the quintessential Irishman, sometimes he had a nasty temper, probably drank too much, he was very good to his family, very devoted to his wife. He enjoyed the newspaper business, he enjoyed writing, he also was a cartoonist he took some courses in [] correspondence when he was in high school, did a lot of cartooning during the war. Some of it he was able to sell. He enjoyed company, enjoyed life. As I say he was a very fervent Catholic. Set a good example.

AD: Would you say he was generally an affectionate man?

GB: Our family was not particularly affectionate in that sense. I wouldn't say he was affectionate.

AD: Despite that, would you say that it was easy for you to interact with him, to speak with him and everything?

GB: Oh yeah, yeah, it was easy to but he was ah, yeah, you had to know how to approach him on issues [a slight chuckle in the General's voice] let's put it that way.

AD: I'd like to move on to your mother. Yet again you may have said this, but when and where was she born?

GB: She was born in 1906, she was born in Marksville, which was a suburb of Plymouth, but it's hard to say suburb because Plymouth only had about 100 people in it and Marksville only about 25. But in those days that's what they would say. But it was Plymouth Pennsylvania. She was the third of three daughters, she was 11 when her father died, and they went to Scranton when she was 12 or 13. She went to the local public school, the Catholic school was two miles away and the public school had all Catholic teachers and about 90 percent of the students were Catholic so they had an hour of religion every morning [] that's what the people wanted so they did. When they moved to Scranton she went to high school [] the same place my father went to grammar school. I think she was in the eighth grade when she started there. My father was behind her because she had skipped a grade or so, and my father didn't start school

until he was 7 ½ or 8 or so they didn't know each other that well. They met when they were fifteen and got married when they were 23 I suppose.

AD: How would you describe her personality?

GB: Very devoted wife. She was a wife of the old school, I remember when they would go to vote she would ask, "for whom should I vote?" because he was head of the family and she was very devoted to the kids, very devoted to us, and particularly devoted to him, and was crushed when she found out he had diabetes because she was a dietician by trade so she, really, he was not on insulin until she died really because she handled the diet.

01:14:49

This was before they had all the non fat, non sugar stuff so she made everything from scratch, she was very good at that. Very good cook, on Thursdays she would bake an apple pie and a lemon pie and a batch of donuts and [pause, motions with his hands as if trying to describe what he is forgetting with his fingers] cream puffs, and often a cake because we would get to lick the bowls.

AD: A very prolific baker!

GB: Yeah, but she enjoyed cooking and we always ate extremely well. I was a fat little boy because of it [we both laugh], but she did a very good job at taking care of us and everything. She did not drive, we only had one car [] in those days. She was very active in Church activities. They started an Archbishop's committee for Christian Home and Family, they visited mothers with new babies and so forth and she was in charge of that in the parish for a while. They were very charitable although in a very quiet way. It wasn't until they died until I found receipts (much of what he says for the next several seconds is inaudible at this point, but what I can make out has him speaking about buying outfits for little girls for communion I think, as well as school uniforms, as well as something to do with schooling paying for something for other children by way of schooling).

AD: Very committed to the idea of works and faith then.

GB: Yeah, that's right!

AD: How would you qualify your relationship with her, with your mother?

GB: Very close, probably closer than to my father and you know, after I was in the army and married and all that of course she doted over the grandkids, although she didn't see them that much because for three years we were in Germany and then we were out in Oklahoma so it wasn't that much. But she looked after the kids, while they were three four years old, and she had a little regime for them, and if they did everything they were supposed to do they would get a gold star on the chart she had an all that kind of stuff. Of course they enjoyed that because they didn't always get the gold star.

AD: So then generally would you say she was more affectionate than your father?

GB: No, they were both, I think it was the generation, the Irish reserve, and I think that was, that was—

AD: That was pretty standard—

GB: You didn't show emotion, you didn't show affection, certainly not in public.

01:18:25

AD: So I'd like to touch on your perceived, what you perceive the influence that your parents had on you and things like that. What sort of values did they emphasize to you as a child and things like that?

GB: They had very high standards. Just as an example, when I joined ROTC we were issued uniforms, shoes, the whole works. But we didn't have shoes initially, this was a brown show arm, so we all had to out and buy brown shoes. I got the cheapest brown shoes I could get because nobody ever wore brown shoes, plain toed brown shoes. So after about three years the shoes really were getting shabby looking so the supply sergeant said, "Give me the shoes and I'll issue you a new pair." I happened to mention to my father that I gave the old shoes in and got new shoes and he really ragged me. He said, "That's stealing, you know, you gave them the old shoes and you shouldn't have gotten new shoes." He didn't understand the army by right issued you the shoes no matter what and I hadn't gotten them for three years. But he was very quick to make moral decisions and things like that. So, I mean, they both set a very high standard for us. I think his only weakness was the creature, which was the Irish problem, drinking too much. And that was not everyday, every night, and he never got unruly, he would just went to bed. Of course, it didn't help with his diabetes until they diagnosed him. Then he eased up on it, but then when my mother died and he was by himself I think that was part of his problem.

AD: Did they ever say that they wanted you to grow up to be a certain sort of person and talk to you like that or say, we want you to be this or—

GB: No, I think, I think, it was just sort of assumed [] they led my example.

AD: Did they ever talk about what sort of profession they wanted you to go into?

GB: No. My father would have been happy to see me as a journalist because that's what he was. You know, I had talked about law, like everybody talks about law in high school. I mean, just in conversation later on, nobody really thought that I would stay in the army, of course the 1950's were a different time. But nobody ever objected to it, nobody ever tried to talk me out of it or anything like that. And I think that probably what helped me was my brother in '52 joined the Christian Brothers which was sort of a wrench because

your son going to St. Charles to seminary was one thing, but going to become a Christian Brother, your only going halfway []. They never said it that way but I think that's what they felt.

AD: So, if you misbehaved as a child what would typically happen?

GB: I mentioned we had a hedge and my mother would go out and cut a piece of hedge about this long [he gestures showing a fairly sizeable switch] and take the leaves off and say drop your draws and you got whacked.

01:23:00

AD: So who was the stricter of the two then, would you say?

GB: My father talked a good fight. He would become bombastic, my mother took action. My father, it was my mother who was really the disciplinarian.

AD: It seems that you parents always tended to encourage you as a unit, so this question might be superfluous but I'll ask it anyway. How would you compare your mother and your father's influence in your life?

GB: Well it depends, different times. I think my mother had probably a greater influence but not that much greater than my father when I was say in high school. I think after my mother died and my father was the only influence, but by this time I was out and had my own kids and everything. My mother died Christmas of 61. In March of 62 we came to Philadelphia [] ROTC at La Salle for three years and we lived two blocks from my father so we saw a lot of him during those three years. We went to Leavenworth and then Vietnam in 66. He died in May of 67 so we saw a lot of him in the early 60's and we were very close then. He was more or less by himself. My youngest brother was still in College and was living with him, but they really disagreed on a lot of things so he was over for dinner at our house all of the time []. The kids loved him. They'd go home from school to his house down the way we used to go, and he'd call and say "don't look for the kids, they'd here." Particularly if they were in first grade and they wet their pants or something they'd go their first because he always had clean underwear for them. Anyway, I don't think we were that much closer to one or the other. []

AD: Just too sort of lay a capstone on the familial discussion before I get into the La Sallian times did you get along with your brothers and sisters, I mean your brothers I should say?

GB: Yeah, yeah. The youngest one he was 11 years younger so he was always a little kid, but no we always got along fine. I mean, obviously we fought but you know, as far as brothers were concerned.

AD: So, now you were the oldest, so would you say that they had any influences on you or do you see yourself having influences on them—

GB: I think I had more influence on them, because I think the oldest is always pushed faster and given more responsibilities and so forth.

AD: Did you have godparents or family friends that had an important influence on you?

GB: Well, one of my aunts, the oldest aunt, the one who died in 98 was my godmother. My godfather was a cousin of my father's who was a doctor out on the West Coast so I didn't see too much of him. My father was an only child so we didn't have close relatives there and my two aunts were spinsters so we had no cousins there. So there really were not that many close family people. As far as nonfamily, the Dr. Colonel across the street he talked army to me and things like that, so he was influential in that sense. But, there weren't too many people.

01:27:05

AD: Lastly, did your extended family, including your nuclear, have any large gatherings during holidays, Christmas, Easter, or reunions or anything like that?

GB: My grandmother and my mother's two sisters would come for Christmas and Easter and thanksgiving or we would go up there, perhaps for thanksgiving. Beyond that there were no extended family gatherings or anything like that. When we went to Scranton of course we would visit aunts and uncles and things like that. The two who owned the drug store were only two blocks away and they'd come over for dinner and things like that.

AD: Do you know how long we've been going for?

GB: Yeah, we've been going for almost an hour and half.

AD: I just wanted to make sure that I wasn't keeping you over or something

GB: No, no, no! Why don't we take break just for a second, let me check []—

AD: Sure.

01:28:41 **End of audio file 1**

00:00 **Beginning of audio file 2**

AD: Alright, we left off about to transition to talk about your experiences at La Salle. Throughout the narrative I'll probably be asking about your involvement with La Salle because it became clear to me as I read through the archives that you've been doing a lot of things with La Salle throughout your career after you graduated. Anyway, as far as the four years at La Salle go, was La Salle then the only school that you applied to, or did you apply to other schools?

GB: In fall of 49 I was a senior at La Salle high school. I won a navy ROTC scholarship. In those days, [] scholarships where the only ROTC scholarships [] and it was a full

01:05

four year education and you where committed then to serve x years in the naval reserve. I had to take physical to pass to get the scholarship you had the same physical you had to take to get into the navy as an officer. And my thumb got in the way again because in 1949 of course nobody thought there was going to be another war and the Navy had been cut way back. The army had a defense budget that year that was 11 billion dollars and that took care of everything, nuclear weapons, the works. So the navy was very picky, and they only picked a very few and the used the physical as a screening device so anybody that had anything wrong with them at all []. So in the spring of 50 I won a full academic scholarship to a college and then got a letter saying that La Salle was establishing an ROTC program. So, first week of June we graduated and I was back the next two or three days later cleaning out stuff in the Wisterian office and with two or three colleagues and we all decided that we where all going to go the college that we where all going to go down and join ROTC because, you know, it was another course and that was about it at the time. So we did. This is about the 15 of June and the 25 of June of course north Korea invaded the south and by fall when we had to go to take a physical for the army as long as you were breathing when you went in you where okay because the draft had been in effect but very few people had been drafted, now they where drafting left and right. And when the end of first semester came about the only people who where left in college where those people who had joined ROTC. You had to have a B average and if your average dropped below a B you where thrown out of the ROTC you reported to the draft board, the draft board was desperate for people and you had passed the physical already. Plus, because you had a semester of ROTC you didn't have to go to basic training, so you where in Korea in 30 days, so it was great motivation to keep the grades up. Of course it was all boys here was no question of girls and boys. You didn't have to declare a major initially, you where sort of taking the academic courses and all that. I switched from Spanish to French as the modern language you had to take, in those days you had to have two years of modern language in college. In those days you had mandatory theology and philosophy courses. Philosophy basically for four years, theology I think for two years or two and a half years. In those days if you had a scholarship there was no limit on the number of semester hours you had to take. The lowest I took was 22 and the highest was 27, and that was no unusual, you just took the courses you where interested in. In my sophomore year the professor of military science asked me if I had ever considered staying in the army and taking a regular commission because in those days if you where declared a distinguished military student in your third year and a distinguished military graduate you could be offered a regular commission, so you went in on the same basis in those days as a West Pointer did. It was sort of the easiest route to get a regular commission. So I thought about it and I was interested so I basically ended up majoring in ROTC but you couldn't do that, so I majored in French because Dr. Guschard [] Fr. Guschard was the head of the French Department and he was very amenable to it. So I took French courses to major in French, actually literature and language was the degree. I took all the political science courses they had, most of the

history courses they had and I took two years of French and I continued with four years of Latin and I took philosophy for four years and I think theology for, I donno two years

06:23

or two and one half years. I spent a lot of time in ROTC, I was the Cadet Colonel for my last two years. Because of course, because the program started in 1950 we had a freshman class and junior class and the junior class had about fifteen veterans who could skip the first two years so they went on and got their commission in 52 and then we where left, there was no intermediate class to we got to be the seniors guys for two years. Anyway, that was sorta, encapsulates my college years as far as that's concerned. The one interesting thing was that I spent a lot of time in ROTC, I still have a recurring dream where I had been so involved in ROTC that I don't even know what courses I signed dup for and its already March and I know I've got classes that day so I'm sort of going room to room in college hall [I laugh] looking to see if it looks like a familiar class that I'm supposed to be in right now, so that must have been a concern in my subconscious that time. But I ended up with a 3.78 average so it wasn't too bad.

AD: That's a lot. So you started attending La Salle in 1950. Was there any, the story about how you joined ROTC, was that a spur of the moment thing?

GB: That was spur of the moment. The whole idea of the [] plan was scholarship, and I would have gone to Villanova if I had gotten one I suppose. Villanova was a lot closer and it was difficult to get there without a car so I saw a way of promoting a car by getting a scholarship to Villanova. Anyway, I didn't get a car for a number of years. Yeah but, I did not go to La Salle for that reason it was gratuitous that I joined ROTC at that time.

AD: How much time did you spend then at La Salle, like throughout the day you would come at what time and—

GB: I used to go relatively early because in that time I had, about the time I was a junior, I had two brother in high school so I would drop my father off at the train, he had a 7:15 train to catch, so I'd get to La Salle at 8 or 8:15 driving, keep the car all day, and I would wait till they where through, they weren't through 'till at about 3:00 and If I had a late class they would have to wait for me. My father would get to the train station taking the train out from Philadelphia about 5:30 and I'd pick him up so it was a long day. Generally I was there all day, and of course with the classes I was taking I had classes just about everyday. It wasn't the modern system where you can have classes Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and sometimes not Thursday. Anyway, that was that was—

AD: I see. I know you didn't have to pay because you got a scholarship but what was tuition like at the time.

GB: Tuition was 250 dollars a semester, 500 dollars a yeah. The high school was 250 dollars a year, and I think the college was 250 dollars a semester.

AD: So, what sort of codes of behavior were important at La Salle?

11:09

GB: Generally coats and ties at the college, although that was a little flexible, more flexible if you wore a sweater or something like that. It was a Roman Catholic college so it was not too different from the high school. I mean, you were treated as an adult but it was still by today's standards a fairly regimented existence. We had a number of, ah, non-brother professors but there were many many more brothers teaching there. I think about sixty brothers lived in the in the [] house and half of these were college so, but, ah, we were still sort of in the immediate post war era, with the Korea war on top of everything so there was a lot of mobility in the student body. People arriving who had been drafted in 50 or 52 and were two years behind and were coming. And because of the G.I. bill of course more people could afford to go to college and classes kept getting larger and larger. When I started high school we were over it what is now college hall because there were only about 90 or 100 students at the college. So the first floor was all high school because they brought in as many high school students as they could to pay the bills. Then, things really started to get crowded and that's when Benilde hall, which was just torn down, was put in as a classroom building. Leonard hall which is gone now was in as sort of a first College Union, book store and all that. Things were pretty crowded. The high school had to move in to where the gym is now they had to build a high school building and the classes were bigger and so forth and so on because they didn't have the space to spread out. But because of the veterans that were still there plus the veterans coming back from Korea college age kids were an older group so they were much more interested in getting an education and less interested in hanging around the campus and things like that. Of course a lot of people had to work so, in college, so that was [].

AD: So it was pretty much, like not that much campus life, you went there to learn.

GB: It was really a day school. There were very few boarders. I don't think there were 100 when I graduated. So the activities were pretty much daytime things and the College Union building, Leonard Hall, was really a cafeteria and that was it. And a book store. But here just, there wasn't that much, I mean they had a theater was there, and there was a theater group, and I was involved in the NFCCA, the National Federation of Catholic College Students, I mean it's a defunct organization now but it was a nation wide Catholic College student's organization. La Salle held the committee of the interracial justice commission. Which in the 50's was brand new and fairly radical and I was chairman of that a year until the college no longer wanted to host it, and this was the early years of the Eisenhower administration and there were some rumblings along these lines and that was about it. There were very few blacks at La Salle so it was not an issue at La Salle but it was an issue primarily in Catholic Colleges in the south, particularly the [] where the Archbishop had desegregated all the Catholic schools and they burnt down a few Catholic Schools because of it was a very tense situation. Loyola [] took in black students and that was considered a bad thing locally. So anyway, they established

this commission to sort of [] sort of an educational tool. So we sent out these letters and things like that and [] and things like that, and Manhattan college in New York was very active because they did have some [] black students. So, anyway, it was an 17:00

interesting time. In my senior year I got out of that whole business because of the ROTC commitments there.

AD: So, since you were the chairman of this, did you have a pretty progressive attitude about those sorts of things, like did you personally agree with the desegregation all that?

GB: Oh yeah! Oh yeah, I think everybody, the great majority of students a La Salle did but they did theoretically because there was no real problem. The black population in Philadelphia at that time was pretty low and they lived in their own area so they just didn't have contacts. It was, popular might be to strong a word, but there was certainly no prejudice against having them accept certain areas of the administration.

AD: You mentioned class sized where bigger, how many people were typically in a class?

GB: It depended. Latin class often times you had five or six people. And some of the French classes you might have 40 or 45. There was a course, French literature from 700 to 1900 and something, and that was a fairly large class, that was all done in French. So we didn't mind it because the odds you were gonna be called on was lower so and that was great, you know. But some of the history classes were fairly large, 50, 60 people maybe. The upper division classes got smaller.

AD: Did you mind being called on at all, or were you fairly vocal?

GB: No, I didn't, I never knew when to shut up probably [laughs], but no I didn't mind being called on. Brother Jude taught several Latin courses, in fact there were a couple of brothers who taught most of the Latin. But he was very demanding and he recited everyday, but of course the class was small. As I said he was very demanding and demanding in terms of Roman history and things like that, his exams were essay exams, were you write on something that you never heard of, that kind of stuff, and then he gave a couple exams were you had to do it in Latin. And you had the responses, essay questions in Latin, which was always exciting. We did a lot of the Latin poets. He had done his dissertation on Roman inscriptions on tombstones and all that, so naturally we had to have a course so we could buy his book. He didn't get any money for it, but it was the idea. That was sort of an interesting course, it was interesting because seven or eight years ago I took two granddaughters to Rome for ten days and I was able to take them by and see some of the original inscriptions and read 'em off and they were startled because they never studied Latin. "Gramps, how did you learn to read that kind of stuff?" "Back in olden times, you had to do things like that." Anyway, the ROTC program was very demanding at the time, this was the first professor of Military Science who started the program who had to show progress, he was very demanding and he had some good

people, well some of the people were good. My freshman year, we got a couple of reservists who were called up, he was in Korea, one was a lawyer from Richmond who was sent to La Salle. He was a devout drunkard, which didn't help matters any. He had 21:45

been imbibing early in the morning and he showed up to a first aid video or something and he passed out. They thought he passed out because of the film, but he passed out because of the vodka that he had consumed that morning so he got fired. But the program was [] than that it was very austere and at that time is not a mandatory program but it was mandatory if you wanted to stay in college, so you went ahead and joined []. Most of the class that came in in 51 joined so it was a pretty big program. At that time, almost all of the officers that were assigned were Catholic. You see in 1950 they added 50 institutions to the ROTC program, they only had 175 before that so it was a fairly large increase and about forty of them were Catholic colleges. So in the eighties, 60 percent of the general officers in the army were Roman Catholic which created some problems in some people's mind, but that's all because of the ROTC programs that started in the 50's. Anyway, one of the things that the Professor of Military Science started was an annual St. Barbara's day parade and a mass down at what was then Holy Child Church, and it was a big parade from La Salle down Broad Street and so forth and when I was back there in the 60's it was still [] before the ROTC program was discontinued. IN the 60's we had almost 2,000 cadets so it was a pretty big parade, and we had a band and a color guard and an honor guard and a triathlon team and all that. When I started none of things had really developed. The rifle team had been started, we had an in door rifle range in under the college union when the college union was built. Anyway, that was La Salle at the time and, but as far as extracurricular activities I think by today's standards they were fairly minimal.

AD: Did you participate in the Rifle team?

GB: Well, when I was back there in the 60's I was the officer in charge of the rifle team, and the officer in charge of the triathlon. Of course with the triathlon, to jump ahead, with the triathlon, very few institutions of higher learning had teams, West Point, the Naval Academy, and a couple of other places and La Salle. So in competition, you had to travel, so we would go to West Point or we would go to Annapolis and we had six or seven pretty good people. The Triathlon was running, swimming, and [] shooting. Of course, it was one right after the other. The regional triathlon or pentathlon was horse back riding and fencing but you had to do the shooting at a gallop which we didn't have horses, that why we went to the triathlon to make it simpler for institutions could have it that didn't have horses and so forth. Anyway, those kinds of things were developed then.

AD: You mentioned, as we both know, La Salle is a Catholic institution. How would you describe the ambiance of the religion, did people often attend Chapel services, were there crucifixes in the class room and that sort of thing?

GB: There were crucifixes in the class room, not crosses. You know, classes all started with a prayer. There was mass as there is now everyday but the attendance was much

higher. It was in the Brother's chapel at that time, they had mass in what is now the chapel which was then an auditorium, but that was only when there was reason to have larger numbers. There was an annual retreat which was voluntary but 80, 85 percent volunteered. And there were other things, for instance one of the extracurricular activities was a liturgy round table. The Brother who was head of the Physics Department would have a liturgy [] and Doctor Holroyd, Holroyd hall is named after him now, from biology were the two sort of the two co-chairs of this. And we would discuss and dissect a bit of liturgy and so forth. Of course everybody knew Latin so if you didn't know Latin, some of us had studied the Greek so you could look at the Greek. Brother [], he knew, ah, he could read Hebrew so it was a very interesting education. In fact I was asked to give a talk on the liturgy last week so it was very interesting to dredge up a lot of the things from that and the thesis and the theory hasn't changed. Things like that were quite common and we didn't have a dormitory situation so that didn't matter too much. Parties were banned at La Salle Boathouse one year because there was actually drinking there and one kid got tossed through a window into the river [] a [] window. People were almost drawn and quartered over that. I mean, there really was very little drinking compared to today, there was very little drink and if there was drinking it was a bottle of beer, it wasn't a few bottles of whisky or something. It was a different age.

29:07

AD: So you mentioned the boathouse, what sort of sports did La Salle have while you were there?

GB: At that time, basketball was the big thing, because La Salle won a lot of championships. Tom [] was there Tom [] was a year behind me. Rowing was very important. Rowing was very important, La Salle won a number of trophies []. La Salle didn't do too bad in baseball, but tennis, gold and all that were really sort of third level, and La Salle had no football, La Salle got rid of football in '48. I think it just got too much to manage. They were the major sports, and there was a lot of intramural stuff, but not too many people participated in that. The people who participated participated. A lot of people worked and because people just didn't live there, wouldn't stay around to play basketball or something in the afternoon or the evening.

AD: One of the reputations that La Salle has to today is as a big community service university—

GB: Community service was not a big thing in the fifties. We didn't call it that. The neighborhood was quite different. The neighborhood was probably you would call it today lower middle class or middle class. And since there was no resident population what you call community service today would be done back at your parish, not at La Salle. Brother Augustine was head of the Sociology Department and he pushed people to think about things like that, but more in a theoretical than a practical way.

AD: Because of the make up of the area.

GB: Yeah, that's right. I mean obviously there were poor pockets that needed help but its not like today were this is a major activity of fraternities, well we had no fraternities, of any particular group.

31: 48

AD: So, you said there were dorms being built while you were there—

GB: Yeah, I think in 52 they started to build and I can't remember the names of them, but the ones catty-corner across the street from College Hall were the first ones to go up. By the time I had left there was one that was occupied there [].

AD: I guess they were up and running by the time you graduated?

GB: Yeah, I think there was at least one, but as I said there probably weren't more than 100 [] students.

AD: Do you know if they had anything like an RA, RAs, Resident Assistant?

GB: I don't know. I think brothers lived there, there was a brother in charge. But I really don't, again there was so few that people just really didn't pay much attention to them.

AD: You mentioned already pretty thoroughly what sort of classes you took, what was the curriculum like at La Salle aside from what you took?

GB: The two strongest areas were education and premed and that was because of the two brothers that ran them. Well, Dr. Holroyd was not a brother. But La Salle had a reputation that if you graduated pre-med and Holroyd recommended you'd get into any medical school in the country. If Brother Ezarias recommended you you'd get a job at the public schools in Philadelphia simply by applying because the standards were very high and they had good contacts and Holroyd was very well respected in the profession. Those are the two sort of shining lights. Business was important but you know the whole concept of a business education was relatively new, and it was difficult to see, I mean some people argued that that was the way to go and then some people said not you had to be in the field of business and what not. La Salle had a good reputation as far a philosophy and theology but people who were going to go into seminary went right into St. Charles right out of high school in those days so you didn't find to many people, you had a few, but you didn't find to many who were going simply to get their philosophy at La Salle. In language, La Salle had a good reputation and was just beginning the La Salle in Europe program and things like that and Guschard pushed those [] Freiburg, Switzerland (note: I might be mistaking on this last city name).

AD: So, are there any programs that were discontinued that you know of, that aren't around today? Is everything continued in one form or another?

GB: I can't think of anything that's been discontinued. I know the Physics Program is dead, you can't get a degree in physics at La Salle, I'm not really sure why. My brother-

in-law, Peggy's sister's husband, graduated in physics in 50, it was a pretty strong program. That's the only one that I know of that was really discontinued.

35:30

AD: So, obviously today we have a university core and these sorts of things. What was that like?

GB: Well, you see, that was the thing. If you were going to major in x, then you might have one or two or three or four options during your course of studies, not that many. You could take more courses but you had to pay for them. Another course cost in today's dollars was almost nothing, in those days it was a lot of money, if you were on a scholarship there was no limit, so you could take anything you wanted. But this core curriculum business is relatively new, it's a new approach because at that time the core curriculum was probably eighty percent or eighty five percent of what you would take. You needed 120 credits to graduate and the sixty that you got in the first two years were pretty well mapped out based on what you major was going to be or liberal arts, were pretty much all the same. The second two years were pretty well blocked in depending upon your major. In those days there was no such thing as a double major, you might have a major and a minor but it was purely a minor that you'd be dealing with.

AD: How did you go about registering for courses, like the mechanics of it?

GB: I think what you had to do was, you had to go to see your course advisor and if the course advisor approved the courses, which basically meant they were in the curriculum model for you particular major then you took the courses. In the lower division it was more or less automatic in the upper division you had some choices but really the choices in you major were pretty well locked in because they didn't teach the same courses every year so if they taught it every fourth semester you had to take it when it came. You had to take a senior seminar, and you had to write a paper generally in your major but that was about as far as it went. Most of it was through your course advisor and I don't remember like registration day were you had to stand in line and do this and do that. The student body was a lot smaller and the registrar was Brother Joseph he had a female assistant secretary and that was it, he handled in very nicely. And the bursar was Brother John, and he had a speech impediment so you had probably understanding what the tuition was sometimes but you had to pay it and he had a secretary. And Joe Bristler (?) was the Vice President of Business Affairs, and he was the President's national brother [] so he ran business affairs basically out of his back pocket. It was very simple. So, nobody really expected elaborate an elaborate ceremony [] to register. And it worked out fine!

AD: The impression that I got when you were talking about what you chose to major in was because the director of that major was very flexible—

GB: Yeah, He was flexible and ah—

AD: Is that why you majored in that?

GB: I mean I liked languages, so I decided I didn't want to continue with Spanish [] and I know in retrospect it was good that I did because I chance to use the language [] (Much of this section for the next several section is inaudible. The phone rang in the middle of this section, and it was at that point that I had to stop the recording because the General had to take the phone call).

40:56 **End of audio file 2**

Recording Log
Interview of Major General William F. Burns USA, retired
By Anthony Nicholas Delcollo
March 14, 2008 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania
Log of audio files 3 and 4

Narrator: Major General William F. Burns USA, retired

Interviewer: Anthony Nicholas Delcollo Electric

Date: 24 April 2008

Location: Mr. Delcollo's town house in La Salle University, St. Miguel Townhouses

Topics: A life history of Major General William F. Burns that encompasses the first half of his life as well as brief section concerning his time as the director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). These two logs include information about the general's years what was then called La Salle College, personal history regarding the General's marriage and courtship of his wife, and information regarding his early military career. Excluded is information concerning his time as a diplomat to the Soviet Union and other nations, as well as more a more detailed examination of his time spent as the director of ACDA.

Note: I have chosen to organize the log question my question. The questions are often not verbatim, but give a more precise notion of what is being asked and the answers that the General subsequently gave.

00:00 Beginning of audio file 3

00:12 (AD: So we left of and you were talking about your languages) The general talks about how he was interested in taking French and the flexibility of John Guschard, a professor. Talks about the specific nature of the degree, and how other languages he took counted towards it as well. The General elaborates about how he took history and political science because he enjoyed them. He noted that his wife was taking many similar courses that he was at the same time and that his gave them an excuse to study together.

01:30 (AD: That's nice. About how much school work would you say you did in a week?) The general indicates that he had a lot of work, and that students procrastinated in his day as they do now. He noted that he feels guilty because he didn't spend enough time on school work, in contrast to his wife. The general relates how the work was not hard for him, especially since he enjoyed most of his classes.

02:23 (AD: Were there any sorts of penalties if grades were too low, aside from having less than a B average and getting kicked out of ROTC?) According to the general, if a

person fell below a 2.0 they would be suspended from activities and could possibly be expelled.

03:06 (AD: Were grades tabulated the same way?) The grades were given in the same way, but the General explains how this was before the days of grade inflation and that grading on a bell curve was common. Fewer A's were given out. To get an A was fairly difficult.

04: 04 (AD: How would you describe the temperament of the Christian Brother and your other instructors?) According to General Burns, they had their idiosyncrasies but were generally competent and took teaching seriously. He mentions how adept John Guschard was, and mentions some history about his life. He notes that Guschard taught because he wished to do so, and was not financially obligated. As a group, the general relates that they did a very good job.

06:13 (AD: Given the reputation of people like Holroyd, would you say that La Salle was a well known and well respected institution?) According to Burns, La Salle had a very solid reputation that was more universal as opposed to parochial. La Salle now has some specialties, which it did not necessarily have in the past.

07:21: (AD: Were there any professors that had a particularly strong affect on you?) John Guschard, the Professor of Military Science, the Latin professor Brother Jude, an Irish World History Professor whose name evades the general.

08:09 (AD: What was their pedagogy like?) The professors would lecture three times a week. Tests were essay based, and there was typically one major paper per semester. It was mostly strict lecture.

09:00 (AD: Would they {the professors} wear suits?) According to the General, attire was always formal by today's standards. The brothers wore their habits.

09:17 (AD: Do you have any friends from these years that you are still in contact with, etc?) 23 graduated from the ROTC program, four offered regular commission, and three took them. The general goes on the say that he still corresponds with the other three and gives information about them and their occasional interaction with one another.

10:53 (AD: How was the ROTC organized and La Salle and how did you end up as the Cadet Colonel?) The ROTC was organized under a Professor of military science who was a Lieutenant Colonel. The Professor had three officers aiding him. At La Salle, the Professor was a field artillery specialist. The program was strongly supported by La Salle; the general mentions how the school supported the marching band, a drill team, and etc.

13:14 (At this point, the doorbell rang with a visitor, so the General had to leave briefly and I stopped the recording for the time being.) **End of audio file 3**

00:00 **Beginning of audio file 4**

00:06 (AD: You were talking about the organization of the ROTC, etc.) In the General's time, they were paid "a pittance by the military." He then goes into an explanation about the low pay for being a professor in the ROTC program, and talks about how La Salle sent a supplementary check each month because the salary was not enough to live on. The ROTC faculty was considered a part of the faculty. As an aside, he mentions the drive to build a gym for the college.

02:24 (AD: You were organized as a field artillery unit?) The General explains how they were taught gunnery and the protocols for operating artillery and talks briefly about the training.

02:58 (AD: What sort of weaponry were you trained on?) The basic training piece was a 105 howitzer. There was a 2 ½ ton truck that could move them, they were fairly small guns.

03:41 (AD: How did you end up becoming Cadet Colonel?) The general relates how he isn't quite sure, but that he thought initially that he wasn't that good at his job. He was made a Cadet Lieutenant early as a sophomore, and was promoted to a Lieutenant Colonel in his next year. He talks about how as the ROTC grew at La Salle, more positions of leadership came into existence and more responsibilities were created. There was a fellow named Major Finkle, a National Guard officer from Nebraska who encouraged the General to write a letter to the Vice President of the US, Nixon, to sponsor a La Salle ROTC trip to Washington D.C. The General talks about how they visited the Pentagon and took a tour of the city.

05:56 (AD: Was it the PMS {Professor Military Science} that promoted you?) The general was chosen by the Professor. The General mentions in a brief aside how during his promotion to one star his former mentor was a logistic Colonel attached to the same base that the General was at.

06:32 (AD: Would you say that you sought leadership roles?) According to the General, it is fairly certain that he did. "I was more interested in being a leader than a follower."

06:57 (AD: Do you think that might have had something to do with your upbringing?) General Burns speaks about how his father always encouraged him to think for himself, and that in his home he was expected to act as a leader as the oldest.

07:12 (AD: What responsibilities did you have as a Cadet Colonel, what did you do?) Being a Cadet Colonel entailed a lot of responsibility. The General speaks about how he had to come up with the training schedule, how he had a cadet staff to help him, and ultimately how committed he was to his role in organizing trips and other things.

08:12 (AD: Did you have any hobbies outside of ROTC and other extracurricular duties?) The General didn't really do much on his own, but speaks about how he played chess a

lot and how most of the reading he would have been interested in he had to read anyway in his classes.

08:54 (AD: How did student react to politics on campus?) GB states that students tended to be docile in the 50's. The general also relates the irony of being awarded ribbon for participating for mere weeks in the Korean War. According to the General, there was little political activity.

10:45 (AD: How much of issues was the Cold War during your college years, were people aware of it?) Since it was the beginning of the nuclear era, the US was in a confident position as the only nation with nuclear capabilities at the time. The Korean War seemed to destruct this notion of supremacy because the new weapons were useless in the conflict. There were anti-air craft and artillery units around Philadelphia activated from the National Guard on the off-chance of a Soviet attack. Artillery batteries speckled the city. There was also the reinstatement of air raid drills during the war. The General's overall impression was that people were aware of it but that it did not completely dominate people's perceptions and concerns.

14:12 (AD: How many guns are in a battery?) It depends on the kind of weapon, GB states. The General then goes on to discuss at length the types of weapons and their groupings in different battalions.

15:12 (AD: Would you describe the campus as generally conservative?) The General notes that La Salle still has a conservative campus, and that in his time it was also conservative as compared to Temple University or the University of Pennsylvania. He reiterates the fact that there was little political activity on campus.

16:24 (AD: How would you describe the intellectual culture at La Salle? Was there an effort made to invite public intellectuals and have other programs of that nature?) There was little of that, GB states. La Salle was not anti-intellectual, but La Salle's major thrust was education and thus was not a research university.

17:15 (AD: Concluding the section of La Salle questions, what was your most important experience at La Salle?) For the General, the ROTC experience was the longest and most profound impact, but he also mentions the importance of the religious experience.

18:15 The topic shifts at this from La Salle to when the general met his wife and his experiences with her. He met his wife at a social event at St. Leonard's where she went to high school, at the behest of Jane. After this occurred, she asked him out to some more events that Jane could not go to. After this happened the General was bound to reciprocate her gesture and asked her to a movie. He introduced Peggy to his parents, they ended up dating, and he courted her for a total of five years.

19:40: (How were you relations with your wife's parents?) The General states that he had pleasant interactions with Peggy's (his wife) parents. He got along with them very well, and respected them.

20:34 (AD: Outside of the movies, what was there for a young couple to do for amusement?) In those days much time was spent studying, said GB, due to their extensive course schedule. They would also do things in groups with her friends. The amount of things to do was fairly limited.

21:46 (AD: When were you married?) 30 June 1955. The general tells a story about how they met in October of '49, and relates an amusing story about the first time he kissed his wife, through which I could not help but laugh.

22:47 (AD: What was your wedding ceremony like?) The wedding was small. The general was an adjunct of a battalion at the time. He had to finish a large amount of work, and his job had restricted their time. Also, her parents had been married on the 30 of June. The ceremony took place at the Church where she grew up. The general also talks about how the reception was at a hall that has since burnt down, and had breakfast for their guests.

24:38 (AD: Do you remember when you proposed to her?) For the General, the project of marriage was something that happened gradually. He explains that they became engaged in '53 and that his father gave him the ring from his mother's ring for the ring he gave to Peggy. There is also a very amusing story at this point about how when he told his Grandmother that he was engaged that she asked him the bride's name. When the General said, "Peggy Cassidy," his grandmother's response was "Saint's be praised, she's Irish!" I laughed quite heartily, again. The General's humor had made taken me hostage numerous times throughout the interview.

26:06 (AD: How old were you when you got married?) He was 23, she was 22.

26:24 (AD: How old were you when you had your first child?) The General promptly answered that his eldest son was born exactly 9 months and 12 days after he got married. He was still 23, she was 23.

26:40 (AD: Did she ever have to work?) Peggy never had to work. She typically stayed with the children. The general explains that in the military it was not common for officer's wives to work, and he mentions that she did teach GED (general education diploma) courses from time to time.

27:10 (AD: Did you want to have four children?) All of the children were born in the first six years, and they did plan to have a family of this size.

27:45 (AD: Did the fact that you had to move around affect them at all?) The General is quick to state that yes it did. According to him, the site of the interview was actually their 29th house. His oldest child was in three different high schools. They were able to adjust, said GB, but it was still very hard. He notes that his two older sons graduated from La Salle.

28:46 (AD: How involved were you in their lives, given your career?) GB was quite involved in his children's lives. He notes that this also depended on his rank and where he was stationed, but that his family was generally with him.

29:54 (AD: Was the way that you were raised reflected in your own methods of child rearing?) How he was raised had very much to do with the upbringing, says the general.

30:29 (AD: Who made decisions as far as how they were taught, and what they were taught?) During the early years the General's sense is that his wife made more of these sorts of decisions. Also, disciplining the children was taken care of by his wife before the General came home from work.

31:23 (AD: How important has religion been for your children?) They all attend mass, according to the General, as well as their children. Religion is as important for them, and almost all of them are observing Catholics. In answer to a follow-up question, the General responds that all of his children attended Catholic schools, with the exception of a public school that had to be attended while they were in Florida. The General goes on to state that his grandchildren also attend Catholic schools.

33:16 (AD: Do you see your sons often?) "Surprisingly, yes." Was the general's answer. All four of his sons, despite their busy schedules, make frequent efforts to see him. This also means that the General visits with his grandchildren often. This led into an interesting story about how the General promised to take his grandchildren "wherever they want to go," and that they have taken him at his word and have taken each of them on vacation to places of interest across the globe.

35:54 (At this point there is a change of topic, shifting away from issues with his family and delving into a brief portion of interview focusing around the General's military career. AD: Why did you ultimately make the decision to go into the military?) When he was offered a regular commission, he decided to take it so that he could get active duty for three years and have the benefits from the G.I. bill to go to law school if he was so inclined. The General then talks about his time in Germany at Fort Sill, and how he was in command of a battery that a captain would usually command. He then goes on to speak at length about a concatenation of attractive assignments including being assigned as an instructor to the ROTC program at La Salle, being assigned to Fort Leavenworth, going to Viet Nam and taking a degree at Princeton. Afterward, he went to the War College, and ultimately stayed in the army because he had a large number of excellent assignments. Other assignments included being given command of a brigade in Germany and assigned as an assistant commandant at Fort Sill. The General related how his toughest assignment was the diplomatic work he did in Geneva, and how he never made a conscious decision to stay in the army. According to the General, it was almost as if the army made the decision for him through a series of worthy and exceptional assignments.

40:20 At this point, I checked the time that we had been recording for. We had reached the three hour mark, but I still wanted to talk to the general about important experiences in his later military career. Therefore, I asked about his transition into becoming a

peacemaker and a negotiator. The General at this point speaks about how he thinks the military are generally peacemakers. "Be at peace or I'll kill you, and I'll break you things." The General used this statement as a bit of exaggeration to make his point. According to him, going to war is the last thing that a reasonable military man wishes to do. Furthermore, in the upper levels of command there is desire to use war only as a last resort. GB took the assignment in Geneva because he wanted confront the enemy face to face and come to terms with them in way that he could not if he had stayed across the ocean. Burns explains that it is an assignment requiring considerable stamina and determination, because of slow progress and the tendency to stalemate. After he left negotiations, he went to the state department and saw another view of the negotiations he had been engaged in. Furthermore, the General speaks about how running the agency was an incredible experience given the impact he had on policy and how pivotal it was to have credible and practical suggestions at cabinet meetings. It was his job to inform the President cogently and help form a rational and effective disarmament policy. Thus, within the context of his Geneva assignment, his role in the state department, and as director of the agency, the General in essence acted as a guardian of peace. He makes mention within the context of his directorship about preventing the spread of Chemical weapons in Iran, and other topics having to do with international weapons of mass destruction control.

47:16 (AD: It what of the various levels in your late career do you think you had the most impact on US policy?) The general at first indicates that he had the most direct impact as director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. However, he notes that the more lasting impact might have been his implementation of the Nun-Lugar act which has done much to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and material.

49:01 End of audio file 4