

ORAL HISTORY

Lieutenant General John H. Cushman
US Army, Retired

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Preface

I undertook this Oral History project in early 2009. In late 2008 I had arranged with Conrad Crane (Colonel US Army, Retired) to begin it with an interview in January 2009 at the US Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA, where Colonel Crane was then Director. Subsequent interviews have taken place at the Knollwood Military Retirement Residence in Washington, DC, where I live.

The interviewer has been historian Robert Mages. Until March 2011 Mr. Mages was assigned to the Military History Institute. Since then he has continued the project while assigned to the Center of Military History, Fort McNair, DC, where assigned duties have limited his availability for conducting, transcribing, and editing interviews.

The project has become substantial, not to say massive. Its planned extent:

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	(the above have been transcribed and jointly edited in MSWord)	
18	Cdr Fort Devens, MA	
19	Advisor, IV Corps/Military Region 4, Vietnam	
20	Cdr 101st Airborne Division & Fort Campbell, KY	
21	Cdr Combined Arms Center and Commandant CGSC	
	(interviews for the above have been partially recorded)	
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I have chosen to self-print Chapters 1 through 7 in 25 copies, for my own distribution.

Chapter One

Born in China

INTERVIEWER: This is Robert Mages, Chief of Oral History, Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, with Lieutenant General (Retired) John H. Cushman. Sir, would you please review your childhood, to include your family life, hobbies, interests, and secondary education.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was born in China, October 3, 1921, into the 15th Infantry. My father was Horace Oscar Cushman, who was born in Danville, Illinois, in 1894. He grew up being taken care of by his mother when his father separated from the family. He went to college in Greencastle, Indiana, at DePauw University there, and then to the University of Illinois. In 1917, in his third year at the University of Illinois, the United States went to war, and he enlisted in the Army to go through Officer Training School. He was commissioned in the infantry and joined the 47th Infantry Regiment, which was assigned to Charleston, South Carolina, to take care of port security.

There in Charleston he met my mother, Kathleen O'Neill, who was a native of Charleston. She was the daughter of Henry John O'Neill, who was the son of Bernard O'Neill, who immigrated to the United States from Ireland in the 1840s, before the famine. Because he was a second son by the law of primogeniture he was not going to inherit anything, so he went to make his fortune in the United States. He settled in Charleston and became a successful businessman and one of the pillars of Charleston business and society. He had nine children who survived. Henry John O'Neill, his eldest son, had nine children who survived to adulthood, and my mother was the eighth of those. She had six sisters and two brothers. She and my father met in Charleston and they got married.

Their first station in 1919 was Camp Eagle Pass, Texas, on the Mexican Border. There they were in 1921 when my father received orders to join the 15th Infantry in Tientsin, China, which he did that summer, and I was born in October. Those were interesting years for any officer in China and especially for a young family getting started in life, who joined a community of remarkable officers and an unusual situation. The 15th Infantry had been there during the 1900 Boxer Rebellion and afterwards had returned to the States. The Boxers had massacred Christians and had seized embassy compounds in Peking. They were overthrown by an Allied Force. When the Boxer Protocols were signed in 1901 some eleven countries gained extra-territorial rights in China. One of those rights was to station troops in Tientsin, a port city for Peking about 100 miles inland. The troops were there to protect that and other ports and the railroads. When the 15th Infantry went back in 1912, the Chinese Revolution of Sun Yat-sen, who had just overthrown the Manchu Dynasty, had installed the Chinese republic, the Republic of China. There was turbulence in the countryside.

The 15th Infantry was part of the Allied international force securing the city and the roads around it, and the countryside and the railroad, to allow commerce to take place. It was an exotic international scene. Families were provided with inexpensive servants. The soldiers lived the life of Riley, with Chinese coolies taking care of their gear, making their beds, and so forth. They had a good garrison life and a good training life. It was four years of great duty for my Mom and Dad. I had two sisters born in China, and I was one of a set of twins. My brother who was born with me died at birth. I have a letter here written by my mother to her mother, three days after I was born. It describes the circumstances of the delivery and how she was coping with the disappointment, losing one son. I have transcribed that letter. Is that of interest?

INTERVIEWER: Any of your papers would be of great interest to us (see below and next page)

My Mother's Letter to her Mother from China
October 6, 1921
Copied from the Original in June 2007
by John H. Cushman

In the summer of 1921, my mother, Kathleen O'Neill Cushman, traveled with my father, Captain Horace O. Cushman, from Eagle Pass, Texas, which was their first station after they were married, to China, where my father would be assigned to the U.S. Army's Fifteenth Infantry. She was pregnant; I was born October 3.

On October 6, she wrote her mother in Charleston, South Carolina. Her letter, in my possession, is faded but still legible. It is written in pen and ink on three folded sheets of notepaper, each with the letter-head "Fifteenth Infantry, Tientsin China". With my wife Nancy's help I have copied it verbatim below for all our children to have.

October 6, 1921

Mother dearest –

I know you'll be wanting to hear all about it and I want to tell you all about everything so I'm writing the first moment they would let me.

First of all – they were twins! Both boys – one died when it was born but thank God we have one wonderful baby – he's absolutely perfect and beautiful – weighs eight pounds – the other little angel weighed seven. Imagine the load I've been carrying! Cush baptized the other little darling, tho it was already dead, they said, died while the first was being born. I had pains all day Sunday, on Sunday night at one o'clock (Monday morning) the water broke and the real pains started and I went to the hospital and at one fifteen P.M on Monday the first baby was born. It was the most wonderful thing that ever happened. I'm going to tell you all about it and please don't think I'm proud and cocky when I tell you that I was brave. I helped with every pain for twelve

hours and didn't make a sound but I surely did have to work. It really wasn't I who did it tho – I've been praying awfully hard for the strength to bear whatever came and somehow I just felt God with me all the time and I was given marvelous strength – for the nurses and Major Stanley said it was the hardest case they have ever seen. The doctor – well he is one in a thousand I don't really think there is another like him in the whole world – the nurse said there were complications that seemed hopeless to her and Major Stanley never for a second lost his nerve – he certainly saved my life and I just adore him. He said I was the bravest woman he had ever delivered and if I hadn't helped like I did he never could have pulled me thru. You see, I am awfully small and muscle bound besides and the baby was big – he finally had to use instruments and I have four stitches – but I have a baby and that's the most wonderful thing in all the world. That's what I thought about all the time and I didn't mind the pain.

Well, the baby had arrived and Cush had gone out to tell the Hutch's – when the doctor discovered there was another one. I was so thrilled I almost died of joy. I've always wanted twins – but that one had been turned wrong and was a breech presentation. They gave me ether and took it and it was dead. They were both perfect and fat and beautiful - but to have had two babies like this one would have been too much happiness I guess, anyway God wanted him and I am so grateful to have had one and be alive myself that that's all I try to think about. Cush was wonderful – all of the nurses are crazy about him. He's so proud and happy – it's worth going through anything just to see him smile and the wonderful shine in his eyes.

We named the baby John Holloway and the one that died Bernard O'Neill – they had to make out birth and death certificates.

The baby has gotten lots of presents and my room is a bower of beautiful flowers. Everyone in the Regiment has been lovely.

I have to stop now the nurse says so good bye. I'm so happy, Mother dear, and being a Mother is the most wonderful thing in all the world. I appreciate you and love you more than I ever have and thank you for having me so that I could have a son. I'll write as soon as possible again but I'm all well now. My milk came this morning and all the hard part is over. I just have to catch up with sleep – for three days and nights I couldn't sleep a wink – in spite of shots in the arm and pills but now I'm rested enough to doze occasionally. But I must stop – I love you.

Kathleen

My mother's letter was in an envelope of which the stamp had been torn off. It is addressed to Mrs. H.J. O'Neill, 177 Tradd St., Charleston, S.C., U.S.A. The return address is partially missing but seems to have been "----- Cushman, -----Infantry, U.S. Army, -----ntsin, China"

In the same envelop, on a folded sheet of lined tablet paper, was this unsigned note in my father's handwriting:

Mother dear –

Just a few words from me --Taddy has not told half of how brave and sensible and good she was – I can't see how she did it -- the nurses all say that they have never seen anything like it --

We had the other little fellow cremated – and the ashes buried in a corner of the British cemetery where there are other stillborn children – it wasn't as if he had really lived –

I'll tell you all about it when we get home.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That letter is relevant to my whole life. I grew up every day the beneficiary of my mother's love and gratitude that I had been born safely. I am attaching a photo of me with my Dad that might convey their pride in me.

INTERVIEWER: If I can go back and ask a few questions about your family, I understand that your mother was a first generation American of Irish decent. Was she Catholic?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My mother's maiden name was O'Neill, and she was a vivacious Irish dark haired beauty. Her grandfather was Bernard O'Neill. He was the one who immigrated; he was the first generation. Incidentally, my twin brother who died had been named Bernard as was my mother's younger brother who died young in an automobile accident.



When I once told her that we were thinking of naming our first son Bernard, she said please don't do that. The first generation born in the United States was her father, Henry John O'Neill, who was born about 1850, before the Civil War. They were Catholic. The family was very devoted Catholics. Charleston was a home to Catholic and Protestant Irishmen. In fact in Charleston they have a Hibernian Society, Hibernians being Irish parentage, and my great grandfather Bernard was the President of the Hibernian Society. It alternated, I understand, between Protestant and Catholic. They got along very well together. They were devoted Catholics, and my mother grew up a Catholic. My father was not a Catholic. My father was raised in the Protestant tradition, and I can talk about that later, because when he died he became a Catholic. That answers that question, doesn't it?

INTERVIEWER: Was there any interfaith friction within the family?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Not at all. My grandmother lived with us from time to time during my childhood, and she and my father would go to church, otherwise he didn't go to church. He just let my mother take the four of us, eventually being a family of four children, to church. It was a happy and satisfying relationship. He supported my mother entirely. In his very last days I went to visit him. He was living on Sullivans Island near Charleston, South Carolina, which had become very much our vacation home over the years. That's where he and my mother retired. He was failing, and he went into the Naval Hospital at Charleston, in 1972. I came to visit my parents and I went to see him in the hospital. And he said to me, "Son, I think I'd like to become a Catholic." So I called the Catholic Chaplain and he became a Catholic, and he died just a few weeks later.

My father's great grandfather was Seth Cushman. Living in upstate New York in about 1816, he and his family had taken a flatboat down the Ohio River to the Wabash and up that river to settle in Sullivan County, Indiana. From his date of birth that I found on a tombstone there I determined that he was the same Seth Cushman that had been baptized in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, within days of that date in 1773. That Seth's forebear had been Mary Allerton, the youngest passenger on the Mayflower. That discovery made me a Mayflower descendant. In 1816 Seth's son Thomas, my father's grandfather, was only a child. He was later a businessman and public official in Perryville, Indiana. Thomas's son William moved to Danville, Illinois, where my father was born and grew up.

INTERVIEWER: Why did your father join the Army out of college?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I don't know why he did that. He was late going into college. He was supporting himself and his mother some. He took a business course and started working as a clerk, he took shorthand, and then he finally went to college. I think he was 22 or 23 by that time, and he was going to the University of Illinois. He had started

out at Greencastle, Indiana, in DePauw University and then he went to the University of Illinois. The war came and he must have said, "I think I want to go in the Army," and he enlisted. Apparently he did quite well, and was well thought of in the Army as a young officer. It suited him fine. I think it was the war that brought him into the Army.

INTERVIEWER: What made him stay after the war?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He loved the life. He was a good soldier. He enjoyed the life of a soldier so when the opportunity came later on to be an Army officer after the war ended, he was brought into the Regular Army. He entered not Regular Army, but they integrated a lot of officers into the Regular Army in 1919, so he got a regular commission.

INTERVIEWER: What was your mother's view of his career choice?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: She always loved the Army. She was the only one of her family that ever got into the Army, she had six sisters and two brothers, none of them followed that path but she loved it. She loved China, that's for sure. The letters back from China to her parents and her sisters just showed how much she loved that scene.

INTERVIEWER: Did her family stay in Charleston and did your father's family stay in Illinois over the course of the years?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Well my mother's roots were in Charleston. She had sisters and a brother in Charleston and we would visit there frequently, many summers. We stayed in China until 1925 and on the return from China we went by there to see her mother. Her mother was rather old at that time and then she died not long after that, but I remember being ushered in to the parlor at age four and getting to see my grandmother. And I remember how somber the occasion was, her sitting there in the rocking chair. That's the last time I saw her.

We would go to Charleston a lot. Her older brother, Henry John O'Neill, Jr., or Harry, was a favorite of hers and he became quite an important businessman in Charleston. He had a grand house down on Broad Street and her sister, Elizabeth O'Neill Verner, was a well known Charleston artist. Other relatives in Charleston we would see often. Charleston was my home base if I had one.

My father's mother lived in Danville, Illinois; she would come to live with us from time to time. She worked in the clerk's office, the Vermillion County Clerk's Office in Danville, Illinois. That's where she maintained herself and she lived in an apartment building. She would often come to see us because my father was also her support. She had some retirement money I suppose, but he helped support her. She would live with us and then go back to Danville in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1960 when I was stationed at the Pentagon and we were living in Washington I decided it was time for my wife Nancy and me to vote in the election of 1960. Kennedy and Nixon were running. So I called

the Vermillion County Courthouse and said, "I'm a legal resident of Danville, Illinois. That's where my father lived. I'm in the Army now and when I turned 21, I took his legal residence." So I had grown up those years in the 1940s and 1950s being a legal resident of Illinois. I said, "I would like an absentee ballot to be sent to me. My name is Lieutenant Colonel Cushman." And he said, "Colonel Cushman? You must be Bertie's boy." He thought I was my father. Bertie, Bertha Holloway Cushman, had been the clerk in the Vermillion County. I said, "No, that's my Dad."

INTERVIEWER: How many sisters do you have?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My sisters were twins. I was born in October of 1921. They were born in December of 1923. We left China after that in 1925 and came home.

INTERVIEWER: Did either of your sisters marry into the Army?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: They both married captains in the Army during World War II.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about your father's service at Camp Eagle Pass. What was his assignment there?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I don't know. I have his records, but I don't remember what his duty was. I think he was a company commander. By that time he was a captain. I suppose he was a company commander and it was regimental duty on the border.

INTERVIEWER: What were your impressions of that time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I didn't have much of a story from my parents about what that was all about. I don't think they were there very long. They got there in 1919 or 1920 and left in 1921. I don't have much about that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know why your father was selected for service in China?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I think that was a compliment because the China service was a plum and the 15th Infantry was noted for the quality of its officers. General [George C.] Marshall, who had been a full colonel during World War I, was there as a lieutenant colonel in the early 1920s. General Marshall had been an aide to General Pershing and was in touch with General Pershing by mail frequently. I once read in some history somewhere that in a letter to General Pershing he commented on the quality of the officers, "We have some very good officers here in China." It was a choice assignment. When they went down the list of captains in the Chief of Infantry's office, trying to figure out whom they'd send to China, they looked at my Dad and he must have had a pretty good record so they sent him. I always thought so. He was quite a good officer. He lacked college education. He never finished college.

INTERVIEWER: So he didn't graduate?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He never graduated from college. Nowadays if you came in, say after World War II, and you were integrated in the Regular Army and you didn't have a college education, they'd send you to college, boot strap, and get you a college degree. That didn't happen in 1919-1920. So my Dad was not a college graduate. That might have affected his career. I don't know. It might have affected his standing among the other officers but he was a highly regarded officer. Back in 1923-1924 there was a lot of unrest in China, and the U.S. Embassy asked that an officer be attached to the Embassy in Peking and report to the Attaché for a mission. They sent for my Dad. He made two patrols out in the China countryside. I've got records of those patrols. They were in his possession when he died. I have those records, and they are part of a DVD that I put together which is quite interesting, a 40 minute DVD on the 15th Infantry in China.

INTERVIEWER: Did your father read a lot?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes he did.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of things did he like to read?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He read military books, non-fiction history and biography, and he read fiction, but he was not what you would call a scholar.

INTERVIEWER: How about your mother?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My mother read a great deal. My mother came from a family that was prosperous in the time of the Civil War and after the Civil War. My great grandfather, Bernard O'Neill, was a successful rice and cotton broker. He ran a brokerage on Broad Street in Charleston. When the Civil War came he was not in favor of secession. He sent his son, Henry John O'Neill, my grandfather, who was about 16 or 17 at that time, to France. He said, "You go to France and get yourself an education. I don't want you getting involved in this war." So young Henry John O'Neill did that, and he came back from France and grew up and married. He married Molly Baker, the daughter of a ship captain, who was in Charleston and he started a family. My grandfather Bernard O'Neill was one of the few people who at the war's end said that South Carolina should not renege on its Civil War debts. He stood his ground on that and fought for it when he became a member of the South Carolina Legislature. He was a highly regarded, up-right man.

My grandfather died about 1904 when my mother was five years old, and the family fortunes deteriorated. Her older sisters had been sent to Georgetown Visitation Convent or off to get educated as an artist and so forth. By the time my mother became eligible for college, higher education, there was no money. My grandmother had to sell off the

property and live on its proceeds. She had moved to a smaller house. That's where my father and mother were married. My father and mother met during World War One. My mother was working as a wartime typist somewhere. She had gone to business school and learned to type. She went to high school but not college, but she was educated by her aunts. She was an avid reader and an educated person. I would say that neither my mother nor father were what you might call scholars but they were very interested in what was going on.

INTERVIEWER: What duties did your father perform in China?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He went in as a company commander and then he became regimental adjutant. The regimental adjutant in the U.S. Army of that time was a key staff position. The adjutant dealt with personnel and was also a special assistant to the commanding officer. He was the regimental adjutant to the regimental commander. George C. Marshall was at one period his regimental executive officer.

INTERVIEWER: So your father served on Marshall's staff?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes During that period the regimental commander was for some reason relieved. I think it was relief because of alcoholism. There was a hint of that in the history of the unit; I forget the name of the regimental commander. It's in the efficiency reports. I've got all my father's efficiency reports and he was well thought of. He was an athlete and a horseman. He was captain of the rugby team. He played on the hockey team; he played on the polo team, he was very active athletically.

INTERVIEWER: Had he always been an athletic man?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, he was. His picture in college shows him in a football helmet and he loved to coach.

INTERVIEWER: Did he learn to ride horses in the Army?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I don't think he learned to ride until he got in the Army. He grew up around horses but he was a city boy. Back in those days horses were everywhere but he wasn't a trained equestrian. Back then, Army officers rode horseback. The company commander would ride horseback even in the infantry. They had horses in China, Mongolian ponies, and they had a polo team. He was good enough to play on the polo team. He loved polo. He played polo until he was 42 years old. He was naturally athletic.

INTERVIEWER: The patrols that he went on, a very interesting story, did he relate those tales to you when you were younger?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I didn't know about those patrols until after he died. He kept

copies of his reports and I found them among his papers.

INTERVIEWER: Were these reconnaissance patrols?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. In those days the central government in China was weak and the warlords were controlling great parts of the country. One warlord was around Peking and close to the capital. He was guarding his domain and the capital. Another warlord was up in Manchuria and he wanted to move in on the other man. There was a third warlord elsewhere who formed alliances with one of the other two. The strife was getting close to Tientsin and was interfering with commerce. The regimental commander told my Dad, "You go out and make a patrol and tell us what's happening. Tell us who's positioning himself where, and what do they look like. Don't get yourself in any trouble, but make a reconnaissance and take lieutenant so and so along with you."

INTERVIEWER: How was the patrol composed?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Two men, a captain and a lieutenant. It's a looksee. They didn't go sneaking around the underbrush like a patrol in combat. They would get on a train and they'd go up there and stop and see somebody and identify themselves. Americans in uniform were fairly well protected. Neither side wanted to antagonize Americans by treating them badly. The patrol would always be conscious of their security. This report has maps. It says, "Here's what I saw in this place. These are the kind of troops I saw. They were well behaved. The fortifications were pretty good. Then I went to another place and they treated us right and this is what I saw there."

INTERVIEWER: How many years had your father been in China at this point?

GEN CUSHMAN: In 1923 he had been there about two years and was commander of F Company. After that he became regimental adjutant. He was regimental adjutant in 1924 when the warlord from Manchuria made a move to attack the capital. The warlord in the capital defended, supported by another warlord. It's all described in the histories of China in those days.

INTERVIEWER: So this is the second patrol?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The second patrol. The US military attaché up in Peking said to the regimental commander, "I need an officer to report to me for duty to make a reconnaissance and size up the situation." So my father received a set of orders from the regimental commander, "You will report to the attaché at the American Embassy in Peking, and do what he tells you." And then he went up there and the attaché told him, "You will go out and you will check up on things to see if there is any danger to Americans, see what's happening and give us a report." There were especially interested in any property damage or interference with American citizens. I have his report. The attaché's endorsement reads, "This is a fine report, very helpful."

INTERVIEWER: Did your father speak any Chinese?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: By that time he had learned Chinese. When George Marshall got there in 1923 he encouraged the use and the learning of Chinese. My Dad had already learned some Chinese by that time. Apparently he was picked because he was pretty good at Chinese.

INTERVIEWER: How did he learn Chinese?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Just from taking lessons right there in China.

INTERVIEWER: Were there instructors?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: George Marshall, when he got there in 1923 or so, said, "We'll have lessons." He said it was important for us to learn Chinese. I think that was one of his contributions. But I think my Dad had already come along pretty well. He practiced Chinese. My father and mother spoke Chinese. When my sisters and I were young when they didn't want us to know what they were talking about. They would talk to each other in Chinese.

INTERVIEWER: What was domestic life like for your mother?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: It was pleasant. They had quarters and servants. The average family had a cook, a number one boy who was a kind of butler, a rickshaw driver, and an amah for any children. That's a nurse maid. I learned to talk from my amah. When I came back from China I could speak only pidgin English, but pretty good Chinese. When I got back to the U.S. my aunts from California met us in San Francisco and they saw this little red headed kid running around speaking pidgin English. It astonished them.

INTERVIEWER: Were the quarters on post?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, they were in a compound in Tientsin. The Americans didn't have a sector. The British had one but the Americans had no sector. The Italians and all the others had a sector and the 15th Infantry lived in the old German barracks. The British had taken the barracks from Germany in World War I. The Germans were ousted from there and the barracks became part of the British sector. Adjacent to that was a compound, a place where International families lived. We lived in there. They had good quarters and a good life. There was a lot of entertaining that went on, parties, games of bridge and mahjong, shopping, and club life.

INTERVIEWER: Very pleasant.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: It was the life of Riley. That's what made China so interesting and so attractive. The regimental duty was rewarding and the family life was great. There are still a number of people my age who grew up in China in those days. I don't remember a thing about it, but I've got friends who were there in the 1930s who remember it very well. Others were there in the 1920s who remember it well too. It was good foreign service. They were supplied by transport once every three or four months. They'd bring in the vegetables. It is not a good idea to eat the Chinese vegetables because of the way they grow them and the kind of fertilizer they use. You had to wash them very carefully before eating them. They brought in food and refrigerated meat and so forth. The ship brought in troop replacements every three or four months. It was a big event when the ship would come in and the train would come in up to Tientsin from the port and replacements would join the regiment.

INTERVIEWER: How many years was your father's tour in China?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Four years. 1921-1925.

I am attaching two pages in .jpg that are a letter written by my mother in May 1922, She was the eighth of nine children and had seven sisters. The letter is to her sister Florence. It reveals some of her personality and something about her life in China, including her total delight with her son. JHC,

Tientsin, China.

May 11, 1922.

Dear Florence:-

I've just gotten your first of April letter and will answer it right away - do hope I'll have another one soon. I have written so many times and told about our house and servants and church that it's awfully discouraging to think that you havn't heard about it all yet.

I'll begin with our house - we are crazy about it - loved it before we got things to fix it up with and now it just lovely. We have bought the loveliest things over here and it looks like a million dollars - with beautiful Chinese rugs and a little bit of hardwood furniture. It's a brick house with a basement where the servants' rooms are and then only one cwht floor. We have a nice big living room with a fire place - I've just had it all done over and it is a lovely buff now and the woodwork ivory. There is a hall between the living room and dining room and a pantry at the back where we keep the dishes and things - the kitchen is downstairs. Then there are two nice bedrooms - mine is an unusually large and pretty room and Jack's is filled with sunshine all day - a perfectly fine nursery. The sitting room is so pretty - if I do say it as shouldn't - Cush and I thoroughly enjoy our home. I gave Cush a big winged chair for Christmas and I have that lovely rocker that Mother gave us for our wedding gift. They are both upholstered in a pretty tapestry and are on either side of the fireplace. We have a fire bench with a big cushion on it between the two chairs. Then the other day I bought a wonderful comfy davenport whcih ads a lot to the looks of the room. It's tan colored. We have some pretty lamps and the windows are large. The curtains are a lovely shade of blue lined with pongee and the rug that I have in there now is light tan with some blue in it. There are all kinds of pillows on the divan.

The church is in the French concession and all of the priests are French. They all have funny little beards and wear long black robes and a hat that looks like a helmet. The bishop is about half as tall as I am and the queerest little man. Of course all the sermons are in French except occasionally an Irish priest comes down from Peking - he is a peach and it's awfully nice when he preaches. We've a nice church - not very large and at the side are two chapels where foreigners sit. The big main part is crowded with Chinese. Most of the people who go to church are French - tho' there are heaps of Irish and English. Today we had solemn high Mass in honor of Jeanne d'Arc and the bishop gave the sermon - even if he is tiny and perfectly ridiculous looking, with a little red beard, he has a voice like music and it must have been a wonderful sermon for most everyone around was about to weep. I'm going to start taking French next month - or rather next week - from a Frenchwoman here. Mrs. McChrystal, who came over with us and whom I like best of any girl in the Regiment is going to take with me. We've both taken before and know about the same amount of it,

The pictures of Jack that I am enclosing are

the image of him. The other day I came home and found him sitting up in his carriage like a man, most, with this funny little hat on and it was the most awful shock, to realize that he had gotten so grownup so soon. I hate him to grow up - he is so utterly adorable like he is - and yet he gets cuter every day. This minute he is lying in his Kiddy-Koop near me just jabbering away, lovely stories about "Oh-da-da" in the sweetest little voice in the world. The little shoes he has on in the picture are some that his amah made for him - all the little children over here wear them. They have little faces embroidered on them like kittens with very large eyes so that the littlefeet can see where they are going. Amah said "Missy, s'pose no have gotty eye - hw can see?". He has all colors. I hope they won't lead him astray. His hair is still red and his eyes are getting brown. His skin is so wonderful I want to bite it. Of course he will freckle - but just now he is very white with pink cheeks and very red lips. But his smile is his greatest charm. He will go to anyone with his arms out and a heavenly smile - so of everyone is crazy about him. He is so happy - lots of the people in the Regiment call him Happy Cushman. Cush is the sweetest thing with him and so proud of him - he plays with him at lunch time and Jack crawls all over him on the floor. Cush has treated him so "rough" ever since he was about two months old that he is like a year-old child now - he can crawl and he pulls Cush's nose and trys to eat up his ears. He doesn't treat me like that but will pat my face and rub his cheek up against mine and when he gets sleepy he presses his eyes up against my lips for me to kiss.

Well, I'll have to be stopping and write some other letters. Please excuse the locks of this one - it's awful but it's so much fun to write on the machine. Give the whole family my very best love. Please write to me soon again. Lots and lots of love to you, from,

Kathleen

Chapter Two

Growing Up

INTERVIEWER: What was your next posting after China?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My Dad was ordered to Fort Slocum, New York. Fort Slocum is on a small island in Long Island Sound off New Rochelle, NY. It's abandoned now but it was then a one battalion post. My Dad was a company officer there for two years, 1925-1927. My first memories are of Fort Slocum. We had a set of quarters on the shore. I remember my first spanking. My Mom had told me to stay away from the sea wall. I went too near it and got paddled for that. I remember the ferry to New Rochelle. It would leave Fort Slocum and take cars and animals and wagons over to the shore. I remember seeing a team of mules that was pulling a wagon and fell off the gangplank going onto that ferry. I never forgot seeing them struggling in the water and the muleskinners getting those mules back on the ferry. I also remember successfully tying my shoes for the first time.

My wife Nancy has reminded me of a story of Fort Slocum days that she had heard from my mother. The story goes that when I was about five years old my two sisters and I got into a pillow fight. They were then three years old, twins. As the fight was going on my mother came in. One of the pillows had broken. Feathers were flying everywhere. I am said to have explained it all to my mother by saying, "A great big bird just flew in here and went away leaving these feathers." I do have a dim recollection of that event.

We were at Fort Slocum for two years with my father on regimental duty. I think he was a company commander. Then he was ordered to the Infantry School as a student at the Company Officer's Course and living in Columbus, Georgia. That was 1927.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you start your schooling?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: In Columbus. We went by Charleston on the way to Columbus, Georgia. I've got pictures of myself and my two sisters on Sullivan's Island with my Mom. In 1927-28 we spent a year in Columbus. We rented a house because there were no student quarters yet out on Fort Benning, and my father was a student. That's where I went to my first year in grade school, in Columbus, in the public school there. My Dad was then assigned to be in an ROTC [Reserve Officer Training Corps] detachment, as a PMS&T [Professor of Military Science and Tactics] at Boston University. We moved in 1928 to Massachusetts, my two sisters and my Mom and Dad and I. My brother was born there in 1929. We lived on 23 Willard Street in Cambridge. We rented a house. Willard Street was adjacent to Longfellow Park. Are you familiar with that area?

INTERVIEWER: I lived in Boston for many years.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: It is near Memorial Drive on the Charles River.

INTERVIEWER: I'm not familiar with Willard Street but I know where you mean.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I went to school at Lowell elementary school near the intersection of Willard Street and Foster Street. If you go up Foster Street about six or seven blocks you come to the Lowell School. It's still there. When I went into Lowell School they sized me up and decided I belonged in the third grade. I was entered in the second grade but they said I read so well I belonged in the third grade. So they put me in the third grade. I attended third and fourth grade at the Lowell School. My sisters weren't yet old enough for school.

INTERVIEWER: How do you account for being so advanced in reading?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I guess I liked to read and my parents gave me books. I got my first job on 23 Willard Street. There was a grocery store up the street and I worked there. I got five cents an hour or something like that. They sold butter by the pound. They had a tub of butter and you'd dip a scoop in there and take it out and slap it down onto the brown paper and that was your butter. I made my first Holy Communion at Saint Peter's Church right there in Cambridge.

INTERVIEWER: So you were raised Catholic?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was very much Catholic. I was taught by nuns at Sunday school. During the election of 1928, Al Smith was running for President against Herbert Hoover. Al Smith was a Catholic. Of course he lost a lot of states but he carried Massachusetts. He lost almost all in the states in the deep South. There was so much prejudice against Catholics. The nuns gave me an Al Smith button. I wore it home and my Dad said, "Where did you get that button?" I said, "The nuns gave it to me." He said, "Take it off. Military people aren't supposed to wear pins during an election. Take it off."

INTERVIEWER: So your father considered you military people?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He considered me a representative of the military as his son. Wearing the pin was an indication that I was in favor of one political party or another.

INTERVIEWER: Did that impact the way you were raised and the way you were expected to behave?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I guess it did.

INTERVIEWER: Were you conscious of it as a child?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Well I never voted. In 1951 I told my friend DeWitt Smith [Lieutenant General DeWitt C. Smith Jr.], a former commandant here at the Army War College, that I had never voted. He said, "I don't understand that. Why didn't you vote? It is a citizen's obligation to vote." I said, "I'm an Army officer." He was mystified.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you go after your father left the PMS position at Boston University?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He was a PMS&T for two years and then he got assigned to Fort Benning in 1930. He was assigned to the 29th Infantry Regiment. So we motored down to Fort Benning, once again stopping at Sullivan's Island. We would frequently go from Fort Benning to Charleston during the next four years while he was there at Fort Benning. We were in government quarters on post.

Our first quarters were a small clapboard house with beaverboard partitions. It had a kitchen and a bathroom and a screened porch. Bathrooms in those days came only one per house. You didn't have two bathroom houses. It was one story, no basement, with bedrooms here and there and an enclosed sun porch. It was heated by coal stoves. In one room you had a stove and in another room another stove, and so on. There was a stove to heat our hot water. You started the stoves with kindling wood.

The kindling wood came from the packing boxes that our furniture had been shipped in from Cambridge. The movers would come and they'd put your furniture inside crates. They'd put a couch or a chair or table in a crate. They'd put the excelsior in there to pad it and then they'd nail it together to form the crate. The crate would be shipped by rail down to Columbus and on to Fort Benning where it would be unloaded and hauled out to the house and uncrated. Our kindling wood would come from the crates. We would stack it up in the yard.

By that time I was nine years old. My Dad said, "You are responsible for keeping these fires going in the winter." So I'd chop the kindling. They'd deliver coal to your quarters, and put it in a coal bin behind the house. You had a coal scuttle, a little bucket-like thing that you used to put the pieces of coal in. It was anthracite; I learned the difference between anthracite and bituminous coal. We used both types but most of it was anthracite. My job, among other things, was to keep the home fires burning and keep the hot water going.

On my 9th birthday my Mom and Dad gave me a bicycle. Across the street from us was an officer who had been in the 15th Infantry with my Dad, Captain Bill Tuttle. My father and he were good friends. His wife, Mae Tuttle, was a good friend of my mother. Their house was the same kind that we had. They have all been torn down. They've put better quarters up at Fort Benning but we all lived alike then in a kind of ramshackle house.

In 1930 friend Billy Tuttle and I, same age, were racing across the yards on our bicycles and when we came out from behind a garage on an alleyway right there at his house, a car appeared and he shot in front of it. I hit the car's running board and went over the handlebars. I hit my head and was knocked out. I think I hit my head on the door handle of the car. I went to the hospital and that's where this scar came from on my head. It has in it some embedded cinders from an alley at Fort Benning. I wrecked my front wheel of the bicycle. I had to get a new front wheel.

INTERVIEWER: Was your father upset when you bent up your bicycle?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, he just went and got a new front wheel. The bicycle was never the same after that.

INTERVIEWER: Well I suppose when you hit a car with a bicycle something has got to give.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Right. At Fort Benning I entered the fifth grade. My class was in a one room tar paper shack built in World War I. It had a huge coal stove in its center. Winter came and that stove would get red hot. If you were near the stove you got too hot, or if you were at the fringe of the room you were too cold. In 1930 they started construction of a new post school in which I attended 6th and 7th grades. In Georgia the primary school ends at 7th grade. After 7th grade you go into high school.

They were building new two-story stucco quarters with basements, on Rainbow Row. In 1932 my Dad qualified for these by his date of captain's rank. We were in them for almost two years. In those days you had what they call a quarters drawing every year. Officers went down to the post theater where they had a big wall map showing all the quarters on post. You got quarters by your date of rank. All bets were off and you started over. You could get ranked out of your quarters. Later my Dad was ranked out of the quarters on Rainbow Row. They don't do that any more. So in 1933 we moved to quarters on Austin Loop, also called Block 14. When I went back to Fort Benning recently to speak about Tientsin at the 15th Infantry Regimental banquet I took time to visit our old quarters on Rainbow Row. A family was living in there, a lieutenant colonel and his wife, and they said they loved it

I graduated from grade school in 1933 after three years at Fort Benning's school and moved on to Columbus High School in Columbus, Georgia. I was 11 years old. My first day in high school I was a kid of 11 in short pants.

INTERVIEWER: How old were your classmates?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: They were 13 or 14, but I fit in with them. That was all right with me.

INTERVIEWER: Were you small for a child?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was a good size. I wasn't big, but I was a good size.

INTERVIEWER: Were you athletic like your father?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I didn't excel at sports like tennis or golf but I was pretty good at contact sports.

I joined the kids' football team in Austin Loop. We would suit up for football and would play a short game between the halves of the troops games in Doughboy Stadium. Sergeant Hutchinson was our coach. Back in 1933 or 1934 good friends of mine were on our football team -- Fred Ladd, George Maertens, Wendell Bevan, Jim Maertens. I was quarterback and the coach taught us how to call signals without a huddle. We'd have certain numbers that meant you'd run a simple play like run around the right, run around the left, run through the middle, throw a pass, and he told me, "You give the team its plays by the numbers you call."

INTERVIEWER: You were calling audibles?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. That was before its time.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have an aptitude for mathematics and science?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, I did. I was good at mathematics. My father was good at mathematics and my Mom was too. I think I got the right genes on that. I was good at all subjects. We took a bus that stopped at Austin Loop and went from Fort Benning the nine miles to Columbus. We would sing on the bus, Frankie and Johnny and The Man on the Flying Trapeze and that kind of song. A few years ago, Wendell Bevan called me from over in Virginia where he lives and reminded me of how I used to tell jokes on the bus. In those days we had radio comedians like Jack Benny and Fred Allen and I would repeat their jokes. Wendell remembered that. I had forgotten all about it. I received ROTC training in high school. They had a small high school ROTC detachment. We didn't have uniforms but we did squad drill and manual of arms and that kind of thing.

Life was good at Fort Benning those four years for a kid my age. It was a great Army post and we were free to roam around. This was the time of the Great Depression but my Dad had an adequate income, although the Army did take a pay cut during those years, I think it was 10 percent. I grew up with good friends, and we roamed that post. We did things like camping out. We took barrel staves and we waxed them with candle wax and attached them to our feet with rubber strips from inner tubes and used them as skis down the pine needle slopes in the woods. We built a log cabin in the woods out of trees that we chopped down. We built little gocarts with the wheels from a baby buggy and we'd ride these down the hills. One summer we went skinny dipping in

Upatoi Creek on the reservation and the officer of the day came by on horseback and told us to quit. A few days later he was at my house at a cocktail party and my mother introduced me to him. He said, " I know Jack. I've seen a lot of him lately."

During that time my mother entered a subscription contest by the Columbus Enquirer newspaper downtown and sold subscriptions to dayrooms around the post. She won second prize, a Buick which we traded on a 1933 Ford V-8 plus cash. I should mention that when we were in Cambridge my Mom had brought in some extra money by selling Bookhouse door to door.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you go after Fort Benning?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My father went to Fort Leavenworth for two years as a student. This was in 1934. We moved into student quarters on Doniphan Avenue, a complex of barracks that had been converted into quarters for students at the Command and General Staff College. School they called it then. They had converted these barracks to quarters with eight apartments per building. We lived in 324-G Doniphan, on the second floor. My Dad was a student for two years. Leavenworth had the reputation of being a very tough course. It was a compliment to be selected. It meant you'd arrived at a certain level.

INTERVIEWER: Your father was a captain?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He was a captain. The promotions of captains to major came in a large group in 1935 or so.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any of your father's classmates?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: We shared a back yard with "Tooey" Spaatz [General Carl Andrew Spaatz], who was later the commander of the 8th Air Force and the first Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Lucian Truscott, a pal of mine, was my neighbor. His dad was Lucian Truscott Jr. [General Lucian King Truscott, Jr.]. Other names later became famous. Manton Eddy [General Manton Sprague Eddy] was another. He was an instructor. My younger sisters, Kathleen and Elizabeth, were best friends with Martha Eddy, Manton Eddy's daughter. Martha is now a fellow resident at Knollwood [Military Retirement Residence, Washington, DC] where I live.

INTERVIEWER: Did you finish high school at Leavenworth?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No. I attended Immaculata High School, a Catholic high school in town, for two years. Almost all the post kids went to it whether they were Catholic or not. Some went to Senior High, but most went to Immaculata, run by the Sisters of Charity. That's where I finished my sophomore and junior years. Years later I became a faculty member and some time after that the commandant of the Command and General Staff College. When I became commandant in 1973 I went down with my wife Nan-

cy to visit St. Mary College in Leavenworth. The Sisters of Charity run that college. The former principal from my time at Immaculata, Sister Mary Baptista, had retired and was living there at St. Mary College. We went down to see her. In a rather formal parlor there was Sister Mary Baptista in her nun's habit. She had her old severe look that I remembered exactly. I felt as if I were a sophomore again. She knew that I was coming, a two-star general. She said, "Jack, how nice to see you." We greeted each other warmly.

We talked about the old times and the people that we had known. George Brown [General George S. Brown, USAF] had been in my class in Leavenworth. He is a little older than I. He had gone to West Point right from there in 1937 and had graduated in 1941 well ahead of me. Sister Mary Baptista said, "You know, I always wondered whatever happened to George Brown?" I was able to tell Sister Mary Baptista that he became Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

INTERVIEWER: Sister didn't get out much.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: George Brown visited the College for a lecture periodically when he was JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff] Chairman. When he next came to talk to the students I told that story to the class when introducing him. I have another story about that high school. When I went back as commandant in 1973 I got a letter from Sister Mary Constantia, a retired nun living in Kansas City. She wrote, "Dear General, I see you are now commandant out at Leavenworth. I wonder if you could be the red headed boy who used to be in my class when I was teaching Geometry at Immaculata. I was so pleased with that young boy. Was that you?" It was. I invited sister up to quarters at Fort Leavenworth to meet my mother when she came over from Sullivans Island for Christmas, a pleasure to them both.

I finished my second and third year of high school there, and then my Dad went on to his next assignment as an advisor with the Illinois National Guard. In passing I should say that my wife's father, Girard B. Troland, was in 1936 in the first one year class at Leavenworth. Her family arrived just as we left and occupied the very same apartment that we had lived in. While visiting Nancy's family after I'd known her a year or two, we discovered that. Her mother was impressed. She said she had never encountered an apartment that was so clean when moved into. I told her, "With my father I cleaned that apartment." That helped me some with Nancy's mom.

The summer of 1936 our family traveled to Brevard, North Carolina, to spend several weeks at the hilltop vacation home of my Aunt Beth, no electricity, with Coleman lanterns. Beth had arranged that during the day my sisters would go over to a nearby camp for girls. My folks sent me off for two or three weeks to visit friends at Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island who had twin boys my age. That summer my Dad put a lot of energy into working on Beth's house, making screens for the windows and building latticework to screen the space under the house. I wasn't much help to him while I was there but he let me loaf. Years later at West Point as First Captain I led the Corps of

Cadets into Yankee Stadium for the Army-Notre Dame football game. Beth was in the stands. After the game I could tell that she had been proud of me. But she said right then that in the summer of 1936 she had thought I had been so indolent that she didn't believe that I would amount to anything.

INTERVIEWER: At what point did you decide you wanted to go to West Point?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I always knew I wanted to go to West Point. I never thought of anything else. That was the thing to do for my generation of Army kids. All my friends wanted to go to West Point. Some of them did, some didn't, but we all thought of ourselves as future Army officers. I never had any other notion. Later I tried to get an appointment and had a hard time. I got an appointment for the second alternate or the first alternate to the Naval Academy. I would have accepted that. But there was no other option in my life. I always figured on going to West Point.

INTERVIEWER: How did you prepare yourself?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was graduating early from high school. My Dad's next assignment was in Carbondale, Illinois, with the Illinois National Guard. I have to describe how that happened. At that time the senior instructor of the Illinois National Guard was George C. Marshall. In 1936 we arrived by family car in Chicago, and my father went to report to the senior instructor, George Marshall, at the National Guard headquarters there. He said, "Come on, Jack, I want you to meet General Marshall" -- Colonel Marshall, he was still a colonel, and he was quite possibly on his last assignment.

INTERVIEWER: What was your father's impression of Marshall?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I think he had great respect for him. I think Marshall kept his cards close to his vest. I don't know what he thought of my Dad. He wrote an efficiency report on him and it was favorable but not very revealing. I don't think that my Dad was one of Marshall's favorites. Marshall had some people that he put in his little black book. I don't think my Dad was in his little black book. But I think he thought well of him because he wrote in his efficiency report something decent. They were good marks and he said my Dad had distinguished himself in a patrol.

INTERVIEWER: What was your impression of Marshall when you met him?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was impressed. I didn't know that much about him. He wasn't all that famous to me, I just knew his name. Back in the 1930s there was a lot of Army talk about the "China crowd." There seemed to be an impression in the Army that the "China crowd" was a sort of clique. When we went to Fort Benning the Commandant of the Infantry School was Brigadier General Campbell King. As a colonel he had been the regimental commander of the 15th Infantry and my father had been his adjutant. Campbell King's wife, Harriet King, had been from Charleston, and had known my mother's family there. When the Kings arrived in China Mrs. King looked up my moth-

er. Here is a regimental commander's wife checking on the captain's wife and I suppose that created a stir. My Mom went shopping with Harriet King. When the Kings moved to the Infantry School's commandant's quarters, which was right near Austin Loop, my Mom and Dad would see them. Campbell King thought highly of my Dad; that was clear. For years we had an autographed picture of Campbell King on a table in our living room.

I don't know what Marshall thought of my Dad. Marshall was thought a rather aloof person, but he was human to the people he liked. I've heard stories about his humanness. He always called officers by their last name. My Dad was always "Cushman." I think he was impressed by Marshall.

This can be considered gossipy but I have the impression that when Marshall was the executive officer of the 15th Infantry in China, my father was the adjutant to his commander, who was an alcoholic. That fact shows up in a history of those days. My father remarked to me late in his life, "Here I was this kid captain having to work between an alcoholic colonel and an ambitious executive officer." He had to navigate that. That was an interesting navigation for him in 1924 or 1925. It turns out that the commander was relieved, but later exonerated and retired with a good reputation at the rank of colonel.

I wish I had used my chance to talk to my Dad about that sometime. My father was essentially a reticent man. Marshall in Chicago was an austere, dignified man in civilian clothes, not in uniform, the senior advisor to the National Guard of Illinois. I shook his hand and then left the office. My Dad was going to be assigned as advisor to a regiment in Chicago. My mother discovered that this regiment was all black and had black officers, and she was going to have to be associating with black people. This was totally unacceptable to someone raised in Charleston, South Carolina. It was a segregated country in 1936. She said, "I can't live with this. I'm sorry, but this is not something I can handle."

INTERVIEWER: Did your father share this view?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No. But he said to Marshall, "Colonel, Taddy is going to have a hard time here in Chicago and she says she can't live with it." And Marshall said, "We'll send you to Carbondale in Southern Illinois to a white regiment." And that's what they did. He said, "If it is going to be a problem, somebody else can take the colored regiment." He went to Carbondale, and that explains why I graduated from high school there.

Carbondale was the location of the Southern Illinois Normal University, a teacher's College then, now Southern Illinois University. It is a basketball power today. Carbondale was a city of 10,000 not far north of Cairo, Illinois. SINU ran a high school where its students trained by teaching high school classes. Carbondale also had a large public high school, with a football team and all the other activities of a high school. SINU

high school was where I was enrolled. It was small, but I got a good education, general science, English, and civics. It was the year of sit-down strikes in Detroit and when Roosevelt sought to pack the Supreme Court. I had fifteen in my graduating class. I was 15 years old when I graduated.

INTERVIEWER: You graduated high school at a young age. You were obviously too young to enter West Point. How did you pass the time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: It was four years before I eventually went to West Point. Because I was not quite sixteen my folks thought I was not ready for college and they were right. After a year in the National Guard my Dad was sent to study at the Army War College. That's a mark of a success as an Army officer.

INTERVIEWER: The War College was then in DC.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. It was at what is now Fort McNair. So we moved to Washington in the fall of 1937. Before I left high school someone from SINU called me, I think it was the high school principal, and said, "We're going to offer you a scholarship at the college here. We're going to give you an academic scholarship." I said, "Sorry, my Dad just got orders to Washington, I can't stay." Some time later I told my mother about that offer and she asked me, "Why didn't you tell us about that." That summer I spent with my Aunt Florence, "Ponce" we called her, Florence Shultz. She had married Clifford Shultz in New Jersey. They had a mansion in Montclair.

INTERVIEWER: Is this your mother's sister?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My mother's sister. She had six older sisters and Ponce was the third oldest. I had a good summer. Clifford was a businessman, a dealer in building supplies, lumber and so on. He was also a scientist by nature, an astronomer, a rock and gemstone collector, a technically competent man with a machine shop on the third floor and a telescope on the roof. He also rolled his own cigarettes. I spent the summer of '36 with my aunt and uncle, going by myself into New York City, being taken fly fishing and to other places by Clifford. We moved to Washington as I was about to turn sixteen. I had to get myself prepared to take the West Point examinations, so I went to post graduate high school in Washington. We lived on Quebec Street. The high school nearby was Woodrow Wilson High School, where I enrolled as a post graduate student in the fall.

INTERVIEWER: I've never heard of that. Is that common?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: It was unusual. I took courses. They allowed that.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a public high school?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. I took Algebra and English. I took typing classes and also

Art Metal, which was vocational training, grinding stones and making jewelry. I liked it. I made a brooch for my grandmother who was living with us that year. Our instructor later wrote a book on the subject, and my brooch is on its cover. When I finished high school's fall semester I decided that was not what I wanted to do.

I had heard about a job as a tire checker for Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. They had a store on Connecticut and N Street in Washington, not there any longer. It was a two story garage with a downstairs repair shop where you could repair tires and get new ones. The tire salesmen were upstairs. My job was to travel the streets of Washington on foot looking for cars with three bald tires. When I found one I recorded the car type, license plate number, location, condition of tires and so on on a form. I got 10 cents for each one I filled out.

I traveled the streets of Washington doing that. I would turn them in at the end of the day and a clerk in the office would take that data and add more. He had a book containing all the license numbers for the District of Columbia. He could read through that book and get the name of the owner of the car. He would look in the phone book and get his telephone number, and look in the city directory and find out if he was employed or owned a business. The completed form would go to Mr. Harms, the sales manager. Every morning the salesmen would come in to sell tires and Mr. Harms would give these leads to them. They'd go out with a kit of tire data and tire footprint samples and try to sell tires to those leads. That was the way you sold tires in 1937.

My first week I got seventy-five of these things filled out and made \$7.50. I guess I was OK because two or three weeks went by and I was the front office clerk. I was taking the tire checkers' leads and filling out the forms for Mr. Harms. I got a salary of \$15 a week, not bad. That was my first job. That's where I applied for Social Security.

INTERVIEWER: You were sixteen at the time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: A salaried employee at 16 years old during the Great Depression. That's pretty extraordinary.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I turned sixteen in 1937, this was now the spring of 1938. I worked there and I tried to study for West Point on my own. West Point exams in those days were structured, four subjects, the same every year. You could send off to West Point and they would send you the exams from the previous three or four years. You could study the questions and you could read up on the subject matter and study on your own.

The Goodyear Tire office was near Beanie Millard's prep school for West Point. He had been an instructor there and he ran a rigorous prep school that had a reputation for success. Some of my friends went there. My family didn't have the money to send me

to Beanie's. We were not independently wealthy by any means and my Dad was using a lot of his money to take care of his mother. Such a prep school was out of the question for me. Anyhow I wasn't old enough to go to West Point so in early 1938 I couldn't even take the examination. During my father's time at the Army War College I spent half the year at Wilson High School and the other half working at Goodyear Tire and Rubber. In the summer of 1938 my Dad was ordered to Fort Wadsworth, New York.

INTERVIEWER: That's in the harbor isn't it?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. Fort Wadsworth is on Staten Island. He was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division. In 1938 it was a square division with two brigades. Its 1st Brigade headquarters was at Fort Wadsworth. My father would be on the brigade staff. Before we went up there I told my boss, Mr. Harms, that I had to leave. The station manager called me in and said "You've got a future at Goodyear. Would you like to stay on and work for us?" I said, "No, I can't do that, I've got to go with my Dad." That was an interesting offer, but I went to Fort Wadsworth with my parents, my sisters Kathleen and Elizabeth, and my brother Robin.

So here I am, seventeen years old. I can't apply for West Point until the next year, 1939. I couldn't go to prep school because we couldn't afford it. But there on Staten Island was a branch of Manhattan College of New York City, run by the Christian Brothers. It ran a two year program, the college's first and second years, that I could take the bus to. I enrolled in the first year of college in September 1938 and turned seventeen that October.



Here is a photo of me and my twin sisters, two years younger, and 9 year old brother.

I was educated by the Christian Brothers in some useful subjects, calculus, surveying and chemistry. My hopes for West Point were for either a Congressional appointment, a Senatorial appointment, or a Presidential appointment. Presidential appointments were awarded by competitive examination. If you were the son of an Army officer you could compete for a Presidential appointment by taking the competitive examination administered by West Point. About 25 of them were awarded each year. Some Congressmen and Senators decided whom to appoint using a Civil Service exam but I had no such appointment by a Congressman or Senator in 1939. In March 1939 I took the West Point examinations hoping for a Presidential. I failed. I have the May 23, 1939, letter from E.S. Adams, Major General, The War Department Adjutant General, saying so.

INTERVIEWER: Was there a specific subject that tripped you up?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He told me that I got 59% in Algebra and 58% in Geometry. A passing grade was 66%. You can't do well studying on your own. You have to have somebody teaching you. I got good grades at college. If you finish a year of college and you get an appointment to West Point you don't have to take an entrance examination. It's called a "dog ticket." If you don't have such an appointment you must take an

examination for a Presidential and score very high.

I had tried that in 1939 and failed. So along comes the summer of 1939. I went back for a second year of college at Manhattan. But I still wanted to go to West Point. So I figured that the best chance for me was to leave college with one year of good grades and to concentrate on studying for the competitive examinations for a Presidential appointment. If I got a Congressional appointment I was okay with a dog ticket, if I could get somebody to give me a principal. I later learned that such was not guaranteed because if you failed the entrance examination once, which I had done, you must take the entrance examination again in any event. You must pass that before being appointed, regardless of the dog ticket. So in effect I was counting on passing the entrance examination the next time, 1940. Dangerous.

So in October 1939, after about six or eight weeks of college, I went to the authorities there, and I said, "I'm leaving college, I'm dropping out." My math teacher, a Christian Brother, said to me, "Jack, you shouldn't do this, you are such a good student. You should stay." I said, "I've got to get to West Point. This college is not helping me to get into West Point. I've got to study for the competitive examinations." I did that. I got a job about Christmas at Woolworths on Staten Island. And I worked various other places, studying for West Point on my own.

I was having a good time, because by then I was involved romantically with a girl from Staten Island. She was the best looking girl I had ever run into. We had become sweethearts. I was seventeen and turned eighteen and she was sixteen. It was a good life for me that year.

Danville, Illinois, being my father's home town, in January 1940 his Congresswoman there gave me a first alternate appointment. My mother had contacts with Senator Jimmy Byrnes of South Carolina through her older brother, Harry O'Neill, who was a successful businessman in Charleston. Senator Byrnes gave me a first alternate to the Naval Academy. If either principal had failed the physical or mental exam I would have accepted the appointment. But neither of those two panned out. Both principals passed and were admitted. After taking the examinations in March 1940 I knew that while I might have passed studying on my own I surely hadn't scored high enough to get a Presidential. So that year had passed with me working, studying for West Point on my own, going out with my sweetheart and having a good time but without getting into West Point.

INTERVIEWER: This was the summer of 1939?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That was the year of 1939-1940. By this time it was spring of 1940.

INTERVIEWER: The war breaks out.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: On the first of September 1939 World War Two began. Germany invaded Poland. George C. Marshall was made Chief of Staff of the Army that very day. That summer my father had asked if I wanted to go with him to maneuvers. The 1st Division was having maneuvers at Pine Camp; later on it was called Camp Drum/Fort Drum. I worked at the Post Exchange selling beer in the canteen and was working there on September 1.

In 1940 I had no Congressional or Senatorial appointment of any kind and took the West Point Presidential examinations in March 1940. After that I decided to get a full time job. I went downtown to an employment office in New York City. I know that I made a good impression on the man interviewing, dressed up in my suit. He said, "I'll find you a job. You have to give me its first week's pay, and it's your job." I interviewed for a position with the JP Morgan and Company financial house on Wall Street and I got the job. I became a runner, \$15.00 a week. It was low level, walking around carrying papers here and there. We had a good cafeteria, free for the employees, down the street for our lunch. I traveled to Wall Street by bus and ferry from Staten Island.

In April 1940, here I was, eighteen years old at JP Morgan watching the news ticker in this grand circular office under a high ceiling just inside the main entrance, 23 Wall Street on the corner of Broad and Wall, where the Morgan partners sat each at his own desk. I was circulating among them and throughout the building as a runner, watching the partners' news tickers pop out news as well as stock quotations.

The news was, "Germans invade Denmark, Norway." In May, "Germans invade France and the Low Countries." In June I read about Dunkirk. I thought, I've got a decision to make. Am I going to enlist in the Army? It had to be done July 1st. If you enlisted then for one year and if you passed the qualifying exam they'd send you to an Army-run West Point prep school. My father wanted me to enlist because he knew that that was the only way to West Point.

INTERVIEWER: Where was the prep school?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: There was one per corps area. The I Corps Area prep school was at Fort Totten in Queens. They had one at the Presidio of San Francisco. They had one in Atlanta. I was going with this charming young lady. I was actually thinking of us getting married. I had talked to my mother about getting married, and she said, "My older brother Harry got married when he was 18 and he turned out all right." I was torn. There was a war on. The draft hadn't been enacted yet but the country was getting ready.

June came along. Only on the first of July could you enlist for one year to try for West Point and not be obligated for more than that one year. I approached the end of June. Finally about the 27th of June I told my Dad, "I'm going to go down to Whitehall Street and enlist." At 39 Whitehall Street on the Battery, Manhattan, was the Army recruiting station. I could see the weight drop off his shoulders. He had not nagged me. He had

waited patiently.

I quit JP Morgan. With a Certificate of Consent signed by both my parents on June 28th, which I still have, I enlisted on June 29th. My Enlistment Record, also in my possession, lists my Army serial number, 12006104. It assigns me to the 16th Infantry, Fort Jay, NY, with date of enlistment the “1st day of July 1940, to serve one (1) year.” After those words, initialed by me, it reads “No promise has been made to this soldier relative to any assignment to duty or attendance at the West Point Prep School.”

On the first of July I reported there again. They swore me in and put me on the ferry to Governors Island, and I spent my first day in the Army in the barracks right there.

Chapter Three

Soldier

GENERAL CUSHMAN: On the 29th of June 1940 I had taken the ferry from Staten Island to the Battery on Manhattan Island, then to 39 Whitehall Street where I filled out my enlistment papers and took my physical. I reported back there on the first of July and they put me on the ferry to Governors Island. Where the ferry landed there was a place to draw your uniforms and I spent my first day in the Army in the barracks of K Company of the 16th Infantry on Governors Island. I was finally a soldier and I was delighted.

After I drew my uniforms I was taken to K Company where I was turned over to the supply sergeant in his supply room. The first thing he did was to make me a set of dog tags. He took two pieces of metal a little smaller than a half dollar and, using metal punches from a kit he had right there, he punched in my serial number one number at a time. After he punched my name and completed both dog tags he tied them together with a piece of white string and I put them around my neck. I felt like I now belonged to the Army.

It was clear that this was the life for me. I loved being a soldier. In those days recruit training took place in your company. The 16th Infantry was a distinguished regiment with a good World War I record, a fine regiment. The regiment out at Fort Wadsworth was the 18th Infantry. The 16th and the 18th had earlier formed the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division, a "square division" they called it. The 2nd Brigade had been the 26th Infantry and 28th Infantry, up north. When the Army went to triangular divisions in 1939 the 28th Infantry went elsewhere. The 16th and the 18th populated the posts around New York City, and the 16th was located in one garrison on Governor's Island, a big set of barracks that exists there now. You can see it from the air.

INTERVIEWER: That's why the regimental song, "The Sidewalks of New York."

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I guess it was. It was an eye opener for me to be in the Army as a soldier. I took my recruit training from a sergeant, who had been busted down to private and made it back to sergeant more than once, and a corporal. I wish I could remember their names. They had about eight or ten of us. We were equipped with the new M1 rifle known as the Garand.

INTERVIEWER: So you had a squad of recruits and they gave you a sergeant and a corporal to train you.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That was it, right there. We lived in K Company's barracks and trained on the drill field on Governors Island. On the company organization chart I was assigned to a squad in a rifle platoon but for four weeks or so I was a recruit. I was not going to have any leave until I was made into a soldier which took about three or four weeks. Then I began to appear on the Duty Roster. I remember first reporting to the first sergeant of K Company, a roly-poly man with a ruddy face. I came in and I called him, "Sir." He said, "You don't say sir to me, I'm the first sergeant. I'm an enlisted man. You don't say sir to an enlisted man." I said, "Yes, sir." I couldn't help myself.

My first payday they took 50 cents out for a going-away present for that first sergeant on his retirement. Maybe it was more than 50 cents. They took out for laundry and for canteen checks that were good for cash in the Post Exchange. Because I had to get movie checks and canteen checks during the month and you had to pay for them at payday, I got about \$10 or \$12 out of my \$21 a month, in dollars. I didn't go out into the dayroom where dice and card games were run by various sergeants and gamble at craps or poker. I got a pass and went to see my girlfriend over on Staten Island for the day and evening. I did that several times. We got back together for a while but I was in the Army now, with good chow in the mess hall and peeling potatoes and washing dishes on KP.

K Company served its meals family style, at varnished wood twelve-man tables. We sat on stools. Sliced G.I. bread and butter were set out, with pitchers of coffee and "side arms," sugar in bowls and canned milk for cream. The food was excellent and ample served family style, breakfast especially. But woe to a soldier who "short stopped" a platter by taking something from it when it was on its way to another who had asked for it to be passed. There was expletive-laden soldier language and stories of doings in New York City that expanded my horizons along with going to lectures to be informed of the horrors of VD.

With others in July I took the simple examination to see if we qualified for prep school. Prep school was to start in late August. I mounted my first interior guard and pulled my first duty guarding prisoners. That was an uneasy experience because the prisoners, from the stockade at Castle Willams right there on post, looked threatening. Armed with an unloaded rifle, I got through that all right. I had become a soldier.

Then I got word that I had passed the exam. I was to go to the prep school. I found out later that I had come in first among those taking it. Prep school was at Fort Totten on Long Island at the end of the Whitestone Bridge in Bayside. When the regiment went off to maneuvers that summer I stayed behind in the barracks on detail, painting bunks white. They had the old Quartermaster insignia on the bunk ends and I dropped one on my right big toe. I lost the toe nail and that toe hasn't been the same since. It was about that time that I stopped writing to my girlfriend. I just didn't keep in touch with her. She went off to college in Washington. She had graduated from high school at the same time I enlisted in the Army. She began to leave my life.

We enlisted men at the prep school were billeted in the barracks of the Fort Totten garrison. The sergeant who was in charge of us was in the same billets. Every day we formed up into sections and marched to the post headquarters building where we had our classes. We were drilled in mathematics, history, and English by two officers, both West Pointers, from the 1st Division. The senior officer was 1st Lieutenant Ferdinand T. Unger, Field Artillery, of the class of 1937. Finn Unger was memorable, a model officer. One day Charlie Dubsy, a fellow student, attracted his attention for some reason. Lieutenant Unger stood him up and "braced" him, plebe style, while we all looked on, getting an education. Charlie made it the next year and was USMA 1945. Finn Unger retired as a lieutenant general then became director of the Soldiers Home in Wash-

ington, DC. After I retired I ran into him at an AUSA convention. I reminded him about those days. He remembered me.

That September Congress passed the Draft Act. That's also when the National Guard got called up and mobilization began to take place. That's when the Army really began to grow. I spent that year in prep school studying, concentrating on the subjects in the examination, doing my homework and taught by those two officers.

The Army was mobilizing. The 1st Division was the only division they had that looked like anything. It had just been made triangular instead of square. The 1st Division was ordered to send troops to Iceland. The division commander said, "We can't support this prep school any longer. I've got to have those officers." So they disestablished the full time prep school. By that time my Dad had been promoted to lieutenant colonel and ordered to Columbia, South Carolina, to be on the staff of the newly organized I Corps tactical headquarters as its G3, the operations officer, working for Major General Eichelberger, corps commander. He had a good reputation as a staff officer. He had graduated high in his class at Leavenworth and had been to the Army War College. He was down there and I got the word to him that the prep school was closed. He pulled strings to get me assigned to the Fort McPherson prep school. I was transferred from the 16th to the 13th Infantry, which was at Fort Jackson near Columbia, part of the 8th Division which was being mobilized down there to be part of I Corps.

INTERVIEWER: The corps areas ran the schools, so did you transfer corps areas?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I transferred from one corps area to another.

INTERVIEWER: So your father had you transferred to another corps area and put into another prep school.

GEN CUSHMAN: That's right. I was assigned to the 13th Infantry, 8th Division, at Fort Jackson with duty at Fort McPherson, Georgia. When my father was transferred to Columbia my mother had moved to Charleston with the rest of the family. By Christmas of 1940 they were in Charleston and I would be in prep school at Fort McPherson. It was a new group of soldiers down there. Those in the prep school up at Fort Totten that closed had been scattered one place or another. But I was able to find a place where I could land and continue. My aunt Helen, my mother's older sister, a spinster, lived in Atlanta near the prep school at Fort McPherson, so I had family nearby.

At Fort McPherson the prep school students were housed in the barracks of the 2nd Battalion of the 22nd Infantry. The school ran classes down in the basement. It happened that I later commanded the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, but that story will come later. It was intensive study. I made a good friend there, Frank Cash who was from the Alabama National Guard trying for West Point himself. The time came to take our examination in March of 1940. We took it in a service club there on Fort McPherson. That club still existed in 1973 when I commanded the 101st Airborne Division and visited Fort McPherson and went to take a look at the place I had taken those examinations. It was still there. In two days we took our examinations in algebra, plane geometry, American and ancient history, and English.

When it was over I went up to the 13th Infantry at Fort Jackson. Activated as Camp Jackson in 1917 and then shut down, Fort Jackson had been reactivated and rebuilt. It was still raw. The Corps of Engineers had just completed construction of the 13th Infantry barracks. I reported to the antitank company. The antitank company was a separate company, not in a battalion. The infantry regiment had three battalions, plus a regimental service company and the regimental antitank company. We had these little 37mm antitank guns that were pop guns. The regiment was getting its first draftees then. I was part of the cadre. Because I could type and had some education I was made company clerk. That was my first duty, helping the first sergeant make out the morning report and duty rosters, the KP roster, and doing the other things a company clerk did.

I made PFC [private first class] and then they started to get the recruits in. My father knew where I was. He was a lieutenant colonel on the corps staff. I came back one evening to my small desk in the first sergeant's office and there at my desk – my father had visited -- he had stuck a sheet of paper into my typewriter. He had typed something like this, "From Willard Paul." Willard Paul was a friend of my Dad in the office of the Adjutant General in the War Department. The note read "From Willard Paul, Jack first in both exams. Aint that sumpin." For years I kept that note.

As an Army son I had competed for both a Presidential and Army appointment. At West Point there were a hundred slots total for Regular Army and National Guard and a hundred for Presidential. So every class would have about 25 spaces for admissions of soldiers of the Regular Army or National Guard and 25 Presidentials. I had scored number one on the Presidential list and number one on the Regular Army and National Guard list. That's what my Dad was telling me. Later on, after I had long graduated, I was at West Point researching something and I asked the archivist if that had been true. Each candidates examination papers had been assigned a code number, not a name, and she found my names code number and the examination scores and confirmed it. I had really studied. It was all a matter of studying.

An interesting thing on the West Point examination at Fort McPherson. I remember the algebra questions. There were ten of them. One of them required you to factor an algebraic expression, to break it down to factors. That was a complicated thing to do. I worked on it and I couldn't solve it. So I went on to the next one and the next one and finally came back to that one and worked on it again. I realized it couldn't be solved. I wrote down, "This can't be solved. It must be a misprint." The next year at West Point the mathematics instructor in my plebe algebra class said, "I remember you, Mr. Cushman. I graded your paper. You discovered that misprint. I gave you full credit."

INTERVIEWER: Wow. How about that.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Anyhow here I am now a clerk and the draftees are coming in. The company commander said, "I'm going to make you corporal." So I made corporal. Then he said, "I'm going to make you assistant platoon sergeant to one of the platoons of the anti-tank company." The platoons were one per barracks. The barracks were newly built, bare wooden walls inside, a latrine and shower room downstairs, two large squad rooms, one on each floor. A coal furnace, in a room entered from the outside,

heated air to be blown through vents inside. On cold mornings a haze of smoke from those furnaces hung over the troop area. At the foot of the company street was the orderly room and the supply room and mess hall. I was on the second floor of our barracks in the NCO's room with my platoon sergeant. It was something to make corporal on your first enlistment. Even making PFC on your first enlistment was a big deal in the old Army. But this was an expanding Army.

My platoon sergeant was Sergeant Todd, a handsome leather-faced mustachioed man who in a civilian tweed jacket and fedora looked like an English country gentleman. He had about 15 years service and told me once "Corporal, I've used about as much ink to sign the payroll as you have drunk G.I. coffee." He liked to regale me with stories of his amorous conquests.

Later in plebe English I wrote a theme describing Sergeant Todd that earned me a 6.0, a maximum grade. I could not have had a better mentor.

So in come the recruits, and here I am a nineteen year old corporal, taking these drafted men through their training schedules including rifle marksmanship and firing on the known distance range.



Taking them to crew drill and out on the reservation with those puny antitank guns, drawn behind a jeep, that they would use to decimate German panzers. It was a great three months. These men in the first draft were in their twenties and many of them had left good jobs. I was their leader, on my first enlistment.

Some would ask me how they could become commissioned officers. I told them about Officer Candidate School. In the summer of 1944, after I had graduated from West Point and was a second lieutenant going to branch school at Fort Belvoir I was walking down a Washington street and a major dressed in pinks and greens was approaching me. When it came time for me to salute him, that major turned out to be one of the draftees that had been in my platoon at Fort Jackson. We recognized each other and had a brief reunion.

During those months I occasionally got a weekend pass and hitchhiked to visit my family in Charleston. My sisters were going to the College of Charleston at the time and they had friends, attractive Southern girls I could date. I was a carefree young soldier on the way to West Point, going to Charleston and dating. I remember one in particular that I took a liking to, to whom in June I presented my dog tags. I later regretted having given them away. I lost touch with this former girlfriend of mine.

INTERVIEWER: Do you want to get her name on the record?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I don't think so. I got my orders to report to West Point, with travel and mileage authority. My mother in Charleston had a sister up in Montclair, New Jersey, Aunt Ponce with whom I had spent the summer of 1936. Ponce had a summer home, a farmhouse called Stone Crop, out in New Jersey. My mother and two sisters and younger brother drove up from Charleston to spend part of the summer there. I joined them by rail for a last few days before going up to be discharged from the Army at West Point and to enter. I remember that the Germans invaded Russia while we were there, the 22d of June 1941. Frank Cash joined us.

INTERVIEWER: Frank Cash was your friend from prep school?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. He was a National Guardsman from Alabama. We had become friends. He's dead now, but we were friends our whole lives. He was a fine man, a Southern gentleman. After graduating from West Point he served well in an armored cavalry unit in the Europe war. After World War II he went into the foreign service. In later life he became the resident foreign service officer to the Commandant of the Army War College. Frank and I went up to West Point together. Here we are on the 30th of June 1941. We have just been discharged from the Army and we are standing on the sidewalk on the Plain at West Point.

The Corps of Cadets was in summer camp on the edge of the Plain, getting ready for Beast Barracks. That would begin the next day for the new plebe class. Each evening they marched by company from summer camp down the road that we were on to the mess hall. Frank and I were standing beside that road in our civilian clothes, sport shirts and trou. We watched them march by. The next day we were scheduled to report to become cadets.

I said to Frank, "Let's go down to where they told us to go in." We walked to the West Academic Building's sallyport where there was an anteroom with a sign that said that was where we were to report. I said to Frank, "Let's be the first ones in tomorrow morning." He said, "Okay, we might as well, what the hell." We went up there from the

enlisted mens barracks early the next morning, about 8:00. We were the first ones there. I said, "Who is going to go in first?" We flipped a coin. I won. I was the first new cadet in barracks that morning. It was an idiotic thing to do, because it was a hell once you got inside. So I go into the anteroom, It's still there. I sign in, and then Frank does. I walk out first into Central Area where the barracks and the Beast Detail are. It's nothing but first classmen waiting for the new cadets.

My West Point entrance physical exam had shown me at weight 158 pounds, height 70 inches, waist 30 inches, general appearance good, and missing my wisdom teeth. That was my condition beginning life as a cadet.

Chapter Four

West Point Cadet

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Beast Barracks got that name because new cadet fourth classmen, plebes, were called “beasts.” The yearlings, new third classmen, are now off on leave, the second class is on their summer-long furlough, and the first classmen who make up the Beast Detail are waiting for the new cadets. The first one they get hold of is me. They remembered seeing Frank and me on the sidewalk the day before. “What were you doing inspecting the Corps, mister?” was how my day started. I was told to go to 2nd Company, which ends up being C and D Company of the Corps, at that time a regiment. The regiment is A through M, 12 companies, so C and D Company take the plebes from the 2nd Beast Barracks Company. I go over there, and they said, “Can you type?” “Yes,” and I’m the company clerk. That starts my Beast Barracks, and began my life as a cadet. Typical of Beast Barracks, there was a lot of running and shouting, but it was livable. At the end of the day, July 1, 1941, in formation at Trophy Point, we were sworn in.

INTERVIEWER: Who do you recall in your class that the typical historian might recognize?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: In my West Point class there were two four star generals, Jack Hennessy was a classmate, and George Blanchard. We had sons of famous Army officers; John Eisenhower, the son of Dwight Eisenhower, was a classmate. In the class behind me was Bill Clark, Mark Clark’s son. George Patton’s son was in that class. Phil McAuliffe who made lieutenant general and then ran the Panama Canal as a civilian, was a classmate of mine. That must be all the famous ones. Of that class of about 475 graduated. At that time it was 550 or so. We were the last of the peacetime classes, those after us entered in wartime. We were the last class to have a 12 company Corps of Cadets. Pearl Harbor took place in December of our first year, on the 7th. Immediately they started thinking about making a short course out of it. In World War I they had made the courses very short. That had been disastrous for the Corps of Cadets. They wiped out all the upper classmen in a hurry. This time the Army decided to make it a three year course. I had entered with the class of 1945, which became the class of 1944. The former class of 1944 became the class of June 1943, and the class of 1943 ahead of it became the class of January 1943. The class of 1942 graduated a week early.

INTERVIEWER: What was the curriculum like at West Point at that time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Everybody took every subject. There were no electives. The only deviations would be in the foreign language department, where you could take Spanish, or French. You didn’t major in anything, everybody took the same curriculum, algebra, calculus, and so on. The classes were organized into sections by subject. The highest ranking academically would be the first section in that subject, in that group of students. One group was A, B & C Company, that was a fourth of the corps. D, E and F Company, G, H and I and so on, so it was four divisions. They would teach each the

same subjects. You could get a class that the other group had on the previous day.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find that as a student? Did you find that abrasive at all?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I accepted it. That was the way you did it. I didn't object. You were graded on a 3.0 scale, 3.0 being perfect. You recited each day in every subject. Your grades would be in tenths -- 2.1 or 2.2, or 2.7. To pass was 2.0 or higher. If you got a 2.7 or higher average, you would get stars and below 2.0 you were deficient. If you were found deficient and you had to take a turnout examination. If you could pass that, you'd stay. But if you didn't pass it, out you went. You could come back a year later if you qualified and start over again. Some did that. General George Patton was a five year student. We had in our class people from the previous class who had failed but came back.

You marched to class as plebes, you marched to class as yearlings and as second classmen. First classmen could walk to class. You formed by sections and subjects. The math sections for A, B, and C companies, say, would form up in Central Area. The highest member of that section academically would be the section marcher. You marched, went up the stairs to your classroom. The section marcher reported to the instructor "All present, sir" or "Cadet so-and-so absent, sir." That was the way we did it.

INTERVIEWER: How would you compare the quality of instruction to, say, your experience at Manhattan College?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Much more regimented. We'd go to the boards and recite and grade every day. It was college, but it was military college.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think the quality of instruction was the same?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I never thought about that. We had good instructors. Some of them were better than others, but as far as I was concerned it was a mill. It was a mill to go through to graduate.

INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy studying engineering?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was a good student. I made first section on everything and became a star man, which means an average of 2.7 or higher, my first year. Prep school had prepared me to study and I studied hard. I had been in the Army so they didn't harass me. The first classmen really picked on the ones who didn't know how to make their beds or shine their shoes and so forth.

I remember one time in Beast Barracks. My roommate George Tuttle could type too, and we were company clerks. One Saturday we were getting ready for inspection. Plebes always had to be out five minutes before formation but in Beast Barracks it was ten minutes before. Say the formation for Saturday inspection was at 8 o'clock, you had to be in ranks at 10 minutes before eight. A plebe would start calling the minutes at the foot of the stairs, and he would sound off, "Sir there are five minutes before assembly for inspection, five minutes sir." At four minutes, "Sir, there are four minutes,"

“Sir, there is one minute.”

George and I were trying to get our gear on, the cross belts, breast plate and cartridge box on the back. It was hard to hook up, there was a trick to it. There we were trying to put this on together, each of us trying to help the other one and we couldn't make it work. Then the minutes, 10 minutes, 8 minutes, 5 minutes, we're still in the barracks. We came out in ranks with our stuff undone. It looked awful, and of course the first classmen pounced on us. “Why are you late?” “Sir, I couldn't get my shoulder straps on.” “Mr. Dumbjohn, shoulder straps are for a brassiere, those are shoulder BELTS.” The next meal formation was lunch. I was at a table with that same sergeant first classman and he said, “Mr Cushman, I can see you're not going to amount to anything in the Corps of Cadets.”

After six weeks in Beast Barracks we went to summer camp. By this time the new yearlings were back from leave ready to haze the plebes. We were the last class to have a full summer camp out on the Plain. After that summer it was war and by 1942 they had got some land out on the reservation and made a summer camp called Camp Buckner. We broke in Camp Buckner. But that summer of 1941 the plebes went to summer camp out beyond the Plain with tents lined up in the Civil War style with four cots in each tent and a wash basin outside and a bucket with water, and a mirror and you'd shave there. The sinks, toilets and showers, were all the way down at the far end. If you had to take a leak you had to go down there and it was a long way from where our C Company was.

We had guard mount and inspection and we had tryouts for choir where we went over and tried singing for the choir master. He'd hit three notes on his piano for “Glory to God.” You would sing them to “Glory to God!” Sometimes a plebe would get only as far as “Glory” and he'd say, “That's all.” When we became yearlings the next June we went for a month to summer camp before the new plebes came in and had dancing lessons in the gymnasium. We wore our hop shoes, which are shoes with very thin soles on them and shiny patent leather for dances, hops they called them. We went over to the gymnasium and danced with each other to the recorded music of the dancing teacher. My partner was my roommate, Chuck Sampson, who became tackle on the football team. First one would lead and then the other.

Plebe year went by. It had been a good year. I didn't have any problems because I had been a soldier and I was older and I wasn't easy to pick on. I did get “slugged” once. It happened during plebe Christmas when all upperclassmen were home on leave and only plebes were in barracks. Our mess hall table got into a food fight, we were throwing sugar and bread. The table was right under the Officer in Charge sitting at the poop deck above. My punishment was something like “six and 10,” meaning six demerits and 10 hours walking back and forth in Central Area with your rifle on your shoulder. I reported to Major Harmony, a senior tactical officer, to receive that punishment. He had known my parents years before at Fort Benning. He said to me, “Your father would not be proud of you.” Plebes' grades were sent to the parents. My father must have wondered when he saw at the end of the year that I was something like 260th in disci-

pline and close to first in my class in every other subject, but I never heard of it. I must admit that in later years I took some satisfaction at having been an “area bird.”

I was a good student. I knew I was doing all right because they posted the grades every month, by section. They posted by highest and down to the lowest. They’ve stopped doing that now, apparently because it was not building self esteem. It’s bad for your self esteem if you see yourself way down on the bottom so they do it alphabetically now.

INTERVIEWER: Sooner or later we all end up on the bottom of something.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That’s how it went in those days, you were ranked in everything. After summer camp we went to our companies. I was assigned to C Company. C Company was in the 18th Division of barracks in Central Area, built in 1854. It was the first division of barracks next to the guardhouse where the tactical department and was where the Commandant of Cadets had his office. I was on the bottom floor because I was still a company clerk. They posted on the bulletin board one day after academics began, “All plebes will go out to be checked out on athletic ability.” So we all went out to the Plain, and they had us all run here and run there and throw balls and this and that. They were sizing us up for various athletic capabilities. The next thing I knew a bulletin board announcement came up, “the following plebes will report to soccer practice.” So I was selected to be a member of the soccer team. I had never played soccer but I was on the plebe soccer team and got pretty good at it.

INTERVIEWER: What position did you play?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Center half. I was on the plebe first team and got my numerals that year. I played center half on the A squad or varsity my yearling and first class years. Plebe soccer ended and they said, “Lacrosse is coming.” I had never played lacrosse, I had heard that it was a game that didn’t have any rules and that you used sticks in. I tried out for off-season lacrosse in the winter. The coach was Morris Touchstone, a great lacrosse player and coach. I remember going down in the field house. It was wintertime, there was snow on the ground and we practiced indoors. I was given a stick to handle. The lacrosse ball fell out the end of my net and I couldn’t toss it. That was humiliating, but I was a rough and tumble athlete, good at contact sports, like soccer and lacrosse, so I ended up on the plebe lacrosse team. Those were my two sports at West Point. I was a second team All American lacrosse defense man. I was also a second team All American soccer player.

INTERVIEWER: That’s quite an accomplishment.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The really good players in those days were in the Army. I’m not a good golfer and not much of a tennis player, but I was good at body contact sports. I was varsity soccer and lacrosse player and my last year at West Point we beat Navy the first time. We had lost to Navy previously.

INTERVIEWER: In soccer or lacrosse?

GEN CUSHMAN: We lost to Navy at soccer yearling year, and lost to them when we played them first class year. We lost to them yearling year in lacrosse, but we went down to Navy and beat them the last time we played them in lacrosse. After the 1943 Navy game I was elected captain of the lacrosse team. I had a successful plebe year, and when yearling year came along I made corporal. I was number five ranking corporal in the Corps, which was pretty good, and I was a star man. In 1942, my yearling year, they brought in a huge plebe class, and the Corps of Cadets had to expand to 16 companies in two regiments, 1st Regiment A through H Company, and 2nd Regiment A through H. I was in C1 Company of the 1st Regiment.

INTERVIEWER: This is a war time expansion of the Corps of Cadets?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. My roommate was Bob Flynn, who had been in B Company. We had played lacrosse together. We were both corporals, happy corporals, and having a good time. He sent me a couple of photos, one of me on the beast detail and one of us as a couple of carefree yearlings. We were squad leaders at Beast Barracks and Bob was the yearling hop manager for the company.



Bob is my lifelong best friend. He went into the infantry and distinguished himself in both World War II and Korea. A great combat leader, he was brought back to West Point when they set up a leadership department after the Korean War. That year went by fast.

Looking back on my life, now in my late eighties, I can see that it was in my yearling year that I developed the strong desire to excel that pretty much characterized my life.

You can call that ambition if you like and I suppose that I was working for rank. I just know that I wanted to do well as a cadet, and in athletics and academics. I remember that as the year went by I got to thinking that I might become the First Captain, which is the senior cadet in the Corps of Cadets. I don't think that I was "bucking" for the job. There's really no way you can do that. I went to daily Mass often that year. I do know that I asked God to help me be a better cadet.

Then first class year came and on graduation day for the class of June 1943 I was named First Captain. My mother had come up for graduation. I was not going to graduate, but she came up to see me June Week and go to the graduation parade. My father was overseas. She had intended to skip the graduation itself the next day and go home. The Commandant of Cadets was Brigadier General Phillip E. Gallagher, who had been a lieutenant in the 15th Infantry.

INTERVIEWER: Do they know each other?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. They had been in China together. My mother said to Phil Gallagher, "We're not going to stay for graduation since Jack's not graduating. We're going to leave." Phil Gallagher said, "I think you better stay." Because he was going to name me First Captain. She stayed and was there for that.

My yearling year they had decided to train selected cadets to become commissioned in the Air Corps and get a pilot's rating and wings upon graduation. So the summer of first class year after they were yearlings, all the air cadets went down to flying training in different places in Texas.

INTERVIEWER: All the cadets who volunteered for it?

GEN CUSHMAN: They could choose Air Corps.

INTERVIEWER: Why didn't you choose Air Corps?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I didn't want to go in the Air Corps. I gave it some thought but I wanted to be a soldier in the Army. The Air Corps is a flying outfit. You have to be proficient flying and you're just by yourself. I wanted to be in an organization. I really wanted to be in the Infantry. I had started out in the 16th Infantry, and I liked that.

INTERVIEWER: Did many cadets wish to volunteer for the Air Corps?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: A lot of cadets, a lot of very good officer material, a third to a quarter of the class. We had a class of almost 500 by that time. I'd say about 130/150 went into the Air Corps. They all went off for the summer to primary flight training and the ground cadets stayed together as a class. Graduation day it was announced that I was First Captain, temporary during the summer, for the ground cadets. When the first class air cadets came back and academics started, we would have a new listing of cadets by rank. After graduation we ground cadets went for armor training to Fort Knox, and then for about ten or twelve days to Fort Benning, where we were to learn infantry and engineering.

INTERVIEWER: This is the summer of 1943?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. I was a first classman after two years at West Point. We had two stripes on our lower sleeves, and we had the chevrons up here for cadet officers and sergeants because there wasn't any cow year.

INTERVIEWER: Your academic program had been abbreviated because of the war.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. They took one year out of it. 1941 when we came in as plebes was the last year that "the cows", the second classmen, had what they call a furlough. it was 78 days. Furlough was a relic from the 1800s when you got two full months off to go back to the farm.

INTERVIEWER: And go work the farm.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, and that still existed in 1941. As plebes all that year we were listening to the yearlings talk about furlough. They couldn't wait for furlough to happen so they could take a full summer off and go home. It was always called a snare and a delusion. They would come back deluded, not ready to be cadets again after being civilians. The yearlings my plebe year looked forward to it. In the mess hall, somewhere down the far reaches, there'd be a cry come out and build. "Yeaaaaaay, fuuuuurloough" throughout thr mess hall. They were looking forward to it, those yearlings.

Our class went to Fort Benning in June of 1943. That's where I met my wife, Nancy. Nancy was the daughter of the chief engineer instructor at Fort Benning, Colonel Girard B. Troland. The senior officers' wives of the post at Fort Benning had said, "The first classmen of West Point are coming and we should entertain them. Let's have a dance." Some of us cadets were invited to this dance to meet some of the girls from Benning. Nancy went there. That's where I met her and fell in love with her on that very day. I dated her three or four times that visit and invited her back to West Point. To make a long story short, we got married. It was a great romance.

INTERVIEWER: I understood that you got married after you had returned from the Pacific?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That's right. In 1943 her father went on to another assignment. Nancy was in her last year of college in New London, Connecticut, at Connecticut College, for Women then. That year I visited her in New London, where her mother had settled for the rest of the war.



We finally became very much in love and I asked her to marry me. I asked her visiting father if I could marry her after I graduated, and he said, “No.” He said, “You’ve got to come back from the war, I don’t want Nancy to be pregnant and then become a widow.” He would not give us permission. We got engaged and we married later on.

My first class year was a busy year. As First Captain I had many duties including being a member of the Honor Committee. The Honor Committee consisted of representatives of the first class from each of the companies. One of them was elected as the chairman. They would meet together. The First Captain was a member of the Honor Committee, ex officio, that is by virtue of his office of First Captain. We met often. We had many honor cases.

INTERVIEWER: What was the Honor Committee? What was the purpose of the Honor Committee?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The Honor Committee dates from years past. Cadets pride themselves on the Corps honor system. The system has traditions and regulations and rules. A cadet does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do. The reports of violations would come to the Honor Committee, such as a man telling a lie, or cheating, or stealing. The accused would come before the Honor Committee and be interviewed, questioned. The committee would deliberate and decide what to do about it. In those days the Honor Committees’ decision was final. They’d either say, “He should be found,” meaning eliminated from the Corps, or “He should not be found.”

When the academic year began and the ground cadets were joined by the air cadets and academics began they reorganized the staffs and worked the air cadets into it. I could have been replaced by an air cadet or other ground cadet as First Captain. I became First Captain for the rest of the year. Here's a story for you. When I was First Captain during Beast Barracks, I was marching the Catholic plebes up to the chapel.

INTERVIEWER: So you're marching the Catholic plebes up to Mass?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. It was Sunday, time for Mass. "Fall in, right face, forward march," by company. In those days the Archbishop of New York appointed the chaplain for West Point, not as an officer, but as a civilian. Ours was the Holy Trinity Chapel, part of the diocese. Our Catholic chaplain was Father Murdock from Yonkers. Father Murdock was a crusty old fellow.

A member of the class before us, June 1943, had been found guilty by the Honor Committee of cheating. The punishment when judged guilty in those days was either you resign or you are "silenced," meaning that no one in the Corps of Cadets speaks to you at all except officially. The management running the academy was not involved in this. It was all done by the cadets. The authorities knew about it, but they didn't rule on it, had nothing to do with it. The Honor Committee had decided the case and that had been it.

Father Murdock had championed this man's cause. He had helped him through the year. The man had lived through the year silenced. He had graduated as a silenced cadet. That man, by the way, served his time in the Army later on. He had been a Catholic and Father Murdock had taken his side. So there is Father Murdock at Mass talking to the Catholic plebes of the class of 1946, the new plebe class that was just being indoctrinated. He starts talking about the honor system. And he says to the plebes something like, "This honor system is arbitrary. It has no mercy. There is no room for forgiveness. There was a good lad last year who was found guilty and I helped him survive. It's a terrible system. You ought to have some mercy to it. There ought to be more than just one punishment. Besides that, this man wasn't guilty. I believe him."

He was telling this to these brand new cadets, and I'm the First Captain listening to this. So I formed up the cadets and marched them back to the barracks. I gathered them around the steps of the mess hall, and I said, "Fall out. I want to talk to you plebes. Now listen to me. Don't pay any attention to Father Murdock. He's got nothing to do with the honor system. It's run by the cadets. It's run by the first class, by the Corps. You do what we tell you to, not what Father Murdock says." I straightened that out. I never heard from Father Murdock.

We have at Knollwood a man who was in that formation. He had been a yearling on that 1943 Beast Detail. He said to me once, "Jack, I never will forget when you marched the plebes back and told them not to pay any attention to Father Murdock." That was my connection with the Honor System. I met with it and was very much a part of it. We had interesting experiences. I won't go through all of them or this could last forever.

INTERVIEWER: What are you trying to instill with the Honor System? What's the purpose?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Tell the truth.

INTERVIEWER: Tell the truth under all circumstances?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: If your wife says, "What do you think of my hat," you don't necessarily tell the exact truth. But officially, even unofficially, you don't lie.

INTERVIEWER: So we're trying to inculcate as part of the military ethos the importance of honesty at all times.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, you have to be honest. Honesty is an absolute requirement. Don't lie, don't steal and don't cheat.

INTERVIEWER: That's important to a professional.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The report has got to be honest. There are violations out there in the real world about this. This is a terribly important subject and I can go on with this for a long time.

INTERVIEWER: I know. I wanted to get on the record that perhaps the priest didn't quite understand the ethos.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Years later I came to realize Father Murdock was right. It is arbitrary. There has to be room for forgiveness.

INTERVIEWER: I know silencing went out in the 1970s, didn't it?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. I have to say that the honor system does not work perfectly. To find an offender guilty requires a unanimous vote by all members. The first classmen in each company elect that company's member. That year we had a 16 man committee. All must agree on the case at issue. One case involved cheating by a first classman. To 15 members the case was open and shut but his company honor committee member could not be convinced. Sad to say, I suspected that his fellow first classmen in that company, which was noted for its relaxed attitude, had chosen this particular honor representative as a kind of joke. He was no model. The committee chairman and I wrestled with that one member but we could not change his mind. The man graduated. He made a lousy officer. A few months later at branch school he was court-martialed, for what I don't know. He left the Army. My class has lost sight of him. So the Honor System can be uneven.

To illustrate, in my first class year a yearling reported to his company honor representative that while on Christmas leave he had been to a party and was asked if he knew a certain cadet. Replying that that cadet was in his company, he was asked if he knew his wife. Thinking that the question was about the cadet's roommate ("wife" is cadet slang for roommate), he said yes, only to find that the question was about his

actual wife. It was common knowledge to the questioner that this cadet had been married.

After a struggle with his conscience considering the consequences, the yearling reported the conversation to his company honor representative, who brought it to the Honor Committee. The committee called in the cadet who admitted that he had married. Because he had signed the official statement required by every cadet that he was not married and had never been married, the Honor Committee found the cadet guilty of an honor violation. He was asked to resign, which he did only months before graduation. Our 1944 Yearbook, the Howitzer, was about to be printed and his photograph was removed.

After that cadet had died years later, I heard from his roommate. He wrote that the cadet in question had married the young woman because she was pregnant. At the time he was aware that others had had sex with her but he considered it his responsibility to assume fatherhood of her child. He had never lived with her. His roommate also related that, having been discharged from the Military Academy, the former cadet had become an officer in the Coast Guard. He completed a full career, retiring as a captain. In the Coast Guard he had been known as a particularly upright officer with a special reputation for being scrupulously honest in inspecting cargo ships entering United States ports, where a bribe was often offered by the ship captain. So outcomes are uneven and that's life.

There is a new book out about honor at West Point, Honor Bright, by Bob Sorley, West Point class of 1956. It has the whole story of the honor system. It has changed a lot over the years. Remember the cheating scandal in 1951 where many on the football team were caught cheating? That was a terrible blow to West Point. Now you can be found guilty by the Honor Committee and be discharged and brought back in. You can serve a kind of probation.

I should tell you about another experience. In the summer of 1943 I had been named First Captain, at least for the summer months and with the ground cadets. Late that summer all classes were taken by truck to Pine Camp – now Fort Drum -- in upstate New York. On the way back we stopped at Cobleskill, a small town with a main street and not much more. We camped out at the fairgrounds in our pup tents overnight. The fairgrounds were enclosed by a fence around the race track. Some of the cadets wanted to go into town. The tactical officers accompanying the group told them, “You can go into town, but we will have a sentry at the exit of the fairgrounds and when you return they will be asking you for an ‘All Right’.” “All Right” was a method by which cadets reporting in from an authorized absence declared that they had not been to an off limits area or done anything unauthorized like drinking alcoholic beverages. It was essentially a self-reporting system, later disestablished, deemed undesirable. In 1943 it was still in effect. I was First Captain and some of the cadets came to me and said, “Jack, they are making us give an ‘All Right’ and we don't want to do that. It is not established in the Blue Book that this is a place where we must have an ‘All Right’ sen-

try.”

INTERVIEWER: What is the Blue Book?

GEN CUSHMAN: The Blue Book is the book of regulations for the Corps of Cadets. It is book-sized about half an inch thick. I talked it over with these cadets and I agreed that this was being done by the tactical department to save them trouble. They didn't want to go down to the town and police the cadets. I don't know where they thought the cadets would go, into a tavern maybe. All the cadets wanted to do was go downtown and stroll around. It was summer time, the evenings were long and it was a nice little town. I asked some if they were willing to refuse to go into town if we had to pass the "All Right" sentry, and they said, "Yes." They objected to the use of this method by the tactical department.

I went to the Officer in Charge and asked if the decision to use an "All Right" sentry was final. He said, "Yes." They had set up a loud speaker, a PA system with a standing microphone they used to make announcements to the cadets about the meals and so forth. I went up to the microphone and I said, "This is Cushman speaking. We have decided that we will not go into town in because they are asking us for an 'All Right'" or words to that effect. The Tactical Officers changed their minds. They said, "If that is the way you feel about it we won't ask you for an 'All Right.'" They may have been irritated, but we succeeded in getting our point across. There always was something wrong with that self-reporting system. President Eisenhower, probably as a cadet but certainly as a five-star general, believed that this was not a way to get discipline, that is to make people honor bound to tell that they had done something wrong.

I am about to graduate, June 6th is coming up. A week or so before graduation the Navy lacrosse team had come up to play Army, and we had beat them to establish Army as NCAA national champions. Nancy was going to come to my graduation and I was going to go to hers at Connecticut College after I graduated. My Aunt Beth, who was my mother's older sister, the second of the seven sisters in the O'Neill family, was a well known artist in Charleston, South Carolina. She had gone to an art academy in Philadelphia in her early days. After her husband died she supported the family by making etchings on copper plate and then worked in pastels and finally did sketches with charcoal. She had published books including one of sketches at Rockefeller Center. My first class year, in November of 1943, she had come to West Point to sketch scenes. I say all this because while at West Point, Beth stayed with a very good friend of hers from years past, June Meister, the wife of the West Point surgeon. That led to Nancy staying with the Meisters a couple of times in their quarters near the Thayer. At my graduation Nancy was going to stay with the Meisters and Aunt Beth was going to be there. I liked that because my mother was also going to be there; my father was overseas at the time. On that visit Nancy became friends with both my mother and Aunt Beth who came to like her. I graduated and became a commissioned officer.

INTERVIEWER: How did you become commissioned in the Engineer Branch?

GEN CUSHMAN: That was a hard decision for me. My father was infantry. Before first

class year I had never thought of any branch other than infantry. I wasn't attracted to artillery or aviation. I wasn't attracted to the Corps of Engineers really. I was high in my class and the tradition in those days was that most graduates with high academic rank would select the engineers. West Point started as an engineer school back in 1802 and it was run by the Chief of Engineers for a long time. Superintendents were often engineers. West Point provided engineers for the building of America in the early 19th Century. Many early railroad presidents were Academy graduates. It was an attractive branch. They always sent their officers to school. They got good jobs in civilian life after they left the Corps of Engineers. I don't think I would have gone into the Corps of Engineers if it had not been for Nancy. Her father was an engineer officer and one of the best, highly thought of. He was pleased when I decided to become an engineer officer. My father was not all that surprised. I remember thinking that in 1932 my father, almost 40 years old, had been commanding a machine gun company in the 29th Infantry at Fort Benning. I thought do I want to do that with my life, to be a company commander at age 38 or 40? It didn't appeal to me much, so I chose engineers. Infantry was my second choice.

INTERVIEWER: What were your career expectations at that time?

GEN CUSHMAN: I didn't have any. I never thought about where I would finally arrive in the Army. I expected to have a good life in the Army with good assignments. There was a war going on and I expected to go to war but I wasn't looking ahead to senior rank. I was looking ahead to a civilian education and interesting jobs after that. I didn't think about getting to be a general.

INTERVIEWER: Did you consider what a successful career would look like?

GEN CUSHMAN: No. I knew I would have one but I didn't know what it would be. I expected to have a successful career.

INTERVIEWER: What did successful mean to you? How would you know?

GEN CUSHMAN: To get promoted on schedule is one definition of success. Even more successful is to make a promotion ahead of schedule. I wanted to get promoted right away from second lieutenant to first lieutenant and then to captain. In those wartime days everyone in my class was promoted to first lieutenant after a few months all at once. Promotion to captain was based on being in a slot and having someone recommend you for promotion. It was decentralized to commanders out in the field.

FAs a cadet of course I had been highly successful in that I was First Captain with my success more visible than it would ever be. Yearling year I knew I was in the running for First Captain. As I said, I wanted it to happen but there never was any way to buck for the job. I think that my attitude was to plug ahead doing the best you can and it had to happen by itself. A couple of days before graduation three of my classmates and I were told to report to the gymnasium. On arrival we are formed into a staff and I had a position in front of the other three, as if I were in command and the others were my staff. That gave me the reason to think that it might happen, and sure enough that's the way it turned out.

My mother and Nancy came up for my graduation; my Dad was in the Southwest Pacific as an observer with General Eichelberger's Eighth Army. Of course it was a great day for me. I received, for being First Captain, the Pershing cadet saber and the Knox Trophy, and a silver tray for being captain of the lacrosse team. (The Pershing and Knox awards still exist but the Knox Trophy for military excellence does not go automatically to the First Captain.)



For the rest of my life, in every assignment, I was conscious that I had once been First Captain and that many knew it. Perhaps it helped me now and then, I have no way of knowing. During that year I sometimes doubted whether I really should be First Captain, but again I plugged ahead and I ended up being glad of the achievement. Its duties interfered with my academics. Although I graduated 12th in my class, in my final year I missed being a star-man by a couple of files.

Let me relate one more episode. For the Army-Navy football game in late November 1943, the midshipmen were unable because of the wartime shortage of transportation to travel by train to West Point where the game was played. The West Point authorities decided that the 1st Regiment would wear its summer white headgear and would be seated in the visitor stands. They were told to memorize Navy fight songs and cheers and to root for Navy. In an immature moment I somehow let the 1st Regiment know that they were not to cheer loudly.

A classmate from C-1 Company, a friend of mine, was an Army cheerleader. Determined to do his cheerleading job right, he came to me. He told me that I failed in my duty by letting that be known. He recommended that I correct myself. He was right. I ended up visiting each of the eight companies in the regiment, assembled by company, in its barracks stairwells. I told each company that I had been wrong, that they should cheer lustily for Navy, and that it was their duty to do so.

I did not like doing it and have never forgotten that episode, in which I had to be reminded of my duty.



Cadet Brigade Commander leading the Corps of Cadets at the 1943 Army-Notre Dame game

Chapter Five

Commissioned

INTERVIEWER: Graduating in June 1944, how was your first duty assignment determined?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Every engineer graduate from West Point was sent on four weeks leave and then to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, to the Engineer School. He attended a six week course designed for West Point graduates, sixty or seventy second lieutenants, to learn about engineering in the field. It covered basic combat engineering, emplacing and removing mines, building Bailey bridges and floating bridges and some field instruction. There was instruction on road construction and that kind of thing.

After we completed that course we were assigned to the engineer replacement training center right there at Fort Belvoir. It took soldiers from basic and gave them training for an engineer MOS [military occupational specialty] before they were sent as replacements for engineer battalions. The trainees were organized into companies and they put two or three of these second lieutenants into each company, making them platoon leaders for a little while. We did that for another six weeks.

During those twelve weeks I was free to go up to New London, Connecticut, by train on weekends and visit Nancy, which I often did. It was a matter of getting on the train, usually standing up because the trains were crowded. I would go up Saturday and come back Sunday evening. The engineer course started in July so we had the months of July, August and September in a combination of school and troop duty. In July or early August each one of us was asked what we wanted to do on our next assignment. The choices were: to go overseas as a replacement either to Europe or to Asia-Pacific; to be assigned to a unit in the States that was scheduled to go overseas soon; or to go a unit that was still in training.

INTERVIEWER: So you could either go overseas as a replacement or join a unit that was forming in the States?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. A lot of it depended on whether you were married or not and what you wanted to do with your life. In August 1944, the Army had just broken out of Normandy and Patton was racing across France. Believe it or not, I thought the war in Europe was going to be over before I got in it. That was not going to happen in the Pacific; there would surely be some war left. So that is why I chose to be a replacement in the Pacific. In late November I got orders to go to San Francisco, board a transport and report to a replacement center in the Southwest Pacific. I went to visit Nancy and we got engaged. I gave her an engagement ring, a miniature West Point ring. By that time my father had been ordered to be the G3 of Fourth Army in San Antonio, Texas. So I went by Fort Sam Houston and visited my Mom and Dad and then went to San Francisco.

INTERVIEWER: How old was your father at this time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: That would have been 1945 and he was 51; he was born in 1894.

INTERVIEWER: He was a lieutenant colonel?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He was a full colonel. My father was a good officer. He was 12th in his 1934-36 Leavenworth class and in 1937 had been selected for the Army War College. In 1941 he was a colonel and the G3 of I Corps in Columbia, South Carolina, under General Eichelberger, the former USMA Superintendent. General Eichelberger thought the world of my father. In October 1942 he was promoted to brigadier general and assigned as assistant division commander of the 45th Infantry Division. It deployed to North Africa in 1943. Earlier it had been stationed at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, for amphibious training. While he was there he came to a soccer match, Army versus Harvard, where we had a brief visit.

INTERVIEWER: In Cambridge?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. He led the advanced party for the 45th Infantry Division's deployment in North Africa. The 45th Infantry Division went into Sicily. Its first combat action was the Sicily Campaign in the summer of 1943. For some reason, my father was relieved. We heard about it by mail, "He is coming back." I've spent a lot of time trying to understand why. It was incredible that my father could be relieved.

In 1970 General Michael Davison, then a three-star general, commanded II Field Force in Vietnam. On a visit to my IV Corps advisory headquarters in the Delta, in a helicopter he said to me, "Jack, I have wanted to talk to you. I was in the advance party of the 45th Division in North Africa. I was a major in the G2 section and your father was the head of the advance party. I came to admire your father very much. After we landed in Sicily, for some reason your father was not allowed in the front lines with the troops. He was told to stay behind at the division command post, and the chief of staff was going forward. I don't know why. Then I found out he was relieved. He came to see me as he left. That was a compliment to me. He said, 'I just worry about the effect of this on my son who is a cadet.'" In September 1991, responding to a letter from me, General Davison wrote essentially the same account.

We were aghast at this news. My father came home, then went to the Pacific as an observer. In New Guinea on General Eichelberger's Eighth Army staff; he didn't come to my graduation. I have looked into his relief in considerable depth. My father was very thorough, insistent on high standards, but not always easy to deal with. He was a brusque man, sometimes marked as abrupt in his efficiency reports. He didn't suffer

lack of effort or poor performance gladly. People have told me stories about his reputation as a taskmaster.¹

The 45th was a National Guard division, always well regarded. It had a good record, eventually one of the best. Its commander was Troy Middleton, later a highly regarded corps commander. I got into the files of the 45th Division and into whatever else I could find. I thought that perhaps the regimental commanders did not like my Dad out there telling them what to do in the way he did it. I heard General Abrams say once that he did not think much of the job of assistant division commander; he said it is like being an assistant husband. I have always been glad I was never an assistant division commander. In my Dad's Army there was one assistant division commander and the other brigadier General was in Division Artillery. One guess is that the regimental commanders complained to General Middleton and my dad was gone. But I don't know.

In 1948 a General officer board reviewed the records of World War II generals who had been reduced in rank. In my father's file is the board's recommendation that he be "advanced to the grade of brigadier general, when he retires from active duty."² And he was.

When I went overseas in 1945 he was at Fort Sam Houston as a colonel, the G3 at Fourth Army headquarters. Nancy's father also went to the Pacific as an observer, coincidentally to General Eichelberger's headquarters, and her father and my father even shared a tent on New Guinea. Eichelberger thought highly of my father; he was a good planner. The remarks on his efficiency report when relieved were something like "this officer is a very good officer for a staff job." But we all thought it was uncalled for. He took it so very well. When he returned after being relieved, he came up as a colonel to West Point to visit me. He said nothing at all about the circumstances, only "I can play on the second team."

INTERVIEWER: I know Eichelberger could be difficult.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Eichelberger was not a problem for him. Eichelberger was a fan of his. The record shows that Middleton was the one who suggested he be relieved. Perhaps someone told him to do so. I and others have speculated but I don't know.

¹ After I retired and was living in Bronxville, NY, I was invited to a banquet of the New York National Guard. My Dad's final assignment had been as the NY Guard's senior advisor. They liked him; the state of New York employed him in a Guard advisory role when he retired. Officers present at the banquet remembered him. One had been in the WW Two 30th Infantry Division, North Carolina National Guard, when it was under I Corps, at Fort Jackson, SC. My father was corps G3. His sphere was training and he had a reputation of being everywhere. He told me of being on the scene when my father said to an officer whose performance was lacking, "What bothers me, major, is not that you don't know what to do. It's that you don't care." Not an admirable leadership style; I have often felt that I inherited it.

² The board: Lieutenant Generals Leonard T. Gerow (President), Raymond S. McLain, and Manton S. Eddy. General McLain "abstained from voting... he has personal knowledge of the circumstances." He had at the time commanded the 45th Infantry Division Artillery. There was no hint of what the circumstances were.

As I was editing this chapter of my oral history in December 2011, I had a conversation with my wife, Nancy, that led me to insert the pages that follow.

A few years ago my daughter Cecelia had shown me a family letter that suggested that my father had been relieved at the insistence of Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr., who commanded the US Seventh Army in the Sicily operation. The suggestion was that my father had let General Patton know of my father's disapproval of Patton's handling of battle fatigue cases during that campaign.

I had then researched the two Patton incidents in August 1943 that received wide publicity some weeks after they took place. Neither involved a soldier from the 45th Infantry Division. Unable to make a connection between those two incidents and a possible confrontation by my father with General Patton, I did not consider the suggestion worthy of mention in my oral history.

However, my wife Nancy has just told me for the first time of a conversation that she had with my mother; this was some time after my father died in 1972. My mother said to Nancy that, in the weeks after his return from Sicily, my father had given her his account of what had happened. She said that he had done so only because he thought she needed to know. Otherwise my mother was unable to understand his relief and loss of rank. My mother had kept all this to herself until she told Nancy, who had done likewise until telling me. I had not known of this action by my father.

The story that my mother related to Nancy was of a circumstance separate from the two "slapping" incidents for which General Patton received criticism during the Sicily campaign and for which he apologized to his troops. As reported by Drew Pearson these two incidents are described in

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USApearsonD.htm>, reproduced at Appendix A, page 11.

On 10 July 1943 the 45th Infantry Division made its assault landing in Sicily; it was in combat 22 days. The incident that my mother described was one in which, a few days after the assault, General Patton had visited a 45th Division field medical station accompanied by my father. There they encountered a soldier with battle exhaustion. General Patton ordered my father to send the soldier back into combat with his unit. My father took exception, saying that the soldier was not fit for combat. This did not sit well with General Patton.

Nancy told me that my mother said that my father told her that this was why he was relieved. I believe that. I speculate that General Patton told the division commander, Major General Troy Middleton, that my father was unfit to command and that General Middleton, rather than recommending his relief, saw to it that my father no longer appeared at the front where he might encounter General Patton. General Davison's 1970 remarks and his 1991 letter to me corroborate that speculation.

Weeks passed. On August 3 the first Patton slapping incident occurred. Two days later General Patton told Seventh Army commanders: "It has come to my attention that a very small number of soldiers are going to the hospital on the pretext that they are nervously incapable of combat. Such men are cowards... You will take measures to see that such cases are not sent to the hospital but are dealt with in their units. Those who are not willing to fight will be tried by court-martial for cowardice in the face of the enemy."

Drew Pearson writes: "On 10th August 1943, Patton visited the 93rd Evacuation Hospital to see if there were any soldiers claiming to be suffering from combat fatigue. He found Private Paul G. Bennett, an artilleryman with the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. When asked what the problem was, Bennett replied, 'It's my nerves, I can't stand the shelling anymore.' Patton exploded: 'Your nerves, Hell. You are just a goddamned coward, you yellow son of a bitch.'"

There was more; see Appendix A, page 11.

News of both incidents reached theater commander General Dwight Eisenhower, who on August 17 sent a letter to Patton reprimanding him. Eisenhower wrote, "I am well aware of the necessity for hardness and toughness on the battle field... But this does not excuse brutality, abuse of the 'sick,' nor exhibiting an uncontrollable temper in front of subordinates." Eisenhower ordered Patton to apologize to the man, but, feeling that he was too valuable a leader to lose, allowed him to retain his command.

I do not doubt that Generals Eisenhower and Patton, old Army friends, had a serious discussion about Patton's behavior. I think that General Patton told General Eisenhower that the generals in Sicily needed to get the word. I think that he may well have mentioned my father's name as one such general. I think that on or about August 16 Patton ordered Major General Middleton to write an unsatisfactory efficiency report on my father that would cause his relief from command and demotion. It would serve as an example.

My father's efficiency report is at Appendix B, pages 12 and 13. At Appendix C, pages 14 and 15, is a letter written by General Middleton, evidently meant to soften the blow.

Records in my possession also include a 21 August 1943 endorsement "to The Adjutant General, Washington, DC" signed by General Eisenhower, of my father's reduction in rank effective August 20, 1943, and his reappointment as Colonel, AUS.³ General Eisenhower wrote, "It is recommended that Colonel Cushman be assigned to duty other than command."

³ The original reduction had been to my father's permanent grade of lieutenant colonel.

General Patton was one of a kind. My father was of a different kind. It was his misfortune to run into Patton on a battlefield. (End of added insert.)

So in November 1945 I am visiting my father at Fort Sam Houston. He is the G3 at Fourth Army. Would you believe it, after I had arrived in the Pacific Nancy's father was assigned as the Fourth Army engineer. So my father and her father were on the same staff and our two families got to know each other. That's a different story. Let's get back to going overseas.

INTERVIEWER: You were in San Francisco and on your way to the Pacific.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My classmate Chuck Davis and I got on this Navy transport and set sail on the 26th of November bound for the Far East. We went to Oro Bay, New Guinea, with a stop at New Caledonia where we were allowed to get off the transport and walk around town. When we arrived at Oro Bay we reported to the Replacement Center expecting to go right onto a unit. There we stayed for almost two months.

INTERVIEWER: What month was this?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I got there about the middle of December. Everybody else that came in got their orders right away, but the three or four of us West Point Class of 1944 engineers just waited at Oro Bay. We felt like we were permanent party. I was given the job to develop a firing range, Chuck Davis was given the job as mess officer. We said, "Where are our orders?" Here comes the Battle of the Bulge and we were sitting in the middle of nowhere and our classmates were fighting. Every day we'd go up there and say, "Any orders?" No orders. The Philippines had been invaded in October and fighting was going on there. We had about decided that we would hop on a plane and go north when finally our orders came.

What had happened was that the Chief of Engineers wanted to ensure that these new West Point officers got the experience of the engineer's war. The Pacific was called an "engineer's war". The Chief of Engineers had certain battalions that he wanted us to go to. We were given special orders for these battalions but the orders got lost. I finally went to the 808th Engineer Aviation Battalion, a well thought of battalion. My classmate Ken Cooper went to the 46th Engineer Construction Battalion and Chuck Davis went to another one. It wasn't until late January or February that I reported to the 808th Engineer Aviation Battalion in Dulag on the island of Leyte in the Philippines. After the invasion it had built an airfield and was still working on it.

INTERVIEWER: What was your duty assignment?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The battalion commander was Ralph C. Glover. He was an older lieutenant colonel, a highly regarded engineer in civilian life, a reserve officer. I came in as a brand new second lieutenant and he made me platoon leader of the heavy equipment platoon. The platoon was equipped with big bulldozers and power shovels

and such. They didn't have a platoon leader; they had a platoon sergeant. All these men had been with the battalion since it was activated and sent to Australia early in the war. For malaria prevention Glover had been taking atabrine so long and had been in the sun so long he was a combination of brown and yellow. All the men were like that, they were bronzed. I didn't know much about heavy equipment. I hadn't trained with it but he made me heavy equipment platoon leader and I remained one for quite a while. I made first lieutenant and before long I learned how to do the work of an engineer.

INTERVIEWER: For what type of aircraft?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: We had fighters there. Fighters and transports. The Japanese had been bombing the field but by the time I arrived they were pretty much leaving it alone. We had an occasional attempt to bomb the airfield but the war had moved on up into Luzon.

INTERVIEWER: What do you remember about the soldiers in that battalion?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The soldiers were very good. They knew their stuff. Many of them had done this kind of work in civilian life, or as reservists.

INTERVIEWER: These were more mature men?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: They were mature. I later became a company commander and had a mature first sergeant. I had mature platoon sergeants, good men.

INTERVIEWER: What did you learn from that experience?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I learned about analyzing a job and getting a job done. I wasn't a technically fully qualified engineer officer by reason of my West Point and Fort Belvoir training but I could get something done.

INTERVIEWER: This must have been a common experience for young officers joining seasoned units. You had to bring something to the table. You had to prove to them that you belonged there. Was that a difficult experience for you? Was that something that you felt prepared for?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, but I managed to get by. I tried to learn from them. Sometimes I tried too hard to understand the job. I remember one time I was watching an experienced mechanic do something with a bulldozer or grader. I was looking over his shoulder and he turned around and said, "What are you doing here, lieutenant?"

Before long we moved to Batangas on Luzon to rebuild a port complex. The war was progressing. In August 1945 the atomic bombs were dropped and Japan surrendered. The 808th had been in the plans for the invasion of Japan as one of the first battalions

to go in. So they quickly loaded us on LSTs (Landing Ship Tank) and shipped us out to Japan. By this time I was commander of B Company. I had replaced a fine lieutenant named Ferris who had been ordered home. I was by then a first lieutenant and Colonel Glover saw fit to make me company commander. So I took B Company and our equipment all on one LST and along with three other LSTs that carried the rest of battalion we set sail for Japan.

Our battalion was one of the first units to arrive there. It took a long time, we motored along at 7-8 knots. It was a pleasant trip, lasted three or so weeks. I read "War and Peace" on the way. I remember sailing into Tokyo Bay with this battalion. There was a huge American fleet in there; this was just after the surrender. In every direction there were, carriers, battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. We sailed into the Bay and beached the LSTs at a landing area on the boundary river separating Yokohama and Tokyo.

When the LSTs opened their doors and dropped their ramps Japanese were waiting there to see what was happening. They were not hostile but curious. MacArthur had gotten the Japanese emperor to say to all his people, "Don't resist, let the Americans in." We unloaded our heavy equipment and took over a section of hangers on a Japanese naval air station. We began work to rebuild the small field that existed on an island there. We connected it by a causeway to another island, the site of a bombed out steel mill. Floating pile drivers drove two rows of piles between which a dredge pumped in silt from the bottom of Tokyo Bay. I got many a bulldozer and scraper stuck deep in that silt. In a few months we built a 10,000 foot runway. I have a photo of the first light airplane taking off from it before we got the paving down. It is now Haneda Airport, still there. It's the LaGuardia airport of Tokyo. Before long the older time officers rotated home and I became the battalion executive officer, as a captain.

INTERVIEWER: When did you make captain?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I got company command and as soon as I had time in grade I made captain, by the time we left Batangas. Many if not most of my classmates made captain. Some were still first lieutenants when the war ended, and stayed first lieutenants for years.

The whole year of 1945 I was in the 808th. By June 1946 I was the battalion executive officer and put in charge of building the new cantonment, because we were going to stay there for quite a while. It was during that time that someone approached me from the engineer group headquarters and said, "We are thinking of making you commander of a colored engineer battalion that we are having trouble with." So I must have made an impression on somebody. They ended up inactivating that battalion.

By that time people began to be eligible for R&R (Rest and Recuperation). I was interested in coming home because I wanted to get married. I had been in theater for a year and half, and had become eligible for a 45 day R&R leave back in the States. I sent a

telegram back to Nancy, "I'm coming home and we're going to get married." That was June of 1946. We got married in the Fort Sam Houston Chapel. Both sets of parents were at the same station. Nancy was not a Catholic. She took a few days instruction to be married in that Catholic wedding. She agreed to that wholeheartedly. It was short notice but her mother and father provided us a memorable and highly satisfactory wedding.

INTERVIEWER: Where did you honeymoon?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: My sister Kathleen was living with my parents because her husband, an infantry captain, was in Italy. She found a honeymoon place for us. It was Gallagher Ranch, a dude ranch in the Bandera Hills of Texas, not far northwest of San Antonio. We spent a week there. There had been a polio epidemic that summer and the ranch had been closed. It had only recently reopened and we were the first and only people there. We had the whole ranch to ourselves.

Then we headed to Ventura, California, for the rest of our honeymoon. My Aunt Agnes, my godmother, had a simple cottage on the beach at Ventura. It had an outdoor toilet, no plumbing besides a water tank that caught rainwater for an outdoor shower and to serve the kitchen sink. It was a lovely place. For two or three weeks we were by ourselves on the beach with an occasional visit into Los Angeles and nearby. We drove there in a car that my sister had sold us because cars were hard to get. In this 1936 Buick we drove out to California and then up to Seattle which was our port of embarkation for the Far East.

Before I left Japan I had formally requested permission for Nancy to join me as my dependent. She did not yet have a port call but our request for her to travel as a dependent was on the record. I boarded a transport but she would have to wait a while so we rented in a boarding house and I reported to POE [Port of Embarkation] and sold the car. Nancy stayed awaiting her port call. I had no sooner sailed than they called her and said, "Mrs. Cushman, we have a cancellation, can you join your husband now?" She said, "Yes but I haven't got my port call or my passport." They said, "Come anyhow." They fixed her up with something, gave her all her shots and put her on the SS Monterey. She and I were on the water in the Pacific at the same time; she was about a week behind me. Luckily for her, her cabin mate was an experienced Army wife going to join her husband, the mother of Harry Shaw of the class of 1945 with whom I had been a soccer teammate at West Point.

Before I had left for home I had told my fellow officers that I would be bringing back a wife. Among them was Lieutenant Pat Casey, the son of Major General Hugh John ("Pat") Casey who had been General MacArthur's chief engineer in the campaigns from Australia to Tokyo. Young Pat Casey had told his dad about my plans for Nancy. It turned out that the elder Caseys had long been friends of Nancy's parents. So Nancy I were invited to spend our first night after her arrival as their guests, in the elegant Tokyo quarters assigned to General and Mrs. Casey.

When I got to my unit in Tokyo they said to me, "We've been looking for you. The Eighth Army has been looking for you. You've got orders to report to the Manhattan District in Washington, D.C." The atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August of 1945. Prior to that there had been an atomic bomb built and tested at Alamogordo, New Mexico. Two more atomic bombs had been detonated at the Bikini Atoll in the summer of 1946. After that the bomb assembly people, who had put the bomb together as essentially a laboratory device, were headed back to their universities.

I learned that about sixty-five young officers, West Pointers mostly, engineers mostly, out of the West Point classes of January and June of 1943, 1944, and 1945, had been selected by General Groves [LTG Leslie R. Groves] to form an engineer battalion (special) in the United States in mid-1946. I was one of them.

Others in Japan were on the same orders. Ken Cooper and Ernie Graves, later three star Generals, Phil Barnes and Charlie Steele, all were engineer captains from the class of 1944. Also Bill Ekberg, a Signal Corps lieutenant, class of 1945. General Groves had seen to our orders. We were to fly at the highest priority, we could bump anybody. Leave your dependents behind; they have to travel by boat.

Phil Barnes' wife Maxine and their baby had just arrived. Phil said, "I'll be damned if I'm going to go back on these orders and leave my wife here with Alicia." So he marches down to Eighth Army Headquarters and somehow convinces the people in charge of cutting orders that he should not go by air, but travel with his family by boat, on a hospital ship returning to the States. Phil Barnes told me, "My orders are changed and we're going by boat." Bill Ekberg's wife was in Japan as mine was. Charlie Steele and Phil each had a child. The four of us joined up and arranged to go by the same boat.

But the boat wasn't ready; it was being repaired, couldn't leave right away. So Nancy and I had three or four weeks in Japan. I had been transferred by that time from the 808th to a different outfit, and my new outfit said, "There's no point in you hanging around here, just take a jeep and take your wife on a tour around Japan." So we had about a month's vacation visiting parts of Japan. We four were the only ones of the sixty-five who did not ship off by air immediately.

Finally we got on the USS Acadia. We stopped in Hawaii. I had an aunt in Hawaii and we spent the night at her beach house, and sat on its front steps to a lovely Hawaiian sunrise. We arrived in Seattle, got off the USS Acadia, and I reported to the Manhattan District in Washington that October 1946.

Columnist Drew Pearson was a close friend of Ernest Cuneo, a senior figure in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Cuneo leaked several stories to Pearson including one concerning General George S. Patton. On 3rd August 1943, Patton visited the 15th Evacuation Hospital where he encountered Private Charles H. Kuhl, who had been admitted suffering from shell shock. When Patton asked him why he had been admitted, Kuhl told him "I guess I can't take it." According to one eyewitness Patton "slapped his face with a glove, raised him to his feet by the collar of his shirt and pushed him out of the tent with a kick in the rear."...

Two days after the incident he sent a memo to commanders in the 7th Army: "It has come to my attention that a very small number of soldiers are going to the hospital on the pretext that they are nervously incapable of combat. Such men are cowards and bring discredit on the army and disgrace to their comrades, whom they heartlessly leave to endure the dangers of battle while they, themselves, use the hospital as a means of escape. You will take measures to see that such cases are not sent to the hospital but are dealt with in their units. Those who are not willing to fight will be tried by court-martial for cowardice in the face of the enemy."

On 10th August 1943, Patton visited the 93rd Evacuation Hospital to see if there were any soldiers claiming to be suffering from combat fatigue. He found Private Paul G. Bennett, an artilleryman with the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. When asked what the problem was, Bennett replied, "It's my nerves, I can't stand the shelling anymore." Patton exploded: "Your nerves. Hell, you are just a goddamned coward, you yellow son of a bitch. Shut up that goddamned crying. I won't have these brave men here who have been shot seeing a yellow bastard sitting here crying. You're a disgrace to the Army and you're going back to the front to fight, although that's too good for you. You ought to be lined up against a wall and shot. In fact, I ought to shoot you myself right now, God damn you!" With this Patton pulled his pistol from its holster and waved it in front of Bennett's face. After putting his pistol away he hit the man twice in the head with his fist. The hospital commander, Colonel Donald E. Currier, then intervened and got in between the two men.

Colonel Richard T. Arnest⁴, the man's doctor, sent a report of the incident to General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The story was also passed to the four newsmen attached to the Seventh Army. Although Patton had committed a court-martial offense by striking an enlisted man, the reporters agreed not to publish the story. Quentin Reynolds of Collier's Weekly agreed to keep quiet but argued that there were "at least 50,000 American soldiers on Sicily who would shoot Patton if they had the chance."

Eisenhower now had a meeting with the war correspondents who knew about the incident and told them that he hoped they would keep the "matter quiet in the interests of retaining a commander whose leadership he considered vital." Ernest Cuneo, who was fully aware, now decided to pass this story to Pearson and in November 1943, he told the story on his weekly syndicated radio program. Some politicians demanded that George S. Patton should be sacked but General George Marshall and Henry L. Stimson supported Eisenhower in the way he had dealt with the case.

⁴ As a 1st Lieutenant, Medical Corps, Arnest was awarded a Silver Star "for gallantry in action near Bois de Consenvoye, France, 8 October 1918, in caring for the wounded under heavy shell fire."

Appendix B

(USE TYPEWRITER IF POSSIBLE
IF NOT, PRINT PROPER NAMES)

EFFICIENCY REPORT

(SEE AR 600-185)

A. OFFICER REPORTED UPON CUSHMAN, HORACE O. 0-6916 Brig Gen AUS
(Grade) (Organization)

A's official status with respect to you Assistant Division Commander

B. PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT 1 16/30 months, from July 1, 1943 to August 16, 1943

C. STATIONS AT WHICH HE SERVED

D. CONSIDER CAREFULLY THESE DEFINITIONS, KEEP THEM IN MIND WHEN RATING, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION HIS LENGTH OF SERVICE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED HIM, WHICH MIGHT HAVE A BEARING UPON HIS PERFORMANCE OF DUTY, PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, OR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

UNSATISFACTORY: Performance of the particular duty reported upon or personal characteristics or professional qualifications below minimum standard—inefficient.

SATISFACTORY: Performance of the particular duty reported upon or personal characteristics or professional qualifications up to minimum standard—passably efficient.

VERY SATISFACTORY: Performance of the particular duty reported upon in an efficient manner. Personal characteristics, professional qualifications, or efficiency above that acceptable as SATISFACTORY.

EXCELLENT: Performance of the particular duty reported upon in a very efficient manner. Personal characteristics, professional qualifications, or efficiency above VERY SATISFACTORY but below SUPERIOR.

SUPERIOR: Outstanding and exceptional performance of the particular duty reported upon. Personal characteristics, professional qualifications, or efficiency above that considered EXCELLENT.

UNKNOWN: To be used in all cases in which the reporting officer has had insufficient opportunity during the period covered by this report to observe the officer reported upon to permit a rating as to the performance of the particular duty, his personal characteristics, or professional qualifications.

E. DUTIES HE PERFORMED: (State separately. Where possible show duration of each in months. Example: Co. Comdr. ordinary garrison training, 8 mos. Summary court, 6 mos. Brig. Adj. prepared training schedules, Supply Officer.) In describing the manner of performance of duty, use one of six classifications as given under D, and consider carefully the obstacles encountered by the individual in the performance of each duty listed. **THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED UNDER "MANNER OF PERFORMANCE" ARE BASED ON—**

~~INFORMAL DAILY CONTACT~~

~~FREQUENT OR INFREQUENT OBSERVATION OF THE RESULTS OF HIS WORK,~~

~~ACADEMIC RATINGS~~

(Line out inappropriate words or amplify under par. F according to circumstances)

Duty	Months	Manner of performance
Ass't Div Comdr - Director of Tng - July 1-10, '43	10/30	Satisfactory
Ass't Div Comdr - In Combat against the enemy July 10 to August 16, 1943	1 16/30	Unsatisfactory in so far as observing the results of tng.

F. What degree of success has he attained under the following headings: ENTRIES BASED ON PERSONAL OBSERVATION OR OFFICIAL REPORTS DURING PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT. (See par. D above.)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Excellent	Superior	Unknown
1. Handling officers and men.....		X				
2. Performance of field duties.....		X	(In so far as observing the results of our training.)			
3. Administrative and executive duties.....				X		
4. As an instructor.....	None given during the period.					
5. Training troops.....	No opportunity during the period.					
6. Tactical handling of troops (units appropriate to officer's grade).....					X	

G. Enter on lines below any outstanding specialties of value in the military service. MAKE NO ENTRIES EXCEPT WHERE STATEMENT IS BASED ON PERSONAL OBSERVATION OR OFFICIAL REPORTS DURING PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT. Show pilot and/or observer ratings of Air Corps officers here.

H. To what degree has he exhibited the following qualifications? Consider him in comparison with others of his grade and indicate your estimate by marking X in the appropriate rectangle. (See par. D above.)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Excellent	Superior	Unknown
1. Physical activity (agility; ability to work rapidly).....				X		
2. Physical endurance (capacity for prolonged exertion).....				X		
3. Military bearing and neatness (dignity of demeanor; neat and smart appearance).....				X		
4. Attention to duty (the trait of working thoroughly and conscientiously).....				X		
5. Cooperation (acting jointly and effectively with another or others, military or civilian, to attain a designated objective).....				X		
6. Initiative (the trait of beginning needed work or taking appropriate action on his own responsibility in absence of orders).....		X				
7. Intelligence (the ability to understand readily new ideas or instructions).....				X		
8. Force (the faculty of carrying out with energy and resolution that which on examination is believed reasonable, right, or duty).....		X				
9. Judgment and common sense (the ability to think clearly and arrive at logical conclusions).....			X			
10. Leadership (capacity to direct, control, and influence others in definite lines of action or movement and still maintain high morale).....		X (Does not have proper confidence of subordinates)				

Appendix B - continued

Name of officer reported on Horace O. Cushman Name of reporting officer Troy H. Middleton

- I. During the period covered by this report has he taken advantage of the opportunities afforded him to improve his professional knowledge? Not while the division was in combat.
- J. Has he exhibited any weaknesses—temperamental, moral, physical, etc.—which adversely affect his efficiency? Yes If yes, describe them. (~~Cause~~ OPINION. Line out one.) An unfortunate critical mannerism in dealing with subordinates. Gives the impression of scolding when correcting others.
- K. Proper authority having decided on the methods and procedure to accomplish a certain end, did he render willing and generous support regardless of his personal views in the matter? Yes - very much so
- L. Since last report has he been mentioned favorably or unfavorably in official communications? No (See par. 1b, AR 600-185.)
- M. During the period covered by this report was he the subject of any disciplinary measure that should be included on his record? No If yes, enclose separate statement of nature and attendant circumstances.
- N. Write a brief general estimate of this officer in your own words This officer is a man of sterling character and high ideals. It is my honest opinion that he is not the field soldier type. He is no doubt well qualified for duty other than with troops in the field. I do not believe he would make a good field commander.
- O. How well do you know him? Very well
- P. Remarks (including entry required by par. 11a, AR 600-185). Of the officers in the grade of Brigadier General known to me as troop officers, I would place General Cushman in the lower third.
- Q. In case any unfavorable entries have been made by you on this report, were the deficiencies indicated hereon brought to the attention of the officer concerned while under your command and prior to the rendition of this report? Yes If yes, what improvement, if any, was noted? A decided improvement in his manner of dealing with subordinates. Sufficient time has not elapsed to judge on his leadership.
If no improvement was noted, what period of time elapsed between your notification to him of his deficiencies and the rendition of this report? Little or no time since we have been combat only a short time.
- R. Based on your observation during the period covered by this report, give in your own words your estimate of his GENERAL VALUE TO THE SERVICE Valuable to the service in a capacity other than with troops in the field. A man of splendid character and ideals, quite intelligent but not a troop man.
- S. I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and impartial and are in accordance with AR 600-185.

(Signed) Troy H. Middleton
 (Name typed) TROY H. MIDDLETON
 (Grade and Org.) Major General, U. S. Army
 (Comdg. whatt) 45th Infantry Division
 (Place) In the Field, Sicily
 (Date) 17 August 1943 Incls. one

1st INDORSEMENT

Headquarters Seventh Army, APO #758, U.S. Army. 18 Aug, 1943. To - C in C AFHG

I concur in the above report.

G. S. Patton, Jr.
 G. S. PATTON, JR.
 Lieutenant General, U.S. Army,
 Commanding.

Appendix C

HEADQUARTERS FORTY FIFTH INFANTRY DIVISION
Office Of The Commanding General

APO 45, % Postmaster
New York, New York
17 August 1943

SUBJECT: Brigadier General HORACE O. CUSHMAN.

TO : Commanding General
Seventh Army
APO 758, US Army

1. Attached hereto is an efficiency report submitted by the undersigned on Brigadier General HORACE O. CUSHMAN, Assistant Division Commander, 45th Infantry Division, as per instructions from your headquarters.

2. In submitting this report I wish to state that the personal relationship between General Cushman and the undersigned has been of the best. Anything that I have said or may say which may reflect unfavorably upon General Cushman as an officer is based upon an honest official belief and not upon any personal like or dislike. There is nothing but good that I could say about his character and his high ideals for both the country and the service.

3. I am firmly convinced that mistakes in war are made through our peace time military system. In the particular case, we have a man who has been advanced rapidly from the grade of captain to that of General Officer. Due to this rapid advance in grades, an opportunity to demonstrate the ability to command a battalion and a regiment and to direct large groups of officers was not afforded him. Had the system afforded the opportunity, he may have been better equipped to meet the situation which confronts one in war. Not having commanded troops larger than the infantry company, except for a brief period; not having battle experience; and not having directed large groups of officers, is in part responsible for what I consider the unsuitability of this officer for high command at this time.

4. I believe that any General Officer on duty with a division in combat should be qualified to command the division. In the case of General Cushman, I honestly feel that his lack of experience and the lack of confidence on the part of some higher officers in the division in his ability to command place him in a very doubtful role as a future commander for this organization. I am convinced that there exists in some quarters in the division a lack of confidence in General Cushman, even though he is respected for his character and high ideals.

5. Another important factor is the fact that General Cushman suffers in comparison with officers in the grade of colonel in the division, since three: namely, CHARLES M. ANKCORN, JOHN H. CHURCH, AND JAMES C. STYRON, are recognized as better equipped and better adapted for troop duty in war.

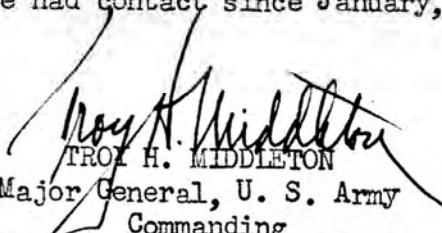
Appendix C, continued

Brig Gen HORACE O. CUSHMAN

Page two

Much of General Cushman's service before joining the 45th Division had been in staff work. While I have not observed him as a staff officer, his work as Director of Training in the division has led me to believe that he likes staff work and no doubt could give a good account of himself in that capacity.

6. The replacement of General Cushman as Assistant Division Commander at this time is believed to be to the best interest of the division. As for his future assignment, that decision quite naturally rests with higher authority. If the termination of his appointment as a temporary Brigadier General is contemplated, and comparing him with colonels of the Army known to me who are not serving as regimental commanders, I would rate him quite favorably among them. In a staff or an administrative capacity I see no reason why his service should not be even more satisfactory than some of the present colonels with whom I have had contact since January, 1942.


TROY H. MIDDLETON
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding

Chapter Six

Sandia Base

GEN CUSHMAN: These sixty-five officers assembled at Sandia Base, NM, in September 1946 were at the dawn of the atomic age. They replaced the civilians who had assembled the atomic bombs up to then. Later on we called ourselves the Sandia Pioneers.

INTERVIEWER: These are civilian scientists?

GEN CUSHMAN: Scientists and technicians whose careers had been interrupted by the development of the atomic bomb. They had devoted two or three years to developing the bomb. Having been successful and having run the Bikini Atoll test in the summer of 1946, they felt it was time for them to return to their universities and many of them did. General Groves, the Chief of the Manhattan District, decided that he had to stand up a military organization to perform the work of assembly, not the development work, but to use the components that were being manufactured and stored, to assemble atomic bombs. This military unit would take those components out of the stockpile and assemble an atomic bomb that could be loaded into Air Force B-29s when needed in wartime. That was the genesis of the 2761st Engineer Battalion (Special). General Groves wanted the battalion established at Sandia Base, New Mexico. This was all new to me.

INTERVIEWER: Did you fly from Seattle to Washington?

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes. I reported to General Groves' office in Washington. General Groves was not there. He had personally selected us and he usually greeted every officer, every one of the sixty-five officers. I came in six weeks after the rest of them. So I reported to his executive officer.

INTERVIEWER: General Groves had to fight to get you too.

GEN CUSHMAN: Once he selected someone that was it. He had priority. He had every priority you can imagine for that atomic bomb. So I walked in there and reported to a colonel. Colonel Cole I think his name was. He said, "Well first we are going to send you to Oak Ridge to take a look at the uranium separation facility down there that makes U235 out of uranium that is mostly U238." This is where they made fissionable material.

INTERVIEWER: They made fissionable material at Oak Ridge and Hanford?

GEN CUSHMAN: They made plutonium at Hanford. Colonel Cole said, "Then report to Sandia Base and join the 2761st." So I said to Nancy, "You ought to go visit your New London family and I'll see you in Albuquerque." I went to Oak Ridge and toured that facility. It was a fantastic facility, a huge layout with various tubes that separate uranium.

INTERVIEWER: Were you told specifically what you were going to do?

GEN CUSHMAN: Colonel Cole told me that I was going to work on an atomic bomb. He said that an atomic bomb is an intricate piece of equipment about the size of a sofa. He said it's intricate and you're going to learn how to assemble it.

INTERVIEWER: What was your reaction?

GEN CUSHMAN: I was mystified. I had seen all the publicity on the atomic bomb. I had read about it. The New York Times had put out a very good series by a reporter named Lawrence who was their scientific writer. He was brought into the secret stuff and told he could write about it. The world wanted to know what this atomic bomb was all about and they had to be told something. I thought that was interesting but I didn't know much. I knew only that we were going to work on the atomic bomb.

INTERVIEWER: Did that please you?

GEN CUSHMAN: It interested me. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know much about the people that were going to be there or what they were doing. It opened up a new world for me. Of course I was a newlywed, and I had a new situation with my bride. So I go down to Oakridge and see this enormous layout. They had row after row of cylinders cascading the separation. They patrolled them on bicycles! I then went on to Albuquerque. Nancy arrived just behind me. I reported to Sandia Base where they had no family quarters for us, so we moved into a motel nearby. Sandia Base was built during World War II, there wasn't anything permanent. Kirtland Air Force Base was nearby and it was more established. At that time it was called Kirtland Field, because there was no separate Air Force in 1946. Kirtland Field was also the commercial field for Albuquerque, New Mexico. They had US Army Air Forces units there.

At Sandia Base I learned that two kinds of bomb had been used against Japan. The LITTLE BOY was the first, used at Hiroshima. The FAT MAN was used at Nagasaki. The LITTLE BOY was built around a gun that fired a projectile of active material into an active material target to create a critical mass. The FAT MAN used explosive compression of the plutonium core to form a critical mass. Our assembly training was directed at the FAT MAN.

When I arrived the 2761st Engineer Battalion (Special) had been established. Colonel Gilbert M. Dorland, USMA Class of 1936, was the commanding officer. He was a fine officer. He had been a successful engineer group commander in Italy. He was personally selected by General Groves. He was assisted by another engineer, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander J. Frolich, USMA 1938, who was his executive officer. They had taken the new officers as they arrived and formed a battalion. One of the companies would include the assembly team.

We had majors from the class of January 1943 and June of 1943 who occupied some

key slots. Frank Camm, Class of January 1943, was the commander of the first assembly company. He had been a battalion commander in Berlin when he was ordered to report to the Manhattan District. He was a bachelor. His classmate, Major Lowell Wilkes, a signal officer, was the bomb supervisor for the assembly team.

They had taken certain officers and sent them to Los Alamos to study with the nuclear scientists up there and learn how to deal with an atomic bomb's nuclear components. They had taken another group of officers and trained them as weaponeers. These men flew as a part of the crew of the B-29 that carried the bomb. The weaponeer had a flight test box that was hooked into the bomb's components and monitored the electrical firing circuits. He's the one who certifies and arms the bomb and tells the pilot it is ready to drop.

We had people to do mechanical assembly. The FAT MAN is a five ton or so piece of equipment that requires mechanical hoists and forklifts for component assembly. These components are built around the nuclear core with high explosives that compress the active nuclear material to make a critical mass. The shaped charges of high explosive are enclosed in an aluminum case. It has to be assembled and put inside an aerodynamic bomb body. They always said the bomb has the aerodynamic characteristics of a grand piano. It wasn't all that aerodynamically pure.

All those people had been there for five or six weeks organizing themselves and learning about all this when in walk four new people, one of them being me. At that stage of the game they were conducting refresher courses in electricity. We had all studied electricity at West Point. We were relearning its use and how these different components worked.

INTERVIEWER: To sum up, General Groves wanted to build and train a unit that could assemble weapons for use in the event of war. He wanted to take this laboratory technology and regularize it by creating standard tools, components and procedures for weaponeering and assembly.

GEN CUSHMAN: This was a pioneering military unit, the first of its kind.

INTERVIEWER: This is the dawn of America's nuclear deterrent.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, and so what to do with Cushman? They put me on the "X" Unit. The "X" unit is a big condenser that stores a huge electric charge that triggers the sixty-four detonators on the shaped explosives that compress the FAT MAN's nuclear core. It sets off the explosives in those sixty-four shaped charges that crush the core into a critical mass.

INTERVIEWER: These charges all have to go off simultaneously.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, and the "X" Unit is designed to make that simultaneous. It is

charged by an alternating current motor that generates direct current that builds this charge up. That component was called an inverter. The charge is measured by the flight test box and the weaponeer in the B-29 on station has to be sure the charge is there ready to pop. Then there's another device called the ARCHIE radar that tells how high above the ground the bomb is and another device called the baro switch which measures air pressure and closes the firing switch at the right height of burst. It backs up the ARCHIE with its separate switch. All this was being learned from the technical people and scientists at Los Alamos and Sandia Base. We were organizing and figuring out the assembly procedures. You see, when they assembled it in the laboratory they didn't have a standard procedure but now we had to get this documented as an SOP and write it all down for a manual.

INTERVIEWER: I've read in some accounts that civilian scientists were skeptical that U.S. Army officers would be able to master these technical details.

GEN CUSHMAN: I've never had it expressed to me, but my colleagues, my fellow officers, had reported that.

INTERVIEWER: So you never heard that?

GEN CUSHMAN: I never heard it personally. I must say I was frustrated by this kind of work. I didn't know that a captain, a West Point graduate, would be called upon to do this kind of hands on technical work. I wanted more responsibility. Some of my classmates who got there earlier had what I thought were pretty good jobs. But I didn't have that kind of a job, and I was frustrated. I didn't tell anybody that. I was simply a capable officer, trying to master the assembly drills, but wondering.

Colonel Dorland was an able manager of people, and I think he must have seen that I was frustrated. Maybe anyone could see that. He was an astute leader. Colonel Dorland took a bunch of officers who all thought they were pretty good, and were highly competitive. He allowed them to rotate from one job to another. He had a policy of switching people from one job to another every three months.

After I was there for about two months he made me commander of A Company. A Company was not a technical company. It was a security company; its men were military police. It had a dog platoon; some military police sentries patrolled with dogs. The secure area, on a nearby mountain in which they stored components for atomic bombs, was surrounded by three or four bands of fencing. Between two of the fences the dogs patrolled by themselves, to attack anyone that was in there. This dog platoon was advised by a civilian, Mr. MacGregor, who was an experienced dog man. I had soldiers in there and sergeants. So I now had responsibility for this company, which I liked.

I had Lieutenant Rick McConnell, Class of 1945, as my executive officer. I had a first sergeant and platoon sergeants, no officers besides Rick, and Mr. McGregor. We had an ordinary set of barracks, not new but temporary barracks, and a company admin-

istration building and supply room. Nancy was pregnant and we were going to have a baby in early July and Rick McConnell's wife Joyce was also pregnant. Getting pregnant was the thing to do in those days, so on the 6th of July Connie was born. That very day, Rick McConnell's wife went to the hospital to have her baby and she died in childbirth. It was an enormous shock to us and to everyone in the battalion. Both our wives were in the hospital at the same time. It just about destroyed Rick's life. He survived and they transferred him. He had a young boy to take care of and the boy survived. Rick became a two-star general of the engineers. We lost track of each other. I always thought very highly of him.

About that time, in mid-1947, Colonel Dorland decided to make me his operations officer. I think I must have impressed him as a man who could handle that kind of duty even though I was not necessarily a great technical person. I think he sized me up pretty well. I'm smart and I can understand such technical matters but they never appealed to me. I took over the S3 duties from Joe Hale, a classmate. He had taken them over from Ernie Graves.

INTERVIEWER: What was the state of the battalion when you took over as the S3? Were the companies all formed?

GEN CUSHMAN: At first we had one assembly team in one assembly company. Not long after that we formed three companies – A, B, and C -- part of the, now, 38th Engineer Battalion. Each had an assembly team. The thing we were emphasizing in July of 1947 was Operation AJAX.

INTERVIEWER: And writing SOPs as I recall.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, by this time we had been there almost a year, and the bomb supervisor jobs were established, the assembly teams were established, the duties of the people were established, and they had done rehearsals and drills. We got good at it. General Groves and General Le May [General Curtis E. Le May, USAF] who commanded SAC [Strategic Air Command] decided to have a field exercise.

Of course in 1945 and 1946 there was no Department of Defense; there was a War Department and a Navy Department. The Manhattan Engineer District was created as a separate district, but not under the Corps of Engineers. It had one purpose, to build the atomic bomb. It was placed under the Secretary of War and the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Marshall, with broad authority to General Groves, the director of the Manhattan Engineer District with very high priorities.

They needed bombers to deliver the bomb, so that job was sent down to the US Army Air Forces, who created a special 509th Composite Group equipped with B-29s, which were just coming into the inventory in 1944. The first B-29s were used in 1944 against Japan. The 509th was then based in the west somewhere, I think it might have been at Wendover Field; after the war it moved to Roswell Field, New Mexico. They weren't

called air bases in those days, they were airfields. So the whole panoply of how to deliver atomic bombs involved scientists who worked on the techniques of building and assembling them and the manufacture of uranium and plutonium all the way to the delivery mechanism which was a B-29.

After the bomb was dropped in August of 1945 our government and the Congress became deeply involved in how these new atomic weapons and atomic energy would be used. A great amount of thought was given to its possible civilian uses. The Congressional studies of this led to what was called the McMahon Act; it established the Atomic Energy Commission. The Atomic Energy Act of 1946 took effect just about the time that the Sandia Pioneers were being organized. The Atomic Energy Act of 1946 split the jurisdiction over atomic weapons between the new Atomic Energy Commission and the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project.

General Groves became the Commanding General of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, a joint military organization but mostly Army at first, and Sandia Base became a field agency of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project. The Atomic Energy Commission retained custody of the fissionable material. Some custody of the other bomb components was turned over to the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project and some custody remained with the AEC. All that began to take place in late 1946 and I was never sure how that worked. This was all referred to as the stockpile, and we did not concern ourselves with that. We were just a small part of this whole organization.

One of our majors, Paul Ellis, was under Colonel Dorland responsible for accounting for the AFSWP stockpile. He knew everything about that. It was ultra secret. Only he and Colonel Dorland had that information. That was a time when there were not many nuclear weapons in the stockpile. I thought you could count them on two hands. Another major was Bob Mathe, Class of June 1943, who became the security officer. He was very involved in the secret nature of things.

Colonel Dorland was both installation commander for Sandia Base and the battalion commander. Along with some of his 1936 classmates Colonel Dorland was reduced in rank from full colonel to lieutenant colonel and Brigadier General Robert Montague was made commander of the Field Command and replaced him as the installation commander with a joint staff. His Chief of R&D was a Navy captain, Chick Hayward, Naval Academy Class of 1933 or so, a fine Naval aviator. He was in charge of R&D because the Navy wanted very much to develop weapons that it could use off a carrier, smaller weapons.

In 1947 they passed the act to unify the armed services into what was then called the National Military Establishment and they created a separate Department of the Air Force. This was August of 1947. So we had a separate air force, an AEC [Atomic Energy Commission] and a secretary of defense. All these things were in flux. At our level we just knew that we had to work with the 509th Bombardment Group with its "silverplate aircraft" -- a code name for aircraft that had specially manufactured to ac-

commodate the atomic bomb.

INTERVIEWER: They had been custom built by Boeing to carry the bomb.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, the bomb as designed had to fit in the bomb bay of the “silverplate” B-29s. By this time, about March or so of 1947, we changed our name to the 38th Engineer Battalion. So Le May and Groves decided to have a field exercise. Now the idea of putting together a bomb in the United States and flying a totally assembled bomb all the way to some far away target was too much to think about in those days. The concept was that the components would be flown to a base in the U.S. that would simulate one within the range of a B-29 to the Soviet Union from Europe. The Soviet Union was always the presumed target. We had to carry the components of the bomb to a forward base where it could be assembled. General Groves did not want us to fly a real bomb over the United States.

INTERVIEWER: So then just to restate the problem. The bomb’s components had to be flown to a forward base that was within B-29 range of the Soviet Union.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, but you had to have a place to assemble them. This called for a facility that had some air conditioning control, because it couldn’t be too hot or too cold.

INTERVIEWER: And this is because of the type tolerances of the metal?

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes, It had to be temperature controlled facility, properly lighted and covered. This called for an assembly building, so they decided that they would have to build a portable, prefabricated assembly building. The pieces of this building had to fit into C-54 cargo planes with the assembly team and flown to the forward base. The bomb would be partially assembled at Sandia Base with everything in place but the fissionable material. Now the “pit” for a nuclear weapon, FAT MAN, is a round ball about the size of a basketball or soccer ball. It is a ball made of nonfissionable uranium and inside of that is plutonium ball, which is the fissionable material. The nonfissionable material acts as a tamper and it crushes the plutonium creating a critical mass. So Le May and Groves said, “We’ve got to test this concept, so let’s find a base that can simulate conditions in England and let’s run a field exercise from that base.”

The base chosen was Wendover Air Force Base, out in the wilds of Utah. We started to develop SOPs for that, and my job was writing these SOPs. One SOP called for a rear assembly team, RAT, at Sandia. We would put the bomb together from components in the stockpile, and the forward assembly team, the FAT, would fly with its house, a pre-fab building, to the forward area, erect the building and receive the partially assembled bomb and the B-29.

INTERVIEWER: Did the RAT have to draw the components from the AEC?

GEN CUSHMAN: No, the RAT would take the components from the stockpile. I think those were in the custody of the Army at that time. I don't know the details of that but there was an arrangement made that allowed them to get these components from the stockpile. I think they were in the custody of the Army, but I'm not sure of that.

INTERVIEWER: I seem to recall and you'd know better of course, but in my research I seem to remember that the Atomic Energy Commission had the components and Groves wasn't very happy about it, because they didn't think the Atomic Energy Commission was paying close enough attention to routine maintenance.

GEN CUSHMAN: He was very interested in that.

INTERVIEWER: I read that Groves wanted to see if the components were in proper shape for the RAT to actually assemble a bomb.

GEN CUSHMAN: I think they accommodated General Groves by putting the components into the custody of the Army. We had components at other places besides Sandia, in the hills outside of Sandia in a fenced-in place. There were components at Fort Hood, Texas, and at Clarksville Base on Fort Campbell, Tennessee. Both of those places had fenced in storage facilities for atomic weapons and they were under Army control. My function was to write the SOPs for this. We had two kinds of assembly methods. One was the RAT-FAT, and the other was a CAT, complete assembly team. where the components were all assembled at a forward base.

INTERVIEWER: In that case the components would arrive at the forward base and they would be assembled by one assembly team?

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes. We had field exercises to test concepts of operating. The first field exercise was Operation AJAX. That was a RAT-FAT with the partial rear assembly being done at Sandia, and the final forward assembly at Wendover. They were going to have six bombs, and one of the bombs was going to be flown to a target and dropped without the nuclear core. A dummy "pit" was used. This was November of 1947. We had Eighth Air Force commander General Ramey and a staff at Wendover, along with Colonel Dorland and his staff with me as the operations officer. We had people from Sandia there from field command but they were not in the chain of command, it was a task force. I guess it was a cooperative task force because I don't think Colonel Dorland was under the operational control of the Eighth Air Force. And we conducted the exercise.

I would suggest that anyone who reads my oral history and really wants to get into this not rely on my oral history but go through the records of the AFSWP and its successors. The AFSWP stayed in business for a long time. As time went by it changed its name and changed its function. It changed to the Defense Nuclear Agency [DNA] and then the Defense Special Weapons Agency and then it got other titles.

We were pioneering the whole concept of building and maintaining a military organization that could put together a bomb and load it on to a B-29. The assembled bomb would come out to the flight line in the trailer covered with canvas to disguise its shape and it would be taken to a secure location on the flight line. It would then be lowered into a pit over which the B-29 could taxi. They would hook a hoist onto the lifting ring at center of gravity of the bomb, one single point, and lift it up into the bomb bay where it would be fastened, ready to be dropped when the bombardier let go. The bomb bay would be closed and the bomb would be hooked to cables running to the flight test box. There were two green plugs in the nose of the bomb that would be replaced by red plugs that would close the switches arming the device. That was done by the weaponeer. Our job was to train and exercise all of these different elements, so that we could deliver a bomb to the target. It was a complicated process, important to do right.

The SOPs I wrote were at the macro level. We had also worked out in the assembly teams that you put cable x against socket y at a certain time and place and you put explosive charge such and such here at this time. You have a mechanical assembly facility and you have an electrical assembly facility. Mechanical dealt with things you could move around, but electrical was dealing with electrons and wiring and testing. There was testing on all of this at every stage of the game. The "X" unit, the condenser, was in the nose of the bomb ahead of the sphere, and other electrical components including altitude determination were in the tail of the unit.

My function was to write these SOPs. Later on as we expanded to more assembly teams I became assistant S3 to Major Lowell Wilkes who had become my boss. We grew and he gave way to a lieutenant colonel. That was about the time we had three assembly companies under Colonel Dorland, Commander of Sandia Base and commanding the 2761st, now 38th, Engineer Battalion (Special). A technical training unit under Lieutenant Colonel John Ord had by then been split off from the battalion. John Ord was a Signal Corps officer who had come to Sandia at the same time as Colonel Dorland. John's function was to establish the school, and that was called Technical Training. He was the only original member of the 2761st who went over to that school. He brought in his faculty from elsewhere, and they taught the "X" unit, the Archies, assembly techniques, everything, but that became a separate institution. Technical Training was set up sometime in 1947.

INTERVIEWER: That was very early as I recall. He came over from the Radar School.

GEN CUSHMAN: That's right. So the time came to reorganize the 38th into the Special Weapons Group. There's not going to be a battalion; there'll be a Special Weapons Group. The three companies of the 38th Engineer Battalion became Special Weapons Units, SWU A, B, and C, later the 111th, 122nd, and 133rd, plus the 144th. Four lieutenant colonels, West Pointers, all of them, engineers all of them, arrived. Three of them were given command of a special weapons unit and the fifth one, Lieutenant Colonel Don Williams, became the operations chief. Lowell Wilkes came in to be my boss because his company was taken over by one of the lieutenant colonels. I was still a key

person because I was doing a lot of the work.

INTERVIEWER: There are a few other things I want to cover. I wanted to discuss your relationship with Colonel Dorland. I'd like to learn about any mentoring that you may have undergone. I wanted to talk about the family and living conditions on the base. Another thing I think is interesting about this experience is the security restraints that you and your families were under. It certainly must have been a security environment that junior grade officers had rarely experienced before.

GEN CUSHMAN: About Colonel Dorland, I thought the world of him. He was not a hail-fellow-well-met type but he was an informal, easy-going boss. He was a man of high caliber, high expectations, and he had good people to work with. Colonel Dorland tried to make us into a social organization. He established such things as calls on the commanding officer by officers or officers with their wives. Calling was standard practice in the pre-war Army and he wanted to reestablish it. He emphasized the Officers' Club. Within days after I arrived at Sandia Base Colonel Dorland gave me the additional duty of club officer. So I was in charge of finding entertainment, and I organized such things as a Casino Night. I organized an officer's show where we put on musical performances. He established a fund to give baby gifts and wedding gifts. Officers would contribute to it and when there was a baby born a small silver cup was presented. Our two first daughters still treasure theirs with the AFSWP insignia. When an officer was married he got a silver tray or some such. There was team building. We had volleyball competitions and the like.

He was an enlightened commander. He looked after our careers. He counseled me on my choice of graduate school. At one time I was thinking of going to Cornell in a special program but the Corps of Engineers finally ended up sending me to MIT. His wife was young; she was having a baby too. She was a lovely lady. He should have made general. He retired from the Army as a colonel before his 30 years were up and he went to work for the Nashville Bridge Company in Nashville, Tennessee. I don't know why.

INTERVIEWER: He called your battalion the greatest single collection of abilities in one small unit that ever existed in the history of the United States Army.

GEN CUSHMAN: That's the way he felt about us. That's probably not right, but we were selected. There weren't any duds in that battalion I assure you.

INTERVIEWER: He also said something that I thought was interesting when he referred to the nature of your work. He said that this is a challenge greater than most folks at any level would ever have in their lifetime. Were you aware of that then? Were you conscious of how important this work was?

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes. We had Operation AJAX and then we had BANJO and then we had COWBOY. Then we had a big one assembling many bombs at Campbell Army Air Field. Then we went out to Eniwetok for Operation SANDSTONE. I went out as an assis-

tant to Frank Camm, who commanded the group from the 38th Engineer Battalion. I was his operations officer.

INTERVIEWER: This is part of JTF-7, and I understand Captain Russell was in command of the group.

GEN CUSHMAN: Lieutenant General John E. Hull commanded the JTF. Captain Russell commanded Joint Task Group 7.1, the technical group under General Hull. Captain Russell was later an admiral and Vice Chief of Naval Operations. There was also a scientific task group under a top civilian scientist from Los Alamos, Dr. Al Graves I think his name was.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Frank Camm worked under Captain Russell and you were working for Frank Camm.

GEN CUSHMAN: Yes. We were managing people in various groups. One was the assembly people, assembling the bomb to be tested. The other was measurement people, assisting the people laying out the gauges for determining blast and light and all that kind of measurement. All that was under Frank Camm. They were integrated with the scientific teams, so they would not be under his direct command, but he was the administrative supervisor. He owned the people, but they were working in technical organizations and assembly, test, measurement. There were three test shots, X, Y & Z; I stayed there for the first one. It was during that time that we got alerted that some might have to return to set up an assembly team for the Berlin Crisis, so we made a list of potential assembly team members for that eventuality.

INTERVIEWER: So there were three shots at Eniwetok. Were you looking at different bomb designs?

GEN CUSHMAN: The Atomic Energy Commission wanted to determine the yield of three different designs.

INTERVIEWER: So you were there for one? What was that experience like?

GEN CUSHMAN: I was there for the X-ray test. We went out there in two ships, two sea-plane tenders, USS Albemarle and USS Curtis. I was on the Albemarle, the command ship also used for other purposes. The assembly team people were on the Curtis. It had converted some spaces below deck to provide for all aspects of bomb assembly. On the islands people were setting up various measurement stations. Down at the lower end of the atoll was an island with a Quonset hut camp where more people lived ashore. Others lived ashore in rudimentary tents on the three shot islands. There were more elaborate facilities down at the southern end of the atoll.

When everything was ready they hoisted the bomb onto the tower and prepared to set it off. Everybody on the islands boarded the ships and moved to the southern end of

the atoll about 20 miles away, for the explosion itself. We all knew exactly when the bomb would be detonated so we got out of bed in the early morning and stood on the deck of the USS Curtis and waited for it. We were told to face the wall, face away from the light. When the bomb detonated the light came fast, right away, brilliant light and then the shock wave came some seconds later. The shock wave was huge. That experience convinced me that we would never have atomic war on the ground. The ground forces cannot live in an atomic battlefield. It's not going to happen even though we trained for it and prepared for it. We don't do that kind of training anymore. We don't do that nonsense. I remembered all that later on when I got into Army operational doctrine.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have a chance to met General Groves?

GEN CUSHMAN: I never met him personally. He came out to talk to us from time to time, but I never had a personal conversation with him. Many did. I got there late. In the early days before I arrived he was much involved. He came out and talked to the wives.

INTERVIEWER: The Army was going to have to share these lessons with the Air Force and with the Navy. What was your experience with the other services in this regard?

GEN CUSHMAN: Since the Manhattan District was formed under the War Department, General Groves was in charge of it. He would naturally figure that the first assembly teams would be Army technical people, but early on the Navy wanted to get into the atomic business. About mid-1947 we began to get the U.S. Navy into the battalion. They knew that this weapon changed the nature of war and if the Navy was going to be important in future warfare they had to be capable of delivering an atomic bomb. This was a high priority in the Navy. The B-29 was then the vehicle for delivering it and the Navy could not fly a B-29. They had to have aircraft that could take off from a carrier closer to the target.

So Chick Hayward, Captain Hayward, USN, Class of 1933, who was a well known naval aviator of technical background, was selected by the Navy Department to come out to Sandia and work toward the development of a fighter X-AJ aircraft that could land and take off from a carrier, and that aircraft was configured to carry the LITTLE BOY. Our assembly teams did not train on LITTLE BOY, although Al Bethel became an expert on it along with Bobby Griffith. The Little Boy was like a cigar, maybe 2 1/2 feet in diameter and eight or nine feet long. The Navy wanted to develop that capability. They said, "If we're going to have this weapon on the ship we have to have assembly teams that can assemble it." In late 1948 I was on a team from the 38th Engineer Battalion that went out to the Norfolk Navy base to visit the USS Frankiin D. Roosevelt to advise the Navy how the carrier's spaces could be reconfigured to house an assembly team. As soon as Chick Hayward got out there in the field command as the R&D chief he started working with Los Alamos to develop a smaller implosion weapon along the lines of the FAT MAN.

By the time I left Sandia Base in May 1949 for MIT we had seven assembly teams, four

Army teams, two Air Force teams and one Navy team in the Special Weapons Group. The Air Force didn't want to rely on the Army for its assembly work. They wanted their own assembly teams.

INTERVIEWER: Please tell us about family life at Sandia Base.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Family life was one of the best features of our time at Sandia Base. We were in a congenial group of friends, officers with similar backgrounds, mostly West Pointers. Many had married right after graduation. They were having babies and enjoying a very nice post where we finally all had family quarters and an interesting social life. It wasn't too active but there were typical social activities and we had a fascinating job. Our first set of quarters was temporary prefab, one of many moved by the Manhattan District from Fort Leonard Wood, a little prefabricated duplex with two bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, bath and a living room. A little while later we moved into newly built permanent quarters. We had two children in Sandia Base. Connie was born in July of 1947 and Cecelia in September of 1948.

INTERVIEWER: How old were you when your first child was born?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: In July of 1947 I was almost 26 years old.

INTERVIEWER: How old was your wife?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: She was three years younger than I. When Connie was born she was 23 years old. The interesting thing about our social life was that everything we did was top secret. We could not talk about it with our wives. If the men were by themselves talking and one of the wives entered the room there was a dead silence. The wives knew something was going on but they didn't ask questions about it. They just assumed they weren't supposed to know. It made for interesting situations. Both Colonel Dorland and General Montague were determined to make it as much like the old Army as possible. We called on General Montague and he would return the calls. It was all very much like the old Army. Our officer's club had dances and that sort of thing. We had a several bachelors and some got married there. The University of New Mexico was in Albuquerque and the sorority sisters began to come out and to the club. Frank Camm, Don Ingram, and others found their wives there.

INTERVIEWER: How far was Sandia Base from Albuquerque?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Sandia Base was on the outskirts of Albuquerque. As you were driving eastward toward the Sandia Mountains on Highway 66, Sandia Base was a settlement off to the right surrounded by desert, with an access road. Dust storms were frequent in those days. The dust would rise up and come in through the windows and create little piles of dust inside the prefabricated houses. You couldn't get on Sandia Base without a pass. We could of course go down into Albuquerque. Albuquerque was a rather nice town. Route 66 went right through there and kept on going. It has grown

considerably. Today Sandia Base is surrounded by development and houses. There was a golf course on the campus of the University of New Mexico. We played golf over there. There was a good range of social activities and family activities. Nancy and I made friendships there that have lasted our whole lives.

INTERVIEWER: What type of amenities were there?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: They had a rudimentary commissary. We had a post exchange. It wasn't much. Sandia Base was a bare base with temporary buildings. Among the first permanent buildings were our battalion headquarters and the field command [Armed Forces Special Weapons Project Field Command] headquarters across the street. Those were completed by the time we left so my offices were in a rather nice building. Colonel Dorland would gather the officers about once a month for an orientation and talk about what was going on and what he expected of us. As I said, he organized a fund for baby cups so all the officers had to chip in. We presented engraved, silver wedding tray/platters to the newly married men. It was lovely.

INTERVIEWER: What was a typical duty day like at Sandia Base?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I worked very hard, especially as S3. The duty day was normal duty hours but I got up early and worked late. I probably worked too hard. I'd dig into my job and I'd frequently go back to work after supper. We had important things to do and I wanted to do them right. Nancy objected to that from time to time. My younger brother was attending MIT and he spent a summer with us. He was 18 years old and he was working as a laborer but he got paid and had a security clearance. Later on he graduated from MIT and went to work for the AEC [Atomic Energy Commission]. But one day Nancy said something that really wounded me. She said, "Our children think that your brother is their father."

INTERVIEWER: What did you tell your wife about the nature of the work you were doing?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I just said that I've got work to do, and she'd be there by herself or taking care of the babies.

INTERVIEWER: Her father was a soldier. Is this what she expected?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, she didn't expect it because that was not her father's way. He was a good officer but strictly 8 to 5. His family had absolutely equal if not first priority with him. He would leave in the morning and come home at the end of office hours when scheduled. He was nothing like I was and she wasn't used to that. That's affected our whole life. I'm an energetic and driven man. This was her first experience with anyone like that. It was new to her.

INTERVIEWER: You were one of a handful of officers that had an understanding of both the technical and doctrinal side of this program.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was abreast of the whole thing.

INTERVIEWER: You played a role in almost every facet of the program.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I must say that it interested me that we were working with the Air Force and the Navy. We had the brand new Air Force. It became a separate Air Force in 1947. I had a great interest in that aspect of it. I remember in 1947 Truman came out with this speech and announced the "Truman Doctrine." The Cold War had started and we had trouble with the Russians in Greece and Turkey. The British were pulling out and Truman had to make a decision. It was a fascinating time because the United States was the sole atomic power. As I said, we took our assembly teams out to Eniwetok to help assemble bombs for testing and got a message from the JCS and field command ordering us to prepare the assembly teams for return to Sandia Base because they were needed to assemble a bomb that we may have to use.

INTERVIEWER: This was in response to the Berlin Crisis?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. In 1948.

INTERVIEWER: What were your thoughts then regarding that crisis and your possible role in it?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: We thought it was the thing to do. We didn't believe that the atomic bomb was surely going to be used but we were the world's superpower. We were the only one that had an atomic bomb. Of course the Russians were working on one at that time but they didn't have one yet. They were frantically working to develop their own atomic bomb.

INTERVIEWER: Was the Berlin Crisis really the first time you deployed a team in a situations other than training?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: We were only alerted then. We deployed on Operation AJAX, a field exercise to prove that we were capable of taking our building and going somewhere and putting our bomb together.

INTERVIEWER: Were you conscious of the long-term health risks from working with nuclear material?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Well the people that worked at Los Alamos were particularly exposed and vulnerable because they were working with active material. They had a fatal accident up there when somebody knocked a device off a table and sprayed the neutrons and protons around and the man died. We didn't have any active material at Sandia Base.

INTERVIEWER: It's common knowledge that the Soviets had effectively penetrated Los Alamos. They didn't penetrate Sandia Base, at least not that we know of. Are you aware of any significant differences in security between Los Alamos and Sandia base?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Sandia Base was highly secure. At Los Alamos there were mostly civilians and sometimes they weren't security minded. As we were sharing stories at the battalion's 50th reunion one of the ladies told us that she once stood on a corner at Los Alamos and watched two scientists arguing vehemently with each other. One was Niels Bohr and the other was Enrico Fermi. She said that the scientist' wives sometimes talked about the men's work. Ours never talked about our work.

INTERVIEWER: The wives at Los Alamos would talk about the work?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The civilian wives. It was a different outlook.

INTERVIEWER: Next session I'd like to move on to your time at MIT.

Chapter Seven

MIT and Fort Belvoir

INTERVIEWER: I'd like you to talk about to your time at MIT.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: In early 1949 I received orders. I was to go to MIT for a year, beginning that summer, and graduate the following June with a Master of Science in Civil Engineering. That suited me fine. We put our two kids in the car, by then I had bought a 1949 Ford, and we traveled to Sullivans Island near Charleston, South Carolina, where my parents were living. My Aunt Helen offered us the use of her small house as our Island vacation home. We spent three or four weeks there and then we drove to MIT. We found a house in Lexington, Massachusetts, and I started school in June.

Somewhere about that time I started thinking about my career. That spring of 1949 there had been a huge interservice fight about the Navy's giant carrier that Secretary of Defense Johnson had cancelled. I was thinking about that and the future and what I'd like to do. I remember thinking that joint operations would be an interesting career path. I thought I'd like to be like Al Gruenther [General Alfred Maximilian Gruenther]. Al Gruenther was the first director of the Joint Staff. The Joint Staff was small in 1947. They didn't have a proper staff as you know it today. Back then operations were done by the services. The Army had Europe and the Navy had the Pacific. But the chain of command for each service was different. The CNO [Chief of Naval Operations] was in charge of the Navy. The Army had a Chief of Staff but he didn't command like the CNO did. These were the kinds of things that I was learning. I started school that summer. I was an engineer officer learning civil engineering from the best engineering school in the world. I was privileged to get some very good professors. I have to say that I am proud that I got very good grades at MIT, an "H" (for "A") in every subject.

INTERVIEWER: Was there an instructor there who you recall fondly or who made a positive impression on you?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: There was a Professor Wilbur, who was the old graybeard of the Department of Civil Engineering. He was the department head and gave us a wonderful introduction to civil engineering. He helped me decide what I wanted to do with my thesis. I grew interested in operations research and did a lot of reading about the nature of operational research in World War II. It was used by the Air Corps in assessing the effectiveness of all kinds of things. I became intrigued with the utility of operations research as a way to make decisions about tactics, weapons and organization. I took an undergraduate course in statistics that I thought would be useful.

INTERVIEWER: What was the subject of your thesis?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: One of my classmates at MIT was from the Class of 1945 by the

name of Jim Hunt. We both wanted to conduct a statistical analysis using operations research and its methods to determine something. We went to our instructor and he told us to take a look at all the rivers in New England and make a study on the flow diagram and draw some conclusions. We did and we got an “H” on it.

INTERVIEWER: How did your family like Lexington?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: They loved it. We had a small Cape Cod home in Lexington, Massachusetts. I was often at home studying. I was in a car pool with two young MIT professors. We shared rides. I had a good academic year. We had our third child there at MIT. Kathleen was born in February of 1950. It was a happy time.

INTERVIEWER: Did anyone at the faculty know about your previous work at Sandia Base?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I talked about it with these two friends of mine on the MIT faculty who were in a car pool with me. They were both physicists. I didn't talk about anything classified but they knew I worked on the atomic bomb.

INTERVIEWER: At any time at MIT did you consider leaving the Army to pursue a civilian career?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Never.

INTERVIEWER: Did any one approach you with an offer?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, they never did.

INTERVIEWER: How were military officers received at MIT? What was the attitude towards the military?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: MIT had been training military officers for years. In fact MIT had been the source of a lot of the development of radar and of Navy ship design and architecture. One of my carpool mates had worked on the radar in World War II and had developed the megatron, which was a huge vacuum tube that was needed for radar in those days.

INTERVIEWER: After graduation you attend the Engineer Officer Advanced Course.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Then I got orders to go to the Advanced Course. I graduated from MIT in June of 1950 and we drove down to Fort Belvoir. I got there a couple of months before the course was to start and we found a little farmhouse off post. Nancy didn't want to move into the family quarters that they had available for us on post be-

cause they were wooden converted barracks and crowded. She was worried about fire.

INTERVIEWER: Had there been a fire there previously?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: She just didn't like places that looked like that. She is a cautious lady. We had a good place, a bit isolated but quite OK. We had a wonderful year there. Since I arrived early I was temporarily assigned to the G3 and was put to work preparing for the visit of West Point cadets for an orientation that summer.

INTERVIEWER: This is the G3 of the Engineer School?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes. Once during that time I was out on a parade field and in comes this helicopter -- a Bell Helicopter with a bubble on it. The helicopter was just becoming a possible feature of war and it fascinated me. I got to thinking, you know if you had a capable helicopter you could make a river crossing very easily. I wanted to learn more about helicopters. Sure enough, I read that the Marines were experimenting with them down at Quantico, Virginia. The Korean War began to change everything. The Army grew and had money, it was wartime. That summer I drove down to Quantico to visit the Marine helicopter squadron.

INTERVIEWER: This is the summer of 1950?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, in August I think. So I saw this Marine helicopter. It was tiny with two rotors. It could carry maybe six people. They were going to use it for transporting troops from ship to shore. They were very interested in it. That started my interest in aviation. I have been a proponent of Army aviation ever since.

INTERVIEWER: Did you want to fly one?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I finally did become a helicopter pilot. That summer was the genesis of my interest in Army aviation. Of course I knew that when they had unified the armed services and created a separate Air Force all aviation, except for the Piper Cubs used for artillery spotting, would go to the new service. But the helicopter that landed on the parade field belonged to the Army. So my curiosity and interest were great.

While I was at Engineer School I continued to pursue my interest in operations research. I visited a place called ORO, Operation Research Office, at Fort McNair. It was the operations research organization for the Army. A man named Johnson was the head of it. I went to him and told him I was interested in Operation Research and that I wanted to conduct an OR study of some kind.

INTERVIEWER: Were you enrolled in the advanced course at this time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes I was.

INTERVIEWER: Weren't they keeping you busy enough?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I kept up with my studies and ended number two in my class in the Advanced Course. Johnson told me that I might do a study on land mines so I completed a study on mines while I was there at Fort Belvoir. I'm not very proud of it. It was a half-baked study on the best way to emplace a minefield. I then wrote an article for Army magazine on it that wasn't all that good. I was also interested in combined operations with Allies so I used the GI Bill and went down to George Washington University and enrolled in a course for credit in International Relations. At a place on Farragut Square I took a one-on-one course in conversational French. I could then have "can speak some French" in my personnel file. I drove from Fort Belvoir into Washington two or three times a week to take these classes.

INTERVIEWER: That's downtown D.C.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, I did that anyhow.

INTERVIEWER: Did your tactical officer know all this?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No, I went to class and I did my studies and did my homework and took my examinations but I had time to do that.

INTERVIEWER: Were you bored by the Engineer Advanced Course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I didn't find it very interesting. That was about the time I began to be disenchanted with the Engineer as a branch. I found the things I was learning didn't seem very interesting to me.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of things were you learning?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: How to organize and direct engineer units. How to solve tactical engineering problems. I began to wonder about the Corps of Engineers as a branch. The Congress was considering legislation for a statute, the organization of the Department of the Army. The Chief of Engineers had testified in favor of maintaining his special separate status in it because of his civil works responsibilities. That led me to wonder about the commitment of the Chief of Engineers to his Army mission.

INTERVIEWER: Did you share this concern with your brother officers?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Not all that much. I wasn't keeping it a secret, but I was thinking

that to myself. I don't remember having any confidants in that class, people that I would want to take into my confidence. We had on the faculty of the Engineer School an infantry officer who was the chief instructor on infantry tactics and an authority on infantry, Lieutenant Colonel Jack Duncan, a wonderful instructor. He had been in the Third Infantry Division, 7th Infantry Regiment, throughout the war. He had considerable combat experience and was highly regarded in the Army. He had commanded a battalion and had fought in Africa and Italy and then in Europe. He was a good man and a good instructor. I went to him and told him I was thinking of becoming an infantry officer. I asked him if he thought I'd make a good infantry officer without any combat experience. He said there's nothing to it. He said make your mind up and just do what you think is right. I always remembered that, those instructions, do what you think is right. So I struggled with myself and finally made a very fundamental career decision to transfer.

INTERVIEWER: Was he a better instructor than his peers at the engineer school or was he talking about things that really interested you?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: He talked about things that interested me but he was also very lively. He had a soldierly way of looking at things, and he was the kind of man I'd like to be. We had engineer instructors but I must say I found their material boring. They taught how to organize engineers in groups and where to put them and what to tell them to do and so forth. I began thinking about my next assignment. It was a wartime Army. It was expanding. When I made my branch choice in 1944, I had expected a return to years of peacetime. The Army was getting into places like combined operations in Europe. They had just organized SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe]. I didn't know how I'd fit into this if I were stuck in the Corps of Engineers. I wanted to do something else.

I went down to the assignment officer at the Chief of Engineers Office and told him that I wanted a job in a place like SHAPE. He said no dice, since they had too many unfilled engineer branch slots. He said I'd have to take a branch material slot, an engineer job somewhere. I told him I didn't want to do that, I wanted to do something else, He said you're not.

So I went home and talked to Nancy. I said I'm thinking of transferring branch from engineers to infantry. She said okay. She didn't mind. I thought about it for a couple of months and then I went down to the Infantry Branch at the Pentagon and met the officer in charge of infantry captains. I told him I was thinking of transferring from the Corps of Engineers to the Infantry. He wondered why I wanted to leave the Engineers. He asked if I was trying to get out of a bad career situation. I told him that was not the case, that I was looking for a chance to do something I liked. I had served in the infantry as an enlisted man and I liked it immediately and everything about it. As an engineer captain I had not served any kind of a combat duty in wartime. I had been building

ports and airfields in the Pacific. It didn't appeal to me all that much, although I liked being around engineer officers. The engineers we had at Sandia Base were a high quality group. You rarely get that kind of a group even in the engineers.

So I made my choice and put in an application to change my branch. They sent me to the personnel people in the Chief of Engineers. I explained my decision in a letter to my Dad...

6 March 1951

Dear Dad -

Mom has probably told you that I was considering transferring from the Corps of Engineers to the Infantry. I know that you will be interested in hearing that today I submitted my request for such a transfer.

This is something that I have been thinking over for some time. As you remember, as a cadet I was on the fence for quite a while - undecided between the Engineers and the Infantry. I eventually chose the Engineers because of their many advantages in peacetime - further education, interesting and responsible work in civil construction, and a preparation for a useful and remunerative life after retirement. I visualized that the major part of my army career would be in times of peace, when military appropriations would again be cut.

The picture today is quite different from what I expected. And I believe that for most of the rest of my career the army will be either on a partially mobilized basis or engaged in actual hostilities. Under those conditions I would much prefer service in the various command and staff jobs that exist in the combined arms. Engineer officers just don't normally get those jobs. The Corps of Engineers is today in the unfortunate position of being short 800 regular officers out of a total authorized of about 2300. Because of this, and because of the continuing commitment of a couple hundred to the civil works program, they do not place engineer officers in branch immaterial jobs without a great deal of protest. So I can look forward, as an engineer, to a long succession of fairly specialized assignments - usually not in the field of the combined arms. To avoid such a prospect and to get into a position where I can have more varied duties is the main reason for my transfer.

There are others. I have become a believer in a nearly branchless army as an ideal - such a concept is heresy in the higher echelons of the Engineers. I have become convinced that the continuing interest of the Corps of Engineers in civil works, regardless of their statements that it is not the primary mission of the Engineers, is to the disadvantage of their army role - and hence operates to the disadvantage of the army. I personally do not want to serve in the civil works program and have no desire to ever attain to the position of Chief of Engineers. That is not a fit way for an Engineer officer to think and it is not good for me to remain in the branch.

I know that I can be of value to the army as an infantryman. My engineer training will be helpful, as will my time in the atomic bomb business. I will go first to Benning for the short advanced course they give reserve officers (13 weeks). Then I will be assigned to troops - to a division in the states or overseas. I hope to stay with a division for a couple of years, and expect that at the end of such a time I will be up to the level of my contemporaries in the Infantry. From then on I hope to continue my education in the combined arms through the varied assignments that will be open to me as an infantryman. I expect that my troop duty will be overseas - in Europe.

Naturally this was a big decision for me to make. I would like to have been able to talk to you about it but I really doubt if you would have influenced me one way or the other. It was really something for me to decide for myself. When all the facts were in it was obvious to me that there was only one answer. And in the answer Nancy and I concurred as one.

Well, we are looking forward to having both you and Mom visit us later this month - the weekend of the 25th. We hope that you can get away for that weekend - although we know that those are your busiest times. When you come down we can catch up on all the news and talk of one sort or another.

All of us send our love --

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text of the letter.

INTERVIEWER: I can see someone in the Army saying this is an officer with unique qualifications. I can imagine that the Chief of Engineers and the Engineer Branch would be reluctant to let you go.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I think the Chief of Engineers had a lot of good engineer officers in the captain grade.

INTERVIEWER: Not many knew how to build atomic bombs.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: There were dozens of them around. The Engineers didn't fight for me. They told me that they were short of engineer officers and that the chances for a branch immaterial slot for me were zero. They said you will go wherever we send you. I made my mind up and they made their mind up. That's the way it worked out.

INTERVIEWER: What was the reaction of your classmates?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Well they were shocked. You just didn't do that. One of them

asked why I wanted to wear those idiot sticks. Some of my classmates recognized me as a man with a certain ambition. They thought I figured it was the best way to become a general. Maybe I thought that but I don't think so. I wanted to have a career in the infantry not in the engineers. Other engineer officers have transferred to the infantry at one time or another.

INTERVIEWER: You had some experience with soldiers in the Philippines.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I had been a company commander, twice.

INTERVIEWER: So you weren't completely ignorant of what it took to lead soldiers.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No. I had soldiers all right but infantry soldiers are different, especially in combat. It is a question of whether they are ready for combat.

INTERVIEWER: So you transferred while you were in the Engineer Advanced Course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Yes, I put on the branch insignia as soon as my orders came through.

INTERVIEWER: I imagine the infantry branch was happy to have you.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I think so. I finished my time up there at Fort Belvoir and reported down to the Infantry School.

INTERVIEWER: You went on to the Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Fort Benning.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I was assigned to the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Benning, Georgia, with orders en route to the Associate Advanced Course at Benning. The 4th Infantry Division was being activated and trained for a rotation to Europe. It was one of the infantry divisions being sent over to reinforce the 1st Infantry Division in Europe. I moved my family to quarters there on post, in Custer Terrace, and I checked in to the Associate Advanced Course. I transferred as a captain thinking I would probably command a company. About the time I got to Fort Benning I was promoted to major as were many of my classmates.

INTERVIEWER: What was the Associate Advanced Course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: In those days they had the Advanced Course and the Associate Advanced Course. The Associate Course was for Reserve officers to bring them up to speed. It was shorter than the Infantry Officer Advanced Course. I think it was about three months.

INTERVIEWER: What was your opinion of the Infantry Associate Advanced Course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Very good.

INTERVIEWER: Did you find it more engaging than the Engineer Advanced Course?

INTERVIEWER: I found it very interesting -- informative and useful to me. The course at Fort Benning had undergone almost a year of intensive change because of the Korean War. We had instructors who had seen combat in Korea and they were good instructors.

INTERVIEWER: How much different were your peers in the Infantry Officers Associate Advanced Course from your peers in Engineer Officer Advanced Course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: The officers in the Engineer Advanced Course were regulars. The Infantry Officer Associate Course was mostly reservists. They were good men but different, not regular and not educated as well. I didn't know many of them because I did my studying at home and then went back to class. The conversations weren't all that great. That's why I was able to be number one in my class.

INTERVIEWER: Was that the first time you'd ever worked with Reserve officers?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: No. The 808th Engineer Battalion had few regular officers.

INTERVIEWER: What were the big lessons being brought back from Korea?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: I can talk about that when we talk about the 22nd Infantry because I ran into a commander in the 22nd Infantry who did not think much of what was taught at the Infantry School. He said that in his experience in World War II they'd get these lieutenants who came in from the Infantry School and you had to train them all over again.

INTERVIEWER: What were your thoughts when you graduated the course?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: At this stage of my career, the summer of 1951, I was embarking on a new career as an infantry officer without having been through the preliminaries. I was a major. I had commanded companies but not an infantry company. I had done training but it was not at all the appropriate training for an infantryman. I had not been in combat. I did not have a CIB [Combat Infantryman Badge]. I was conscious of that from the onset. Now I was assigned to the 4th Infantry Division. I had two classmates out there, Jack Hennessey and Charlie Daniel. I was thinking about trying to get to Korea as infantry replacement. I knew that if I went to Korea Nancy would be left behind with the three children. I'd have to find a place for her to stay and she didn't bargain on

that when she agreed to my branch transfer. She did not bargain on my going into combat right away.

INTERVIEWER: You hadn't discussed that even though the Korean War was going on at the time?

GENERAL CUSHMAN: She didn't think about that as an eventuality. She just thought about the change in branch. She probably did but she didn't mention it and I didn't think that I would do that right away. I denied it I suppose, but I began to think more about it. I thought it was necessary to get some combat experience. This was during the late summer of 1951. I went to see Lieutenant Colonel Jim Lynch at Benning who had been a tactical officer at West Point. He had just returned from Korea. He had commanded a battalion over there. They were talking about a truce that summer and he told me he didn't think the Korean War was going to last. He thought I'd go over there and just get stuck. He said if I took the job in the 4th Infantry Division, I'd get to understand infantry. So I decided not to apply for Korea.

I finished school and took some leave. With the 4th Infantry Division going to Germany I decided to settle my family at St. Petersburg, Florida, near my sister. Her husband was an artillery officer in Korea. She was a waiting wife. She had two children. Nancy had three. There was also a cousin of mine who was there with an Air Force husband in Korea. So the three of them would have mutual support and that's what we did.

While I was there in St. Petersburg I developed a trick knee. In 1946 in Japan I had been playing touch football and stepped in a hole and twisted my knee badly. When I had gone to Sandia it kept popping out on me. I remember it popping out on me once when I kicked the tire of my old car. It popped out on me at MIT while I was playing lacrosse. Now it was bothering me again so I had it examined and it was determined that I needed knee surgery. They scheduled me for an operation at Walter Reed. I was in the hospital at Walter Reed on my thirtieth birthday. I had four weeks in the hospital in the swimming pool and doing weights and all that. After a short visit home in St. Petersburg I sailed for Europe in November of 1951.

I arrived at the port and went down to Frankfurt by rail and reported to the 4th Infantry Division Headquarters at Frankfurt. I was assigned to the 22nd Infantry Regiment.