

INTERVIEW WITH

J. Earl Schaefer

by

E. Alan Thompson
Supervisory Archivist

on

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for

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J. Earl Schaefer
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Oral History Interview with J. Earl Shaefer, Wichita; Feb.24, 1969, by Alan Thompson.

THOMPSON: This is an interview with J.Earl Schaefer of, Vice-President of Boeing Airplane Co. (Retired)

SCHAEFER: Air--

THOMPSON: How would you say it, sir?

SCHAEFER: Ah, Vice-President, General Manager, Boeing Airplane Company, no, Vice-President, General Manager, retired with the Boeing Airplane Company.

THOMPSON: All right, that's fine. The date is February 24, 1969. I'm going to ask Mr. Schaefer here to describe his first meetings with Cadet Eisenhower at West Point. Will you start somewhere around, what would that be 1914? Would that be about right, sir?

SCHAEFER: It would be in the spring of 1914 at the time of my entrance to the Military Academy. I was a "new cadet" who followed Paul Hodgson, Ike's roommate. As the plebe of Paul Hodgson I contacted Paul and then Ike and we were friends from that time on.

THOMPSON: Now you were also from Kansas, did you come from with this appointment from the same district and so on?

SCHAEFER: I came from the 8th district of Kansas which was Paul Hodgson's district and I was appointed by Victor Murdock whose family owned the Wichita Eagle. Victor was then Congressman from this district. He disposed of an appointment to West Point by competitive examination. I took an examination (early in March of 1914) for that appointment and was second. A candidate by the name of William Wooley (prominent in banking circles later in Kansas City) was the winner, but he failed his physical examination and I became the appointee.

THOMPSON: Very good.

SCHAEFER: I came right directly to West Point as a member of the 1918 class and started in June of 1914.

THOMPSON: That would have been--

SCHAEFER: At West Point.

THOMPSON: At West Point and then you went to "Plebe Camp" is that right?

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: Wasn't this the summer camp training session before the academic year began?

SCHAEFER: No, as a plebe you are first in beast barracks for about six weeks, four to six weeks, I've forgotten which and then you join what remains of the Corps for the summertime. One class being on furlough and another class graduating so there would only be two classes there in the summertime and in the winter time then the entire Corps is there.

THOMPSON: All right. Can you tell us a little bit about your first experiences on campus in athletics and so on?

SCHAEFER: Well, you're just a low brow plebe and you're trying to be integrated into the Corps by an aggressive group of upper classmen that are anxious to see that you're the right kind of material for a corps of cadets.

THOMPSON: Do you remember anything in that first academic year, perhaps on the sports field and so on where you ran across Eisenhower and some of the other people of that class, the class of '15?

SCHAEFER: Well, I barely knew any of the upper classmen. Ike and Paul Hodgson, I knew him fairly well. Ike just knew me as a fellow Kansan who was Paul Hodgson's plebe and he said "hello" to me and a few things like that. But we never got very well acquainted until later on in life.

THOMPSON: Now somewhere in a letter I believe you describe sitting in a tent where Eisenhower was strumming your mandolin. Do you remember that experience?

SCHAEFER: No, I don't remember it as in a tent. It may have been either in a tent or in the barracks when I played a mandolin. Ike was very much impressed with my ability with a mandolin. I was pretty good at it at that time.

THOMPSON: All right. Now, after graduation (of course the war was well along), what was your first military experience after your commission?

SCHAEFER: Well, I first went with the 46th Infantry at Camp Taylor, Louisville, Kentucky. But before that I reported to Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis and was assigned to the 46th Infantry. Immediately on reporting to my regiment I wrote a letter to the Adjutant-General of the Army requesting a detail to the aviation section, Signal Corps which was in accordance with the request I had made as a cadet at West Point. I'd asked for aviation before I had graduated. The story on that is every cadet, about six months before he graduates, is asked to give a preference for the branch of service that he wants. You are permitted to have three choices.

THOMPSON: Preferences, would that be the word?

SCHAEFER: Preferences, yes, preferences. And I put down my first preference is aviation, my second preference is aviation and my third preference is aviation and when that came to the attention of the Commandant of the Cadets who was Capt. Chaffee, later General Chaffee (the one who mechanized the cavalry). He called me on the carpet and wanted to know what kind of a reply this was to his request for official information and I said, "It's

quite sincere, sir, if I have any preference at all, my first preference is aviation, my second preference is aviation, my third preference is aviation." He said, "Well," he says, "I believe you've convinced me. We've never had a situation quite like this before. You go back to your room and write the Adjutant-General of the Army and we'll see what happens." So I did right away and I got a reply in about 10 days saying, "this cadet will have to be assigned to a line organization and detailed to aviation section, Signal Corps." I then reported in at Ft. Benjamin Harrison and wrote a letter the same day. I wrote that letter that night and I got a reply within 10 days and it says, "there are no details being made to aviation section Signal Corps at this time, but within another month write your letter again and we'll see what we can do then." After a month the 46th Infantry was transferred to Camp Taylor, Louisville, Kentucky, and by that time the Colonel, J.N. Pickering of the 46th Infantry, told me that he was much impressed with me. He needed young officers and I was the only West Pointer he had in the entire regiment and he wasn't going to lose me. He made me assistant regimental adjutant. On several occasions

I submitted my request for detail to aviation section, Signal Corps and each time he would write "disapproved" on it. So one day when he was on a particularly heavy inspection tour he came (it was snowy) and he came to the office and there was quite a few papers on his desk that were ready for his signature. He looked them all over and he said, "Well, what are these?" I said, "These are all routine, sir." And so he signed them and in that group of papers was my request for detail to the aviation section, Signal Corps. In ten days, my orders came through and when he found out what happened, he just gave me hell and told me off in no uncertain terms, "I should've court-martialed you." I said, "No, sir, that was all routine," I said, "I told you it was routine and you know, I've been making routine requests for this detail for weeks." And so he said, "Well, you'll just get killed, you'll just get killed and I will just lose another good officer." And so I came back to Wichita for a few days to get married and my fiancee at the same time says, "Well, if I hadn't gone this far with our marriage, I would forget it too. Because I don't think you ought to get in aviation." So I got married and

later in March we went to the University of Texas to ground school, where General Barton K. Yount was the commanding officer. He was a delightful person.

THOMPSON: Now, the University of Texas then was supporting an aviation cadet program, was that the idea, during the war?

SCHAEFER: There were several universities set apart for aviation ground school training and Texas was one. There was one in California, and I think there was another one back east.

THOMPSON: Well, you went into aviation just as it was beginning.

SCHAEFER: Oh, yes.

THOMPSON: Did you in your remaining years in the army have any relations with or meet such people as Hap Arnold or Tooie Spaatz?

SCHAEFER: Oh, yes.

THOMPSON: Is this when you first met these people?

Mr. Schaefer

SCHAEFER: I knew Tooie Spaatz by reputation as a cadet at West Point. He was interested in aviation. Hap Arnold I knew by reputation only until I got into commercial aviation here in Wichita. However, I knew Hap when he was at Ft. Riley. We were very close friends.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

SCHAEFER: And I--Mrs. Yount and Mrs. Arnold, two of the outstanding widows of service people I got quite a letter here just the other day from Mrs. Yount.

THOMPSON: Oh, yes. Before we go into this, and we will want to come back to some of your army friends who stayed in army aviation, let's step onto your next career. Just a few years after the war was over you left the service, retired from the service and you got a new job. Can you tell us something of what went through your mind at this time?

SCHAEFER: I left the service because there was difficulty in bringing about a separate branch of the service for aviation:

Mr. Schaefer

the Air Corps. I was one of many regular Army officers on detail in the aviation section Signal Corps who were transferred back to line organizations. I was sent to the 10th Infantry I think it was, or was it the 25th Infantry. It was the 25th Infantry, I think. And when I got those orders I submitted my resignation right away. Washington was at that time accepting resignations of regular army officers who gave as pecuniary reasons their desire for getting out. I wanted to get out if I couldn't fly. I didn't want to continue in the service.

THOMPSON: I understand.

SCHAEFER: And that's why I got out and--

THOMPSON: Now this was 1922, is that correct, sir?

SCHAEFER: Well, it's 21, Mrs. Schaefer says, she's better on dates than I.

THOMPSON: All right. Very good. Now from that point you went with Goodyear Rubber and Tire Company.

SCHAEFER: Yes, I went with the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in Houston, Texas. I looked over the field there and picked out three firms after looking over their plants--what kind of looking places they were, one of which was the Hughes Tool Company a beautiful set-up--and I was interviewed by the manager who was a retired army officer who had come from the service as a Colonel and he says, "Well, Mr. Schaefer I would like very much to have you go to work for the Hughes Tool Company but," he said, "I want to tell you right now that you have to learn to understand and tolerate the boss' son who is somewhat of a mechanical genius." He referred to him as a "snot-nosed kid." That's exactly what he said, and the "snot-nosed kid" was Howard Hughes. The Colonel, I thought was telling me that it's a nice place to work if you can tolerate the boy. I didn't want to get fouled up in anything like that so I went to work for the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company which had just opened a new branch in Houston. After being there a year I always wanted to be able to say 'I made the payrolls of own.' There was a bankrupt franchise for the Federal System of

Bakeries in Galveston and I was able to sign notes for the acquisition of that franchise. So I went to Galveston, Texas.

THOMPSON: Well, how long did you stay there with Goodyear-- about one year roughly?

SCHAEFER: With Goodyear, yes.

THOMPSON: And then you went to Galveston, for how long did you-- We're doing a little historical research into Mr. Schaefer's early career in aviation. He has told us that for about a year, from 1921 to early 1922, he was with Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in Houston, then for the following several years he was in Galveston, Texas with the Federal System of Bakeries.

SCHAEFER: That's right.

THOMPSON: And in February 1923, came to Wichita, now what brought you back to Wichita, sir?

SCHAEFER: Well, my father and I were in business together in Galveston and we got the business going fairly well and I had

Mr. Schaefer

an opportunity to come up here with a friend who was driving and in those days it was rugged driving. But I came back to Wichita and got started here in the automobile business. And then from that I went back into aviation in 1927 with the Stearman Aircraft Company which had just been moved from Venice, California to Wichita and incidentally for these details the boys at the plant in Wichita have files.

THOMPSON: What was your role in Stearman--let me just ask that one question?

SCHAEFER: Well, I started out as Sales Manager and Secretary.

THOMPSON: All right.

SCHAEFER: And then I became Secretary and finally General Manager. From that time on it was first, Stearman, then United Aircraft Transport Corporation, then Boeing and then the different corporate names for the development of Boeing throughout the years.

THOMPSON: All right, I think that explains it very well. Now

at one other time there was an important contact during these early years between you and the Philippine Army Air Force. As you told me earlier the Stearman plant here in Wichita supplied the Philippine Army with the Kaydet Trainers. What was that aircraft? Can you tell me a little bit about it? When it was developed? And so on.

SCHAEFER: The Kaydet Trainer was developed by Stearman here in Wichita and later became the primary training aircraft for our own Navy and Army. We built over 10,000 of them including equivalent spares.

THOMPSON: That's a very impressive figure. Now when the Philippine Army purchased these, I believe you told me that a certain "Jerry" or Lieutenant William L. Lee was in command of the Philippine Army Air Force.

SCHAEFER: Well, he was the commanding officer of the Philippine Army Air Force. He was teaching in the Philippines. He and Lt. "Lefty" Parker were teaching Filipinos to fly. Now Ike was on Mac Arthur's staff at that time and Jerry and Ike be-

came quite close friends. It was then that "Jerry" taught Ike to fly.

THOMPSON: In one of your Kaydet Trainers no doubt.

SCHAEFER: In one of the Kaydet Trainers.

THOMPSON: All right.

SCHAEFER: That's right.

THOMPSON: Now I think we can move along now. Let me stop here and say that this would have been about 1934-1935, just as-- or perhaps it was 1936, would you care to give a guess as to when this would be?

SCHAEFER: Well, again, let me suggest you get that through the Boeing relations staff.

THOMPSON: All right we can get that from other records.

SCHAEFER: Yeah.

THOMPSON: Now in--

SCHAEFER: Herb Hollinger at Boeing would be glad to help you with this.

THOMPSON: All right, fine, we'll take that up later. Now if we can move along. In World War II we find you here in Wichita with Boeing of Wichita, building--

SCHAEFER: B-29's.

THOMPSON:--B-29's during most of the war.

SCHAEFER: And to tie Ike into that. When he came back from a visit with his folks in Abilene, Kansas; in Kansas City they had a big parade and reception for him. I have a picture in my photo album where I hand Ike a miniature B-29 airplane commemorating the occasion. The model, I think, is now in the Eisenhower Museum at Abilene. And I think the particular thing I remember about that most was one of the reporters on the reviewing stand, Mrs. Eisenhower, Ike's mother, was seated right near me, and one of the reporters had asked her if, "Aren't you proud of your boy?" And she says, "Which one?"

THOMPSON: Very good! Now--

SCHAEFER: Ike and I visited a little on the reviewing stand. I remember this observation during his speech while he was talking, he was holding on to his thumb, and it's a great big thumb. He has big hands. I never will forget seeing him hanging onto that big thumb as he's speaking. He was always very good at public speaking even as a cadet. He liked to visit with other cadets, and he liked to argue with them in a friendly sort of a way. I liked a good argument.

THOMPSON: Now there were many other times of course after the war when the General would come through here or through neighboring cities and you would often get together.

SCHAEFER: He was only here intermittently but any time he was here I always saw him and we always visited together.

THOMPSON: All right. Now we move along I think a little bit towards 1951-52 and we get into the business of a little political campaign and here you become a key member (if we can use

that term) in the campaign here and in business circles for 'Eisenhower for President' campaign.

SCHAEFER: Well, I think you'll find in this file that you have, letters when Ike was in Europe and everyone was pressing him to be President. I wrote him on several occasions telling him to watch out. He was not a politician, he was a military man and a good one. I said, "These politicians will wrap you around their fingers if you're not careful, so do be careful." I remember so well when Senator Carlson went over to NATO to confer with him about running for the Presidency. I think I wrote him then and said, "Now, Frank is one of my very best friends but he's a politician and you're a military man and just watch your step." But I thought he just got along beautifully. I don't think I was, in fact I'm sure I wasn't overly concerned about him. He handled himself quite well. I know from history: Grant was not a scintilating president. And I think Ike did better handling military problems than political. All told, however, I think he did remarkably well. With the final result, I think he did a marvelous job. I'm proud of him.

THOMPSON: Well, you, I believe, frequently stressed in your letters that you feared that his military career and training does not equip one too well for a political life.

SCHAEFER: That's right, that's--

THOMPSON: Yet you were militarily trained and went into business and made a success of it. Do you see any reason then--

SCHAEFER: Well, I think there was quite a bit of difference. I was only in the military for a few years and I was young. I had a lot to learn in the very few years but the military training and discipline was good for me. I got along beautifully with Goodyear and I went right up in that organization. I was on the way up in Goodyear very quickly. When they transferred me to Akron, I turned that down because I wanted to go in business for myself.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

SCHAEFER: I wanted to know what it took to make a payroll and to compete in business. That was rugged! Ike had never been

on the business firing line and I thought it was pretty important for me to have that background.

THOMPSON: All right, can we pause for a moment perhaps here in developing this and let's discuss some of the other military figures you have known well in your life. You mentioned a couple of them earlier. We have, Hap Arnold, Henry H. "Hap" Arnold--

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: As Chief of Staff of the Army Air Forces during World War II he undoubtedly had many occasions to correspond with you, and to meet with you, and to even visit with you in your home and at the plant; is that correct?

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: And in your home?

SCHAEFER: Oh, yes. I've known General Arnold and Bee, his wife, for years. Just before declaring World War II, I was called to Washington as part of a group of top military contractors, by General Arnold. It was in the early days, preceding the declara-

tion of war or whatever we called it at that time. Anyhow, we were called together and all were sworn to secrecy. He said something casually about this being a very important meeting then he says, "I want you to know that I called this meeting for a very important purpose." "Hap" then looked at me and said, "The first thing, Earl, I will need", and he pointed to me "is training planes", he says, "I have to train pilots and," he says, "I want you to start building 600 training planes right away." And he looked at me kind of funny and he says, "Yes, I want 600." Then he says, "What are you going to do about it?" And I says, "Well, the first thing I'm going to do is catch my breath." And he says, "Well, Earl, that's the first job I want done." And we started building PT's right here just as rapidly as possible.

THOMPSON: PT's? You mean for pilot training.

SCHAEFER: PT's for Primary Training.

THOMPSON: Training planes.

SCHAEFER: Training planes--yes.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh. During the war now you built the PT's, B-29 here in Wichita in this plant, and B-17's parts here and assembled and built in Seattle.

SCHAEFER: Yes, uh-huh. Then B-17 parts in Wichita and CG4A gliders for the "D"-Day assault.

THOMPSON: The B-17's came out of the Seattle Boeing plant, is that correct?

SCHAEFER: That's right, we built, however, parts for the B-17 here, we built the wings, many of the wings here and other parts of the airplane.

THOMPSON: We can get that from the records in the office I'm sure.

SCHAEFER: Yeah, they've got all the historical records. Plane Talks and everything like that, contact Herb Hollinger for data from him.

THOMPSON: Oh, very good. Now another person whom you would have run into very early would have been Carl Spaatz "Tooie" as he was known.

SCHAEFER: Well, I didn't know Tooie very well. Hap was my big contact, Tooie was under him and I would see him but once in a while. But every time I was in Washington Hap wanted to see me and it was always in connection with this training plane program for he wanted progress reports and answers from "the horses mouth," as he would say.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh, now what about George Kenny, now--

SCHAEFER: Well, George Kenny and I are very dear friends. He was in charge of Wright Field in the early days. He's a brilliant officer, an M. I. T. graduate. He just did a terrific job in the Pacific. For example, to give you some idea of how dynamic George is. He's a short stockily built little rascal and Mac Arthur didn't like his looks for some reason or other. He says, Mac Arthur told him he needed to get some airplanes over the mountains to one of the islands in the Pacific. But anyhow George told him, "Well, I can get the airplanes over the mountains." And he said, "All right, you go ahead and do it." He says, "I'll have them over there in so many days." Mac Arthur laughed at him and called him a "little runt" something of that

nature. So George disassembled the airplanes and cut them in two with blow torches and then flew them over the mountains and then welded them back together. Ever after that MacArthur just swore by George Kenny and they were fast friends.

THOMPSON: And I can understand why. What about Bill Lee? We were talking of him earlier in the Philippines--did you keep up your relations with Bill?

SCHAEFER: Yes. Bill or "Jerry" as I know him corresponded for years and still do. He's quite a dynamo. He thinks the political machinery of the country is going to the dogs and he's in trouble with the politicians all the time. But he's a big raw-boned Texan and just as sincere and conscientious as you could ever ask for. "Jerry" got in trouble during the war when Marigon, one of President Truman's friends while in Italy, Rome, I believe it was, Marigon was making quite an ass of himself while drunk. Jerry was then a B.G. and he went over to Marigon and told him to shut up, Marigon said, "Apparently you don't know who I am." Jerry slapped him. He told him he was making an ass of himself and to calm down. Again Marigon said,

"Apparently you don't know who I am." Jerry said, "I don't give a damn who you are, you're making an ass of yourself." And he says, "Get out of here." Marigon said, "Mister, you'll hear about this." And by gosh in a few days Jerry lost his star. He (Marigon) reported to Truman and Truman then took his star off of him. As time went on, Ike invited me back to one of his dinners at the White House. While there, I was visiting with Mamie and asked her if she ever heard from Jerry Lee and Bert, his wife. She said, "Goodness, I haven't heard from either of them in quite some time." I then said, "Well, do you know that Jerry is still a Colonel?" And she says, "Why! Didn't he ever get his star back?" I says, "No." And so I said, "Well, that's interesting, isn't it?" She said, "It sure is," she says, "I'll have to tell Ike about that." And in a few days Jerry had his star back. Jerry is now retired as a B.G.

THOMPSON: Very good. Now you were speaking earlier of your cadet days and P.A. Hodgson who was Ike's roommate.

SCHAEFER: Yes, well, Paul Hodgson was a Wichita boy. He went to Fairmont College and was a brilliant student there and a good

football player on the Fairmont team. He was beautifully built and was in one of the "flanker companies." He was in "A" Company and that's one of the--

THOMPSON: Where the tall men were.

SCHAEFER:--the tall men are. Hodgson was on the football squad at West Point. He saw me come in and says, "Well, gee whiz," he says, "Earl, I thought you'd be football material but," he says, "you only weigh 135 pounds." And I said, "That's right." And he says, "Well," he says, "our line is 190 pounds from end to end." And we had Merillat on one end and Bob Neyland, who was on the other end. Bob later was the coach at Tennessee. And so Paul says, "Well, you going to have to get some weight on you." We visited around. P.A. made a big name for himself. He was handsome, good looking, and personable and an excellent student. He graduated in the engineers. And so he went into that service. Later his health commenced going bad. The family has a history of severe arthritis. He died about 10 years ago and you'll see in the files letters I wrote Ike and Ike wrote me about our visits with P.A. Whenever I had to go to Seattle,

Mr. Schaefer

for example, I'd route myself by "Frisco" to see Paul. But he died in terrible shape. He had to look through prismatic lenses he was all so tied up with arthritis. He had to sleep half-way up in bed. But he was still a marvelous bridge player. He and Ike, to their dying days, loved to play bridge. Both were good bridge players.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

SCHAEFER: Paul and his brother were quite prominent in Wichita and well liked.

THOMPSON: Now here in Kansas, too, of course, you've met many people who have been influential in Eisenhower's White House years and I wanted you to comment a bit about some of them, for instance, Frank Carlson, the Senator from Kansas.

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: When did you first know Senator Frank Carlson?

SCHAEFER: I knew him as governor of Kansas and knew him quite well then and since. He was a delightful person and a good

politician.

THOMPSON: All right. What about Franklin D. Murphy? Now you were working with him on a program for acquisition by the Universities of certain equipment and what-have-you after the war.

SCHAEFER: Oh, yes, well, Franklin D. Murphy--

THOMPSON: Was the President of University of Kansas after the war.

SCHAEFER: I was on the Aeronautics Board at the University of Illinois, I helped get some war surplus equipment for the University. I thought that was what you were thinking of. Then I knew Franklin Murphy, who was later Chancellor at UCLA, and I knew him quite well. He was a delightful person and I worked with him as a member of one of the Boards at Kansas University.

THOMPSON: I think I've about gone through the list except for one post-war associate you and Eisenhower knew, and that's Robert Patterson, the Under Secretary of War.

SCHAEFER: Yes. Well, I just knew him as Secretary. I was one of the government's principal contractors in the defense effort. I knew Mr. Patterson fairly well and I thought a great deal of him. He did a marvelous job. Our relationship was strictly business.

THOMPSON: O.K., I think I had just one other name. In a letter to General Eisenhower you recommended this man to the General. He'd had a previous relation with him under the Eisenhower Foundation and that's Colonel A. E. Howse.

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: Or Al Howse.

SCHAEFER: Colonel Al Howse was one of the men I talked to you about and about whom you asked my opinion.

THOMPSON: How long have you known Mr. Howse and did you have anything to do with his joining the Foundation?

SCHAEFER: First I knew of Al was when he became associated with

General Kenney at Wright Field. He was Kenney's executive officer and a brilliant man. He just worked day and night studying Army regulations. He knew army regulations and general orders remarkably well. After about six (6) months in Wright Field he knew the ropes there better than half of the people in the whole doggoned Air Force.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

SCHAEFER: He was a brilliant student and still is. He was just a most unusual officer and if you're going to visit with him you'll find him very, very interesting and very personable. If he wants to talk to you. If he isn't willing he'll tell you in no uncertain terms. I--

THOMPSON: That's fine. All right, well, we'll be getting together with Mr. Howse, I hope.

SCHAEFER: Yes.

THOMPSON: One other person whom you seem to have been associated with and tried on one occasion anyway to get together with General

Mr. Schaefer

Eisenhower and that was Paul Harvey, the commentator.

SCHAEFER: Oh, yes, well, Paul Harvey and I are very good friends. I've known him for years. He was originally from Tulsa and later he was on a radio station I think, in Salina, Kansas. Now Paul is one of the top commentators, a brilliant man and a very dedicated man. I'm very fond of Paul Harvey. And if you have occasion at all to listen to any of Paul Harvey's five-minute talks each evening he'll give you something to think about.

THOMPSON: Yes.

SCHAEFER: He's brilliant.

THOMPSON: Is there anything now that you can think of that you'd like to tell us about that you think we ought to get on tape here?

SCHAEFER: Well, I don't know. I think I told you about my appointment to West Point. I was one of 13 to take the examination for the appointment and I came out second. Wooley was first and he failed the physical and I made it. I recall

Mr. Schaefer

one interesting incident. I was asked for the number of signers on the Declaration of Independence in the history examination. I pictured, on the history recitation room walls, a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence and I put 112. Then I got ready to turn in the paper. The officer was there waiting for me. I drew a line through it and put down 56. A few days later when they were commenting on the examination I was asked, "Mr Schaefer, how did you get the number of signers of the Declaration of Independence?" And I said, "Well, I pictured a facsimile of the Declaration on a history recitation room wall and put down 112. Later I decided that I would divide that by 2." And I was the only one out of 13 to get the correct number of signers of the Declaration of Independence--

MRS. SCHAEFER: Sheer luck.

SCHAEFER: Yeah. And then this is somewhat of a long story. Do you remember when the "Black Tom" bombing of the docks at Hoboken took place just before World War I was about to get under way?

THOMPSON: I've heard of it, I've read of it, yes.

Mr. Schaefer

SCHAEFER: Well, several months before we had entered the war it was thought, after the "Black Tom" Hoboken bombing, that the perpetrators of that act might be found somewhere around West Point. So we were called together (The Corps) and told of this possibility. All the waiters were taken out of the dining room and the adjutant then read a secret order saying that the people who bombed the docks were thought to be around West Point. The cadets would form cavalry details on the day following and scour the hills near West Point and look out for blazed trails and any other evidence of the perpetrators of this bombing. In the middle of the meal the Corps published this order. Then, at the end of the meal, the cadet Adjutant goes around and picks up messages from cadets about lost books, etc, and publishes notices such as "cadet so and so would like to meet cadet so and so in front of the old gymnasium immediately after dismissal", and things like that. Little personal messages. And so I wrote a message and turned it in to the cadet Adjutant. He was reading through these different items like lost books and everything of interest to the cadets when

Mr. Schaefer

the adjutant came to my message--"Cadet Schaefer would like to see the following named cadets in front of the old gymnasium immediately after dismissal--very important." And then he started reading names: "Cadet Shultzie, Cadet Dursmith, Cadet Schwartzkopf, Cadet Jank, Cadet Keiser" and others--all of the German names in the corps I could think of, see. He got about halfway through with the list when the corps started laughing. So I was skinned for publishing a facetious order in the mess hall. Let's see. And then Captain William P. Ennis, known as "Bull" Ennis, Field Artillery, was in charge of Field Artillery Tactics when I was a cadet. This all took place a few weeks before graduation in August 1917. I was in charge of a mountain artillery detail during a practice march. Captain Bull Ennis was the tactical officer in charge of the problem. I was told to have my detail ready to go at 5:00 A.M. We had been out about 10 days on this march. It was in August and the mules backs were sore and everybody was anxious to get home. I had the detail ready to go at 5:00 A.M. and no orders and at 5:30 there were still no orders, but the mules were restless, the sun was coming up, and it was getting hot. So I finally told

Mr. Schaefer

the detail to put the guns down on the ground, to relieve the mules sore backs. After getting the guns down on the ground--who should come in sight but Bull Ennis, "Who is in charge of this detail?" I said, "Cadet Schaefer, sir." "I thought I told you to have this--" And I said, "Yes, sir, but--" and that "but" was a mistake, he just tore me apart in no uncertain terms. Now time goes on and I am officer in charge of flying at Post Field outside of Fort Sill. The commanding general at Fort Sill was now General William P. Ennis. An orderly came into my office one day about 10:00 o'clock in the morning and he says, "General Ennis sends his respects and wants to know if it would be possible for him to fly a reglage [artillery spotting flight] of 155 mm artillery at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon." I says, "Who?" And the orderly says, "General Ennis." And I says, "Why, yes, indeed, I'll be glad to take care of the General's request." At 2:00 o'clock the General drove up and he introduced himself. I introduced myself. He told me where the BT line was and so I flew the reglage for him and did it myself. I was then officer in charge of flying. When we got through with the reglage, I throttled back and asked

Mr. Schaefer

him if he'd like to fly around the country and let me show him what the airplane would do. He said, "Yes." So I wound that airplane up for all it was worth. I had a good time with him. When we landed, he said, "What did you say your name was?" And I said, "Why, Lt. Schaefer, sir." And he said,--

THOMPSON: When you landed now, sir.

SCHAEFER: Yeah, when we landed from the flight over the mountains and the completion of the reglage, General Ennis called me aside and he said, "Lt., what did you say your name was?" I says, "Lt. Schaefer, sir." He says, "Didn't you and I have a little difficulty with a problem back at West Point when you were a cadet?" I said, "Yes, sir." He says, "Were you thinking about that incidence when we were up there?" I said, "Yes, sir." And he says, "Well, are you married?" And I said, "Yes, sir." He says, "Mrs. Ennis and I would like very much for you to have dinner with us soon." Now I've forgotten why we didn't get to the dinner, but I don't think we ever had the dinner. Anyway the General and I became very good friends. He was a delightful person. He's dead now.

Mr. Schaefer

THOMPSON: Do you have another story here?

SCHAEFER: Well, here's, the last thing I thought you might be interested in. My first ride in an army airplane was in an OX 5 jenny on 7-1-1918, the number of that jenny was 2713, the sum of the digits was 13 and it took place at 1:00 P.M., the 13th hour of the day. Now, I lived very happily at 13 Huntington for 15 years and on 7-24-52 the boys at the plant took me up in a B-47 to give me my first ride in that airplane even though we were building them at the plant. I looked up at the tail on the airplane and it was airplane #12235 the sum of the digits is 13. I've had all kinds of experiences throughout my life with 13--

THOMPSON: 13 coming right up.

SCHAEFER:--it's pretty lucky.

THOMPSON: Very good.

SCHAEFER: Yeah.

THOMPSON: Well, thank you, Mr. Schaefer.

3-3-71

Mr. Thompson

Gen. Bradley was also a good friend. He and Mark Clark are old and dear friends--both classmates of Ike. I think you have letters from my files which I turned over to you. General Wilbur is another dear friend then I have my classmates. All of whom are dear friends. General Albert C. Wedemeyer is also one of my closest army friends, also General Bonner Fellers, General Mc Arthur, Chief of Psychological Warfare in the Pacific. General Norman Cota and I are old school friends. I'll tell you of our contacts at West Point when we are together soon.

J. Earl Schaefer