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Interview no. 181

S. L. A. Marshall

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Brig. Gen. S. L. A. Marshall (1900-1977)
INTERVIEWER: Richard Estrada
PROJECT: _____
DATE OF INTERVIEW: July 5, 7, 9, 11, and 19, 1975
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Military historian.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Biography; encounters with Pancho Villa; Felipe Angeles and Jose Vasconcelos; Albert Bacon Fall; Pershing Expedition; Columbus Raid; Ciudad Juarez in the teens and 1920's; effect of the railroad on El Paso; Zack Lamar Cobb; Zack White; prominent men in El Paso in 1915; sentiment in El Paso toward the Mexican Revolution; Pascual Orozco; orientals and blacks in El Paso during the teens; crossing the international bridge; Emil Holmdahl; Sam Dreben; General Pershing; prejudice against Mexicans; the El Paso Herald Post vs. the El Paso Times; friendliness of El Paso; Chris P. Fox; returning to El Paso after World War I; newspaper work; Ku Klux Klan; the Depression; Copper baseball league; re-enlisting as a private in the National Guard; humor columnist; origin of nickname "Slam"; Revindication Revolution; Prohibition; cultural advantages of El Paso; Lawson-Jackson fight; Tiger Flowers-Gorilla Jones fight; use of marijuana;

prostitution in the 1920's; work with the Detroit News; World War II military broadcast column; trips to Mexico and conditions there; Sherwood Anderson; Ulises Irigoyen; L. M. Lawson; the United Nations; El Paso-Ciudad Juarez relations; Cedillo; oil expropriations; Josephus Daniels; Charles Lindberg; Francisco Mujica; Spanish Civil War; Ernest Hemingway.

BICENTENNIAL

E: General Marshall, what is the origin of your name: Marshall?

Have you ever looked it up?

M: It's, I think, Norman. "Marshall" comes from the same root as "constable" and so on. A marshall, in feudal times, was the head of the infantry in a lord's household, just as the constable was the head of the cavalry. You'll find the name, incidentally, in every language; it's in Chinese, in Japanese, in Portuguese, in Spanish, in Italian. It's a persistent name over the globe.

E: That's very interesting. To what social class did your parents belong? Could you tell me something about your parents?

M: I couldn't say that they belonged to any social class. My mother, as far as pedigree was concerned, came from an old American family. They were Mayflower people, the original Gamelial Beeman. She was a member of the DAR and these various other organizations.

E: So her ancestors actually came over on the Mayflower?

M: That's right. And practically every Beeman in the United States is related to me. My mother's family was well aware of their ancestry. My father was an Englishman, born in England. He came to this country at the age of sixteen. He never talked about my family in England, so I knew nothing about them. I know I had an Uncle Sam over there. Dad was an American from the word go. That was one reason that he never went into family affairs. He was a very strong man physically, and the best mind that I ever ran into. Both my brother and I got our vocabulary from my father, not from

the school system, because I had very little English in school. He was the best-spoken man I ever knew. I didn't get to know my British relatives until I went over there in World War I. My Uncle Sam brought up the question if my father had ever talked about the family. I told him, "No." So he said, "I'll give you a run down on it." I had a lot of relatives in England at that time. He was the one who told me that my grandmother, my dad's mother, was from the Wedgewood family; I think she was the niece of Darwin's wife. I hadn't known that until that time.

E: Charles Darwin?

M: Yes. And that's about it. The family--our family--was not at any time a family of means. I was not aware we were what you would call a poor family today. But oddly enough we traveled all over the United States from the time I was a baby.

E: And you were born in Catskill, New York?

M: Catskill, New York.

E: In 1900?

M: In 1900, and the record would make a researcher believe that we lived there until my brother was born eight years later because he was also born in Catskill, New York. But I was there briefly for only a few weeks. Then we moved to New Hampshire, then to Maine, then to Baltimore, then to South Carolina, then to Colorado, and from there to California and then to El Paso.

E: Well, what was the nature of your father's business to...

M: Well, it was this... He was an expert--probably the brightest mind in the business in clay machinery, and the making of bricks and tile. He became an expert for the American Clay Machinery Company,

which sold practically all the clay machinery in the United States at that time. Whenever they would sell the machinery to a new plant they would usually get a mortgage on it, and then the company would start losing money and they'd send Dad there to straighten it out. By the time he would get it in the black, they were ready for him to move on to some other place.

E: Did the entire family move with your father every time?

M: Usually we'd move a few weeks or months behind him. The only time that I moved out ahead of the family with him is when we came from California to El Paso. We were here six months ahead of the rest of the family. This kind of thing is supposed to be unstabilizing to a child. It had just the other effect on me. I think that was the big advantage I got out of my youth because I had a chance for adventure on my own. And that started at age five when we were living in South Carolina in a small town called Killian, just outside of Columbia, and I got in the habit of roaming the fields and the woods pretty much on my own or with a boy companion. I can remember at the age of six coming across a Civil War canon ball in the woods down there. This little pal and I built a fire and threw the canon ball in to see if it would explode. Of course it didn't explode; it was a round shot. I use that as an illustration of what set me on the course that I followed. From that time on I think I lived a more carefree life than most children did. We moved back to Catskill and we were there once again briefly. I was still in the habit of going out on my own. Then, when we moved to Boulder, Colorado--this was at the age of eight. We lived there from the time I was eight till the time I was twelve. In those years I got in the habit of mountain climbing and hunting game with a rifle.

I say "big game"--I mean wildcats, and porcupine and so on--in the mountains. Game was abundant at that time.

E: So you've always led a more or less adventurous life?

M: That's right.

E: Could you tell me in what year did you come to El Paso?

M: Well, I should first tell you about California.

E: All right, sir. Go right ahead.

M: We were there another three years when we went to Niles, California, where there was a big brick plant. That was the western branch of Western Essanay Company which was turning out Western motion pictures. The first Western motion pictures were the "Bronco Billy" pictures and the "Snakeville" comedies that were made by the film industry anywhere. This was before Hollywood became Hollywood. I was hired as a juvenile when I was in the eighth grade simply because I passed a better screen test than any other boy in the eighth grade. They were looking for another juvenile. And so I began working as a motion picture actor in 1912, and continued it until we came to El Paso. I think that was one reason that my father moved from California and came here. He was afraid that the life at the studios would ruin me. Whereas, if we'd stayed there I might have become governor of California.

E: I don't doubt it. What year did you come to El Paso then?

M: Early 1915.

E: Early 1915. Do you have any recollections about...

M: Very definite ones.

E: Could you tell me about them?

M: Yes, the International Brick Company was located down next to the boundary, right next to what is now the Chamizal zone.

The 16th Infantry was at Camp Cotton. That was its base camp and that is in what is now the Chamizal zone. That was about two hundred yards from the brick plant. Since Dad was here alone, he had gotten acquainted with the 16th Infantry and he was eating his meals at the mess of F Company, 16th Infantry. This was my first contact with U.S. soldiers. So I dined every day at the mess. So at the age of fourteen I was becoming well acquainted with soldiering. I was pretty mature by that time. I had my full growth. I was, I guess a little bit cocky and self confident. I became accustomed to being around the military and I remember the people in that Company very well. I was not interested in soldiering. I had never thought of myself as a military person. I had never played with toy soldiers or anything of that kind. But being with the uniform became a natural thing to me. In 1916, as a civilian, I was playing right field on the Fort Bliss baseball team--still with no idea of ever becoming a soldier. But I remember that within the first week of hitting El Paso and meeting the Army, I also went to Juárez on my own at fourteen, to explore that.

E: Tell us about it.

M: Well, the third experience was a bad one. I was at the Black Cat [Gato Negro] in Juárez--which was a café with a small gambling establishment--at the corner where the street car turns, and right next to the Big Kid's establishment. It was owned by Villa. I had ordered a soft drink because I had never had anything alcoholic in my life. I was also ordering dinner. Villa came in with Roberto Fierro, I think his name was.

E: Rodolfo.

M: Rodolfo Fierro. They got into a discussion about whether Villa could knock a comb out of a dancehall girl's head with his pistol without sighting it, holding it like that. He fired and shot her through the brain. They laughed and he paid off the bet. It was twenty five dollars... I got the hell out of there.

E: You actually witnessed that?

M: Yes. It was my first experience with violent death.

E: Did people tell you that this was Francisco Villa? Had you seen his picture?

M: I recognized him when he came in. I didn't know anything about Fierro. But I got on the same street car with Norman Walker, the war correspondent, who also bailed out at that moment. That's when I met him, on the street car. He told me who the principals were and what it was all about. They were talking in Spanish and I didn't know Spanish.

E: So it was Villa that did that killing?

M: Yes.

E: Tell me, what do you recall about Pancho Villa, physically? Can you remember what he looked like when you saw him?

M: Yes. The main thing I remember about him is an aura of greasiness. He was a great sweater. He always seemed to have, at least under those few occasions when I knew him, a very jovial manner. I met him once again through Tom Leā. Tom Leā did some legal work for him.

E: The former mayor of El Paso?

M: The former mayor of El Paso. So I formally met him while I was still a kid.

- E: Tell us about that second meeting. What were your impressions of Villa?
- M: I don't have any impressions from that second meeting except that in a conversation with Lea he gave Lea his personal dagger for some reason--I can't remember the reason. And subsequently Lea gave it to me. It was a Sheffield pearl handled knife. Lea gave it to me because he was a gun collector and in some El Paso ruins I found an old Derringer that he very much wanted. I gave him the Derringer and he gave me the knife in return.
- E: That's very interesting. Did Tom Lea ever talk to you about Villa at any length? About the kind of person he was or any dealings he may have had with him?
- M: No, not extensively. Nothing that I recall. As a matter of fact, I learned far more from Emil Holmdahl and Oscar Caballero who were agents of his. Oscar was a purchasing agent and we discussed him at great length. The last time I saw Fierro was in 1938. He was the man that took me out to Palomas to see Cedillo. But I would not go into the conversations for the simple reason that my memory about that is hazy. I never wrote anything important about Pancho Villa. So, this was just idle conversation, do you follow me?
- E: Yes, sir.
- M: I kept no notes.
- E: Tell me something, what were your first impressions of Mexicans or Mexican Americans when you came to the Southwest? What do you recall about them? What kind of jobs did you see them working at?
- M: My father's force at the brick plant was all Mexican.
- E: 100% Mexican?

M: 100% except for the foreman. He had worked Blacks, Portuguese, Poles, Italians. He'd had various experiences with different labor groups, different ethnic groups, all over the United States. He preferred Mexicans to any other.

E: Why was that?

M: They are more faithful on the job.

E: What else do you recall about Mexicans? Do you ever recall seeing them in a social setting?

M: Well, I've seen them in many, many settings. See, in the years that followed, particularly after I went to Detroit, I would spend three months out of every year in Mexico working. I guess I'm one of the few Americans that has gone to every state and every territory in Mexico including Quintana Roo at a time when practically no one went to Quintana Roo. But I've been all over the country. So I got to see them under many, many conditions. I knew many of the revolutionary leaders quite well. For instance, Portes Gil was a friend of mine. You'll find in that collection at UTEP a book from Portes Gil signed to me by Portes Gil.

E: I met him three years ago here in Juárez.

M: Is he still alive?

E: Yes.

M: To me it was always an enjoyable experience. The only reason I stopped in 1938 was because in 1939 the War came along. That turned my interest in an entirely different direction and I never got back to it.

E: But do you think that if the war had not come along you would have maintained your ties with Latin America? Your reporting on Latin America?

M: Oh, I don't think there's any question about that. In 1923 when I was twenty-two years of age, due to a conversation with Arthur Lockhart who at that time was one of the Lockharts that owned the Rio Grande Oil Company here in El Paso...He was a rather wealthy man...still alive by the way and living in Long Beach. He brought up the point that a newspaperman should be a generalist. He should be able to work in any field in the newspaper: society editor, sports editor, city editor, write a column, etc., etc., which I proceeded to do. But he made the further point that in order to not be at the mercy of his employer he should turn to certain specialties. So I sat down and figured out what specialties I would follow. Whereas I'm a watercolorist, a painter, and I was a trained musician--I used to be a singer in El Paso; I was well known here as a singer--and whereas I'd been an actor, I decided that for my field of criticism I'd forget all of those things that I had learned in youth because there were so many people in the field and I'd become a military critic. I'd learn about military affairs from beginning to end. Although I'd been an all-around athlete in school and also played polo, I would not concentrate on any of the familiar sports. I would concentrate on sports of the horse: polo, steeple chasing, and racing--not flat racing--steeple chasing and horse showing and become an expert in that field. In foreign affairs I'd concentrate on Mexico and the Central American Republics because other foreign correspondents were paying fundamental attention to Europe and Asia. I never expected that my affairs would carry me towards Europe or Asia. I continued with that plan until the Second War came, never expecting that the

military studies would pay off for me. I thought that I would get the big payoff in Latin American affairs, and in polo, especially in horse shows. By the mid-1930s I was a national writer in both of those fields. In fact, my scrapbook on writing about the horse is out there in the UTEP collection. Some of my pieces in military criticism are there, but they were just marginal pieces at that time. Does that explain it?

E: Yes, sir, it certainly does. Going back to your years here in El Paso just before World War I: Tell me something about relations between Anglo Americans and Mexican Americans in those days. Can you recall anything?

M: In high school?

E: Yes.

M: Beautiful. I remember them very well for the reason that many of our schoolmates were refugees from the Revolution. For instance, one of my classmates was Julius Laguerre Terrazas who was the grandson of old man Terrazas.

E: Luis Terrazas, Sr.?

M: That's right. Ramón Concho was another one. He later went to Mines at the same time I did. Maldonado was another. But at any rate, they were our classmates and our friends. They participated in sports up there. I was the manager and captain of the baseball team and half of our team were Mexicans. And I really think the great change in El Paso came about because that generation of individuals, getting that kind of a schooling and relationships, finally came to power in El Paso. They were determined that this city, at least if they could affect it, would take a more sensible social attitude toward Mexicans.

E: So most of the Spanish surnamed individuals that you knew were of a higher social element in comparison to most Mexican Americans on the border. Is that right?

M: Yes, that's a good point. Most of them here couldn't afford to go to high school. Their parents couldn't help them.

E: What part of town did these refugees live in?

M: Well, they lived, many of them, north of San Antonio Street. For example...

E: Up near Sunset Heights maybe?

M: Golden Hill.

E: Golden Hill?

M: Yes, we lived in Golden Hill and Vasconcelos and Felipe Angeles lived within a couple of blocks of where I lived. My father knew both of them quite well.

E: Your father knew Angeles and Vasconcelos well?

M: Yes. I knew them. I met them.

E: Tell me about Felipe Angeles and José Vasconcelos. What do you recall about them?

M: Well, Felipe Angeles was one of the most informed soldiers I ever met. I don't know whether the reputation was correct, but on the border at the time he was given credit for having been one of the main developers of the French 75. He was at Saumur. He was a very soft spoken, moderate man. Vasconcelos, who was more of a scholar, was much the same type as far as his outward seeming was concerned.

E: Angeles, of course, was executed probably about three years after you met him.

M: That's about right.

E: Do you recall ever hearing him talk...any conversations that he may have had that you were present at...anything you can recall about him? Anything further than what you've said?

M: No.

E: Just those initial impressions?

M: That's right. You must understand, again, at that time I was not interested in military affairs. He talked like a soldier and most of his conversations had to do with the fighting problems in Mexico.

E: Had you begun to understand any Spanish by this time?

M: I struggled with it. I found that my parents kidded me very much about it because my efforts were so bad, but I did my damndest.

E: Did your father ever achieve any degree of fluency?

M: None, none. He was not a linguist. He had no ability in that field at all.

E: You say you lived right near Golden Hill...

M: Yes, I lived on Laurel Street.

E: Did you ever, by any chance, meet Albert Bacon Fall?

M: Yes.

E: Could you tell us about that?

M: I had one memorable meeting with him. We were playing football-- that is, just passing a football in front of his home.

E: That big mansion up there?

M: Yes. I was playing with Bob Holman and a boy named Bosco Pomeroy who later became quarterback of El Paso High School. One of us kicked the ball and it landed in his roses. He, the Senator, was just coming out of the house at that time. He grabbed the football and started to come down and tear us apart. I said to Holman,

"You tackle him and he'll drop the ball and I'll get the ball and run with it." That's how we got the ball back.

E: One of you actually tackled him?

M: Oh yes. I think it was Pomeroy that tackled him. He and Holman together.

E: Of course, again you were quite young at this time, but word has it in historical circles, historiographical circles, that Albert Bacon Fall maintained a very real economic interest in what was happening in northern Mexico. He was affiliated for instance with...

M: He had a very direct interest in the Green adventure...

E: Bill Green.

M: Around Cananea.

E: He was the attorney for that company, wasn't he?

M: That's right. I think his interest in Mexico had developed long before that time. It developed even when he was a young lawyer.

E: Do you think it was a sincere intellectual interest, perhaps fostered by living on the border?

M: In the first place, Albert Bacon Fall had an intellect. There's no question about that. I can't see how anyone can come to El Paso without developing an intellectual interest in Mexico and in Mexicans. It's unavoidable for any person who has a mind and becomes interested in local affairs.

E: Have you ever given thought to Fall's interest in Mexico throughout the rest of the revolutionary years? I realize you don't consider yourself an expert on the Revolution, but I would like to have the benefit of your reflections.

M: On the contrary, I'm not an expert but I know the Revolution quite well. I was a student of it right from the word go when I came here.

E: All the better. What are your views on Albert Bacon Fall's role, for instance, speaking out in the Senate against all the revolutionary activity on the border, etc.?

M: If you want me to be frank, I think that he was interested primarily in any field in which Fall could make money.

E: Did you ever know anything about his connection with Edward Lawrence Doheney?

M: No. I didn't know about that until the Teapot Dome scandal came along.

E: Of course, they had both been friends since the days that Fall was an attorney in Las Cruces. They had met back in the 1880s. So here you are about sixteen years old on the border and about this time war clouds are on the horizon in Europe. Could you tell us what you did after...did you go to high school in El Paso?

M: Yes. I went to high school both at the old high school and at the new high school. I started there in my sophomore year. Then I moved to the school on the hill when it opened. I said I had no interest in soldiering, but when the Pershing Punitive Expedition came along I got a job driving an FD truck at which I was not very good. The head of the organization was Colonel Lewis. Incidentally, that "Colonel" is not a title--that was his first name. I got the job because I knew his boys who were schoolmates of mine. About three weeks later they discovered how young I was, so I got kicked out of Mexico. I was running from Columbus to Colonia Dublán.

E: So you were a civilian working with the Pershing Expedition.

M: That's right. Most of the people were. Two of my classmates, incident-

ally, Cecil Boyd and Bill McClure, were chief scouts for the Expedition. So this was not unusual for an El Pasoan. Dick Lewis, who was younger than I was and was the son of Colonel Lewis, also had a job driving a truck. Boyd and McClure are not even mentioned in history but they had a far more important position with Pershing than did the Apache scouts, who get a great deal of publicity, because their fathers were ranchers in that territory and they knew the territory very well.

E: They knew it intimately.

M: That's right.

E: Tell me something, General, with regard to the feeling extant here on the border at that time with regard to the... Do you remember the Santa Isabel massacre?

M: Yes.

E: What was the feeling of El Pasoans, especially Anglo American El Pasoans, toward the Villistas after that massacre?

M: Oh, terrific resentment. It did not express itself in violence. I didn't see violence until the Columbus raid. Something happened in El Paso just about three or four days before that raid that completely misled us. There were about forty prisoners in the jail--the jailer was Frank Scottere, Sr. whose son was a classmate of mine--who were being deloused in the jail because typhus was epidemic in northern Mexico at that time. Nineteen of these individuals were Villista soldiers who had been caught trying to get up across the border. Somebody struck a match and these people all went up like torches. Then when the raid hit, we in El Paso thought that this was a reprisal for what had happened in the jail.

The night after the raid I went downtown to San Antonio Street and there were mobs of Anglos (as they are now called) going up and down San Antonio Street armed with clubs and pistols and so on. Every time that they would run into a Mexican they would beat him up and throw him into an alley. It was one of the most horrible scenes I've ever seen.

E: Did any of them ever get killed?

M: I don't recall that anybody was killed. They may have been. The police were making no effort to interfere.

E: Who was mayor of the city at this time?

M: I can't remember. I think Tom Lea was still the mayor but I'm not sure.

E: I believe that's correct. Tell me the origins of this [burning] that took place at the jail. Did you ever find out who did that? Was it ever known?

M: Who struck the match?

E: Yes.

M: No, I don't think so. I don't recall. If there is anything on it, you could find it out by going through old newspaper files. The incident has escaped El Paso memory. You won't find any reference to it in connection with the raid at all, which has surprised me because the event itself shocked this community. The double shock coming out of the raid had quite an impact on El Paso.

E: So, El Pasoans, in general, saw a cause and effect between that [burning] and the raid.

M: That's right.

E: That's very interesting. I had never heard about that or read about it.

M: I know I talked to the Westerners Society here a couple of months ago and this was news to them. They'd never heard of it.

E: General, tell me something with regard to the way your dad or other businessmen treated Mexican American laborers. I'm not asking leading questions. I would simply like to know about things like wages or working conditions for anybody that they hired-- Anglo Americans, too. How much did people get paid in these days? Do you recall?

M: I can recall very well because I also worked at the brick plant.

E: Did you work along side the Mexicans there?

M: Yes. I worked on the dry press and worked on the pug mill and finally set brick there although my hand was so small for setting brick that it was positive torture. As to our pay, it was 75¢ an hour.

E: 75¢ an hour?

M: Right.

E: Was it hard work?

M: It's the hardest work I ever did in my life.

E: Did you yourself...did you personally get along with these lower class Mexican Americans that you were working with?

M: Why certainly, why not? If I hadn't been able to get along with Mexicans of any category I couldn't have worked all over Mexico without feeling some trepidation about myself.

E: That's very enlightening. So here you are, you were working and I take it you were going to El Paso High School at this time?

M: No. This was before I went to high school. I came down here in early 1915 and didn't go to high school immediately. I worked from the early part of that year until September when school took up.

- E: You say you went to Ciudad Juárez a couple of times and you...
- M: More than a couple of times. I went over there as rapidly as I could get any money to buck the chuck-a-luck game with.
- E: Did you take part in the Keno games and all that?
- M: Yes, and I played roulette and so on. We we were warned in those days that if you won as much as fifty dollars you'd better get immediately on the street car and head for El Paso or you'd likely be mugged. Well, I never came within fifty five dollars of it, so I didn't have to worry about that.
- E: Throughout the 1930s and 40s Ciudad Juárez gained the reputation of being a "sin city," a capital of sin and vice. Here on the border in about 1915, how would you describe it with respect to that characterization?
- M: Well, these are both "sin cities." This was the toughest community I ever knew when I moved into it--terrifically so.
- E: It was tough?
- M: Yes, sir. In every way. In every way except the younger generation was extremely gentle--the people in the high school, they were the gentlest people I ever knew. The boys were much more mature than the boys that I had known in California. I think being on the border did that for them. Four or five juicy murders a day in El Paso shocked nobody. That was sort of par for the course.
- E: Is that right?
- M: That's right. It was still that way in the 1920s when I was an editor here.
- E: And this was in a town of about 50,000, 60,000 people?
- M: It was around 60,000. Around 60,000 and, of course, the red light district here was as large and much more wide open than the

Barbary Coast by a long ways--down on Utah Street and some of it was on Santa Fe Street. I also saw that in great detail. There were about five blocks of cribs on Utah Street and not well policed. As for medical attention--very rudimentary, no requirements to speak of. Gambling, while not wide open, was going on all the time just as it was in the 1920s, particularly at the Knickerbocker Club. Juárez at that time, I think, had more open gambling establishments than any city in North America.

E: How about the "sin" aspect of it? Was it any more sinful? Was there any more prostitution or vice per se than in El Paso, at that time?

M: No. I don't think there was more prostitution in Juárez. It wasn't as well organized as it was in El Paso. Juárez was an extremely dirty city, unbelievably dirty.

E: Tell us about it.

M: The streets were almost wholly unpaved. When a rain came along it was difficult to navigate over there, the mud was so deep. If it hadn't been that most of the soil was sandy you couldn't have moved on the road. El Paso...one of the strange things that startled me about El Paso when I first came here was, I had grown up with horses in Colorado and then again when I was with the Essanay Company in California and when I came here, I thought I was going to run into a horse town and I quickly discovered that there were no horsemen in El Paso outside of the few cattlemen that would come in here and a few society snobs who rode up in what is now the Kern Place district. But there wasn't a livery stable where you could rent a riding horse. This was rather strange.

E: That's interesting. Did you ever travel to any other part of Texas during these particular years?

M: You're talking about the teens?

E: Yes, sir.

M: Well, I traveled to Sierra Blanca and that's about it. I traveled to Deming.

E: The reason I ask is that there was a very colorful book that came out in 1916 called Texas the Marvelous by Nevin Winter. In this book Mr. Winter happened to mention that at that time he considered El Paso as "the most cosmopolitan city in Texas" in so far as there were many out-of-town visitors constantly coming through here on the railroads. Do you recall any of that?

M: Oh, I recall that very well. It was cosmopolitan in its nature-- the nature of the population. That was for the reason that the city was then the mecca for all people troubled with pulmonary ailments, with tuberculosis or emphysema or anything like that. So they had spread throughout the culture developing elements of this society. So it had, I think, a higher level of intellect in the population than you would find anywhere else. These people did wonders for the city. They did more to bring it up to modern times than anyone else because we had lawyers and doctors and so on who had already established big reputations in the East who came out here for their health. That was the most startling thing about it. The great contrast between the frontier pioneer nature of half of the society and the cultural interests of the people who were newcomers. El Pasoans, for instance, in those days had no accent at all--they didn't affect an accent. When I came back here in the 1930s and again in the 40s I was impressed by how many El Pasoans whom I had known were affecting a Southwestern drawl, including my rather famous nephew, Marshall Willis. They had

gotten this from television and from radio. It was a case of real life imitating art.

E: That's extremely perceptive. That's a very good comment. You talk about...you just happened to mention a well-known person. I'd like to ask you about a couple that lived here in El Paso, a few well-known persons. Did you ever know Zack Lamar Cobb?

M: Very well.

E: Tell me about Mr. Cobb. He was from Georgia, wasn't he?

M: Yes. He came from the Lamar Cobb family. The general was a famous Civil War figure. I also knew his brother [Howell] very well who was the Deputy Sheriff here in El Paso. I had very strong connections with him. My life pivoted on something that happened to him and something that he did for me. Zack Lamar was a very small man, very slight. He was more birdlike than anything else.

E: Birdlike?

M: Yes, I was going to say terrierlike, but that's not true. He was a kinetic, a very emotional conversationalist and so on and he possessed considerable intellect. He was a charming companion to be with.

E: They say...as a matter of fact, it's known that he played a major role in the Revolution, the Mexican Revolution, in this general area, because he was very anti-Villista toward the end of Villa's glory. This was about 1915. Do you recall anything about that?

M: No. I can't recall his being anti-Villista. He did, due to dint of circumstance, play major parts. But I wouldn't say it was because he had an anti-Villista attitude. It was because of the job that he filled at the time. You will find, for instance, that

Barbara Tuchman's book on the Zimmerman telegram goes into a part he played in connection, as I dimly recall now, with the doings and death of Pascual Orozco.

E: Yes.

M: You remember, who was shot as a supposed horse thief, down in Green River Canyon not far from the Love Ranch. I don't remember exactly how Cobb figured in that, but he is mentioned there in several places. He was not, let me say, an outstanding figure in El Paso circles. His job made him an important figure. But he was a man who got around a great deal and became a well-known figure in El Paso.

E: He is also mentioned in Clarence Clendenen's The United States and Pancho Villa which...have you read it, by the way?

M: No, I'd like to read it but I don't know that one.

E: What were Zack Lamar Cobb's economic interests in this town? He was a lawyer to start off with. Where were his investments? Do you recall?

M: I can't tell you.

E: Where was his house?

M: I don't remember where his house was and I don't remember where Howell Cobb, his brother, lived though I knew Howell much better. But I just don't recall details like that.

E: All right.

M: I have enough trouble remembering where I lived.

E: Let me say that your memory on the border...about the border at this time is superb. I had no idea you knew as much as you do about these events. I'd like to ask you, do you recall anything else about Mr. Cobb or his family, anything at all? Dimly, any events or...

M: No, nothing that I recall well that would be important.

E: Fair enough. Did you ever know Zack White?

M: Oh yes.

E: Tell me about Mr. White.

M: Well, the story was when I was a youngster here that Zack White owned half of the town and Harvey owned the rest of it. It was somewhat of an exaggeration, but Zack White was a very, very strong person in every respect. He knew what he wanted and he knew how to get it. He was capable of taking on great responsibilities and he never hesitated about doing so. He had, I guess, as much to do with the advance of this city as any person that you could name from that period.

E: So you would say that definitely he was one of the most prominent men in El Paso at that time?

M: No question about it.

E: Who, in your recollection, were the other prominent men in El Paso, say, in 1915, 1916?

M: Well, Tom Lea was certainly so. As far as Army figures were concerned, Micky Michaelis who commanded F company of the 16th Infantry was better known than John Pershing who commanded at Ft. Bliss because Michaelis was the first Army officer to come here and not only mix with the civilian community but play a leading role in the civilian community. He is hence a great figure from that time. I can't overlook Slater, H. D. Slater, because not only did I work with him, but from any point of view I would say that H. D. Slater is one of the preeminent figures in El Paso history; he came here as a young intellect. He had been a sub-editor on the Literary Digest. This

town was still a very rough frontier city...half civilized at the time he started the El Paso Herald. He was a reform nut. He fought the good fight for reform and made himself very unpopular.

E: A Southwestern muckraker. Was he a muckraker in the old...?

M: Not so much that. He was, in the first place, a very good newspaperman in those years. His judgment about what a paper should be I would say was ahead of anything that you'll find in El Paso today. He believed in good writing. He believed in absolute integrity on the part of his staff. If a man didn't have it, he was shortly let out. He was in many ways a formidable character. It was almost impossible for anyone to get close to him. He lived a quite secluded life. I later got to know him to the point where, when famous people would come to this town, he would take me, for instance, to supper with Pavlova because she was an old friend of his and that kind of thing. I don't know why he favored me. A good many of the famous visitors to El Paso I got to meet through him. Going back to 1915, I would describe him as one of the preeminent figures here. I would say that Judge W. D. Howe was one of the outstanding figures at that time.

E: Did you ever know Mr. Sweeney?

M: Oh yes. I knew Sweeney quite well.

E: Tell me about Mr. Sweeney.

M: Well, he was a guy... He was a rather sardonic figure, and yet he had a great sense of humor--a politician from his toes right up to his crown, and somewhat ruthless. I could get along with him, but he was a little hard to take. Unpleasant is the word for him. You probably have run into the name of Joe Dunn.

E: Yes, yes I have.

M: Well, I knew Joe Dunn very well. He had an office in the El Paso Electric Building and he was supposed to be the political boss of South El Paso. He was accused of herding Mexican voters and paying them a dollar a vote and so on. Without a doubt Joe had no more scruples than Mayor Curly in Boston. He was one of the most jovial men I ever met. I liked him very much.

E: Was he Irish?

M: From the ground up. Of course, he was not a large man. He was short, roly-poly and rather redheaded. He had a terrific sense of humor. You could oppose him outright and he didn't treat you as an enemy, whereas Sweeney did. If you were on the other side you were pretty hard for Sweeney to take.

E: That's interesting. So he was more or less a political boss in South El Paso?

M: Yes--I think the only figure that was so identified in El Paso's history.

E: Did you ever know Frank and Ike Alderete, Alderete?

M: Oh, very well. Frank "Keeko" Alderete was a teammate of mine in baseball. A very, very stocky guy and a very hard hitting outfielder. Yes, I knew them quite well. What are the questions?

E: Well, of course, Mr. Alderete--both of them as a matter of fact--their names figured prominently in El Paso newspaper articles with regard to gun running. In addition to that, in the Albert Bacon Fall collection which has been micro-filmed, there are several documents in which intelligence is brought to Senator Fall's attention in which reference is made to this gun running activity by the Alderetes.

What do you think? Do you think...?

M: I wouldn't doubt it.

E: You wouldn't doubt it?

M: I wouldn't doubt it. I couldn't prove it but gun running was rather common along the border then. Anything like that is now regarded as a major crime. It wasn't thought of in those days in that way. [A gun runner was regarded as an adventurer, not a criminal.] It's very difficult to recreate the climate in El Paso at that time.

E: Well, you're doing a good job of it.

M: I remember a center of revolutionary planning and plotting was the Fisher Hotel. It's still in existence across from the Del Norte. That was owned by the Viljoen brothers. Viljoen had been one of the most prominent Generals and bushwackers in the Boer War. The people would meet there. The funny part of it was that they did not court the privacy that's common in such affairs today. Reporters would drift in and out of the meetings.

E: These revolutionary planning sessions? You're kidding.

M: No, that's the way it was. I didn't realize how naïve it was at the time.

E: Of course this was General Benjamín Viljoen who was with Madero in 1911 when Juárez was first taken.

M: Well, I wasn't even aware of that.

E: Yes, he was. Of course, a grandson or a nephew of Garibaldi was also there. He was part of the Foreign Legion in that revolution.

M: Well, I remember about the Garibaldi grandson but they seemed to spread around.

E: I understand what you mean. Let me ask you this...

M: I just want to insert one further point and that is in connection with

the support of revolutionary activities in Mexico in that time.

Haymon Krupp was certainly one of the important figures in El Paso.

E: He was a businessman here.

M: That's right. He had a very large business right where the present Civic Center is.

E: Was it a clothing business? Is that right?

M: It was a clothing business and other things also. He was a wholesaler. But in providing uniforms to the Villistas and that kind of thing he was not only very active but also very successful. That is, he made a great deal of money out of it.

E: How about the elder Mr. Schwartz?

M: I don't think so, no. No, I don't think so. I knew Adolph Schwartz and Maurice and the boys very, very well. I knew them about as well as I knew any family in El Paso. I don't know any family that had more respect than they did. They were certainly a greatly stabilizing influence in this community. Incidentally, I'm having lunch with one of the nephews tomorrow, Irving Schwartz. They were...Maurice especially was, I would say, the outstanding sportsman in El Paso. He would do more to help people by way of financial support who were interested in sporting activity and helping with kids and that kind of thing.

E: General, with regard to... You mentioned the Alderetes, or I did and you expounded on them. We talked a little bit about the fact that they may have engaged in gun running and the fact that that was perhaps endemic along the border, a lot of people did it. Can you recall ever thinking about the fact that the principles of the Mexican Revolution...that the principles may have had an effect on the thinking of the Mexican Americans in El Paso? Did you ever give that any thought?

M: You have to spell that out.

E: All right, sir. I realize I'm being a little vague. Well, let's say, here you have a border community. A very unique border community. You have a unique border community which is faced all of a sudden with the first--well, at least Ciudad Juárez is--is faced with the first social revolution of the twentieth century...what turns out to be the first social revolution.

M: Right.

E: There are very great historical forces at work here, whether or not people knew it at that time.

M: I don't think the principals knew it for the most part.

E: That's an interesting comment.

M: They didn't really understand what they were driving at--I mean outside of land division. Their concepts hardly went beyond that.

E: That's interesting. That's very interesting. Now, do you think that there was any support among the Mexicans on this side of the border or the Mexican Americans even? Say, we're not just talking about the emigrés, say, the Mexican Americans--do you think they had any support for the Revolution either moral or did they actively help it? Do you recall ever hearing anything about that?

M: I was not here at the time of the Madero Revolution, when it started. By the time that I got here in 1915 the turbulence in Mexico was so great that I felt that most El Pasoans had just this view of it: "If we could just get rid of this we'd be so much happier." Initially, from what was told me, there is no question but what the sympathy of the El Paso public was with the Madero Revolution. But I may go on to say that I have observed over the course of a lifetime that this

is almost inevitably the case in a free society. For example, we talked about the De la Huerta Revolution. At the time that that came along there was a great sentiment in favor of it here. This was especially true on the part of the press of the United States. The press which is unthinking on such matters is usually in favor of any such movement that comes along.

E: For its press value.

M: That's right. I **thought** that the attitude was pretty blind--that what Mexico needed was stabilization and not a new revolution. Certainly the fact of the revolution being right next door had an impact on El Paso that was different from that on any city in the United States because we were the only large border city. We were the only people that were directly involved in revolutionary affairs. This makes a hell of a difference.

E: Thank you, General. This is the end of the first interview with General Marshall.

[2nd interview session, July 5, 1975]

E: General Marshall, you were mentioning some families, some prominent families that you had known in El Paso back in the teens. Could you tell me something about those families?

M: To those I numbered the other day I would add the Richard Burgess family and the Orndorff family and the Magoffin family because there were still a lot of Magoffins here at that time. Three of them were schoolmates of mine. I think these were among the substantial families that you would refer to as pillars of the community. They had a great social position and prominence, and wealth and also they were minglers. They did not hold themselves apart. I wanted to add that to the list of the other day. I also failed to mention one of my friends that early was Victor Ochoa. I mention him for the reason that a good deal of the insight I got on revolutionary Mexico I got from him in person. He was very directly connected and interested in revolutionary affairs. I met Orozco through him very briefly. And I would say, incidentally, that the great overlooked man as far as story material is concerned out on the Revolution is Orozco and not Villa. Much has been written about Villa, yet Orozco's career from beginning to end is more interesting and more dramatic and nothing has been done on it. There is nothing in the El Paso library and practically nothing in the Congressional Library. I don't believe there is a figure in history that turned coat as often as he did. His activities directly concerned not only Mexico but the United States in many respects. So I would suggest that if you ever want to embark on studying Orozco that's worth doing. I have quite a bit of material on him in my files. He's an unbelievable character.

E: I'm sure. General, you say you actually met Orozco?

M: Yes.

E: Could you tell us about that meeting?

M: I met him at the Elite Café.

E: Which was located...

M: In Central El Paso. I think the Grant store is there now. That was a meeting place for El Pasoans and revolutionaries. It was a delightful center. Incidentally, the Eskimo pie came out of that shop. They had what was called a baseball there--frozen ice cream with a chocolate coating, a round sphere. The man who developed the Eskimo pie stole his idea from this confection here in El Paso. Frank Pickere1 who ran the Elite lost out in that respect but I believe he later made a fortune in oil.

E: It seems that Villa and Orozco used to frequent ice cream parlors quite a bit.

M: Oh yes. I have a picture of Orozco at the Elite. I think Villa is in the same picture. I don't remember where I got the picture though.

E: Could you tell us more about the meeting between yourself and Mr. Orozco?

M: Well, it was carried on in Spanish. Orozco, you know...there was a story around here that he was the descendent of an Irishman and that his name was really Roscoe. He had reddish hair. He was a very taciturn man. We were talking mainly about his concepts of the Revolution and what his responsibilities were. I cannot recall the conversation beyond that. I was not a reporter in those days and I have no recollection of conversations at a time when I was not interested as a news gatherer.*

E: That's understandable. This must have been in early 1915.

M: It was. I think it was in the summer of 1915.

E: The summer of 1915.

[*My own recollection of the incident is vague. I was reminded of the meeting by Lewis B. Rutherford in 1966.]

M: I don't remember how I happened to meet Victor Ochoa. It was quite by accident.

E: Of course, Orozco was killed about the first part of September of 1915. Isn't that right?

M: I think it was a little later than that. I'm not sure.

E: You mentioned Victor Ochoa. Was Mr. Ochoa from El Paso?

M: He was from El Paso. I think it's his family that Ochoa Street is named after here. He was an old-timer here. He was about, I would say, in his early 60s at that time, but still a very active mind and a very congenial companion.

E: Do you know if they were related to the famous Ochoas from Ciudad Juárez? This would be the Inocente Ochoa family.

M: No, I don't know.

E: General, I'd like to mention some other names for you. If you don't recall them you can be very curt with me and just say no. Lee Pollard.

M: The name clicks but nothing else does.

E: J. E. Tolsend.

M: No.

E: W. J. Millner.

M: No.

E: N. B. Braily.

M: Never heard the name before.

E: A. W. Spalding.

M: No.

E: William Lowe.

M: No.

E: Very well, sir. For everyone's information, these were prominent socialists in the El Paso area during that time.

- M: I didn't know we had any prominent socialists here, [except Bill Moran.]
- E: It may have been a contradiction in terms there. Were you ever aware of any socialist or IWW activity in the El Paso area during your early years on the border?
- M: IWW activity, absolutely not. I knew nothing about that until the war came on and the trouble rose in Bisbee. The big "jefe" of the...IWW Haywood...
- E: Big Bill Haywood.
- M: He was there at the time that the IWW was run out of Bisbee and put into what amounted to a concentration camp by the sheriff.
- E: Did you ever hear the name Mary Harris, "Mother Jones"?
- M: No.
- E: Do you know if William Haywood ever made a trip to El Paso?
- M: I don't recall that he did.
- E: Do you recall any strikes in the El Paso area? Perhaps at the Smelter?
- M: No, I led one at the brick company.
- E: You led a strike at the brick company?
- M: Yes, I did in a sense. There was a character by the name of Teddy McColt who was a union figure here. We later found out that he was an escapee, I think, from Idaho Penitentiary. He was a union organizer and I thought that the people from the brick company were underpaid. The odd part of this was that the brick company was owned by the International Union of Bricklayers--Brick, Tile and Terra-cotta Workers, I think that was the title. The plant was not organized. I joined McColt in organizing and striking against my own father. And after we organized and had our little strike, he said, "What are you going to do about it? We can't pay any more money and stay in the black, so that's the situation." We used to go to...one of the techniques

of stikers in those days was to go downtown at the evening dinner hour and spread around and take up the seats, all the seats in the cafés and order just a cup of coffee and sit there for an hour. There wasn't anything that the proprietors could do about it. We were not breaking the law. We were trying to use their pressure in order to get public sympathy for the strike. Well, that strike completely fizzled out. That was my only experience in striking.

E: Do you recall any mention or any propaganda relating to socialist activity in this area?

M: None at all. The reason that I think I would have been impressed with it was because my father came to the United States as a young socialist, an English socialist. He followed socialism very closely. But he grew completely disenchanted with it and became a conservative.

E: Do you recall any Blacks or Orientals that may have lived in this area during the teens?

M: No, there were a very few Blacks in the community. Most of them worked as shoeshine boys in the barber shops. But they were such a minuscule group that they had no effect on the community whatsoever.

E: How about Orientals?

M: Very few of them.

E: Do you recall what jobs those few may have held?

M: Laundries and so on, menial work.

E: General Marshall, do you recall ever hearing anything relating to the use of drugs in El Paso during the teens?

M: During the teens, no. During the 20s, yes--very much so.

E: During the teens did you ever hear about...

M: It could have been going on and I would have known nothing about it. Because oddly enough the...despite the ruggedness, the toughness, and the meanness of the community in those days, the people that I associated with were not drinkers, not drug users. There was nothing of that kind in the high school. I knew only two boys that drank beer, for instance. The males were extremely upright individuals--far more so than those that I'd known in California.

E: But you heard nothing through rumor at all?

M: No. And I ran with really the toughest gang in the community, the Myrtle Avenue gang.

E: Was that what they were called, the "Myrtle Avenue gang"?

M: The Myrtle Avenue gang--in fact, several of them later went to the penitentiary. We had the winningest ball club in El Paso. We were never defeated. But I recall very strongly that when we wanted to celebrate after a game we drank soda pop. We didn't think of drinking beer.

E: Did you ever, during the teens, meet any underworld figures?

M: What do you mean by underworld?

E: Well, I'll leave it open to your interpretation.

M: Well, it would be pretty difficult to classify anybody as "underworld" in El Paso at that time.

E: Did you ever meet anyone that in any way was associated with illegal activity in the area?

M: Gee, that's a hard question to answer.

E: All right.

M: I met people that I knew were in the gun running business. But I didn't get the goods on them, so I would not speak of that.

E: Do you recall any rumors at all about contraband or smuggling? Do you recall ever having read anything about it?

M: No.

E: General Marshall, in our last interview you made the observation that you used to go to Ciudad Juárez quite often. Could you tell me, what procedure did one go through at the bridge to visit and return from Ciudad Juárez?

M: You had no difficulty at all.

E: You'd just walk over?

M: We were just admitted on personal recognizance, that's all.

E: Did you just walk over? When you came back did you have to state your citizenship?

M: Walk... No... Yes, you had to state your citizenship. I've never seen any exception to that along this border. One of the strange experiences I recall is going over there on a motorcycle with a high school friend of mine named Crook Evans. He was later killed in an aircrash just beyond UTEP. We went to the Juárez racetrack. They had some good horses running in those days, in the revolutionary period-- Iron Mask and Old Rosebud that won the Kentucky Derby and so on. We got out to the track and we met a Villista captain there. I forget the two horses, but he wanted to bet ten dollars on the horse he was backing against ten dollars that we were betting, which was all the money we had. We put the money on a fence post. The race was run and we won. He put his hand on the ten dollars and stuffed it into his pocket. Whereupon Evans hauled off and socked him and knocked him out. We got on the motorcycle and started for the Santa Fe bridge. When we got there they had sent a message through to the bridge and there

were two mozos standing up there with a rope to stop us. Crook just decided that he was going on and hit that rope to see what happened. Fortunately the rope didn't throw us; it dragged the two mozos along the bridge. I guess they got splinters in their asses. We kept on going and by the time we reached the American side the motorcycle was completely off balance. At that time we did take a ditching ourselves and I picked up some splinters.

E: You had some extraordinary times here in El Paso, didn't you?

M: Well, I remember that rather vividly because I was scared.

E: General Marshall, do you recall any Mexican officials ever being stationed on the American side of the bridge?

M: No, I don't.

E: Do you recall which bridge had the railroad going over it?

M: The railroad?

E: Yes, sir.

M: I can't tell you. The streetcar went over the Stanton Street bridge and came back by the Santa Fe bridge. I think I've got those right.

E: Did you ever meet or hear of Juan Medina, of Ciudad Juárez?

M: The name rings a bell, nothing else. I don't know whether I ever met him.

E: The other day during our interview you mentioned one Emil Holmdahl. Is that right?

M: Emil Holmdahl, yes.

E: Emil Holmdahl, could you tell me more about him?

M: Yes, he was a very handsome individual. He was said to be Villa's agent in negotiations mainly with the business community though, as I said, **Oscar** Caballero was also active in that sphere. Holmdahl, I would say, was a man of about 45 at that time with silver-gray hair.

He was a very closed mouthed individual. He always wore a gray semi-uniform. He looked like a military figure with some kind of a Western hat. He was a very quiet man. He would talk if you pressed him. I don't mean he was uncongenial but he was just a kind of a reserved type, whereas Oscar Caballero was just the other way around--he was a very forthgiving, jovial individual [and a great joker.]

E: "Holmdahl" sounds German. Is that correct?

M: I think it is, but I can't swear as to his ancestry.

E: Was he a friend of the Orndorffs?

M: Yes.

E: What other El Paso families of German descent or supposed German descent do you recall?

M: I draw a blank there.

E: Tell me something more about Mr. Caballero. Do you know where he was from originally?

M: No, I don't.

E: Do you recall what his particular job with the Villistas was?

M: Purchasing agent.

E: Purchasing agent, O.K. Did you ever know Lázaro de la Garza?

M: No, I don't even recall the name.

E: General, you said that you used to sing here in El Paso during your youth. What kinds of social functions would you sing at? Do you recall?

M: I sang, at that time, in the first Baptist choir. I've been trained as a singer and I still had a pretty good voice at that time. I sang in light operettas at the high school and so on. I didn't do much public singing outside of the church choir and the high school activities. I sang with a high school quartet that made many public appearances in 1917.

E: Did you ever meet or hear of Juan S. Hart?

M: Oh, yes. I heard of him a great deal, but I never met him.

E: You never met him?

M: No.

E: Although he had great fame as a baseball player. Do you recall that?

M: That was before my time.

E: Before your time?

M: Um-hum.

E: Did you ever visit Hart's Mill?

M: Yes.

E: What kinds of activities would go on out there?

M: I can't remember.

E: You can't remember?

M: No.

E: I'd like to ask you something about the Villa raid. By the way, have you ever read Frank Thompkin's Chasing Villa?

M: I think I have, yes.

E: Do you recall whether or not you thought it was accurate?

M: I thought it was inaccurate.

E: You thought it was inaccurate?

M: I thought the book Viva Villa was highly inaccurate, also.

E: How about Colonel Thompkin's book, do you recall specifically what you thought...

M: No, I don't. I think that Villa has been as greatly romanticized as probably any character in the history of North America. I know the story that was around El Paso in those days was that his original crime was stealing bottles of milk in his hometown. That was when he first

ran afoul of the law. I can't vouch for the truth of that but...

E: That was the story going around?

M: That was the story, yes--that his first offense was stealing milk after it had been delivered.

E: The night after the Columbus raid, you said the other day that you had witnessed the beatings of Mexicans on San Antonio Street?

M: Right.

E: Do you recall that anyone that you knew was involved in this? Did you know some of the people that took part in the beatings?

M: No, no.

E: Could you tell us what was your immediate reaction when you saw this?

M: Shock.

E: You were shocked?

M: Yes, I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe it. I'd never run into that kind of brutal scene before and I've seen very few things since. I've seen a few in war where...for instance, I saw one in World War II during our move into Paris for the liberation of Paris, where French soldiers formed a gauntlet and had the German prisoners that we had just taken in an action come down there and they were beating them with rifles and bayonets and canteens and every kind of thing. Frankly, I was afraid to move in because I figured they'd turn on me also.

E: Do you recall the reactions of these Mexicans that would be set upon?

M: There wasn't any reaction. They didn't have a chance because being outnumbered four or five or six to one, all they could do was take it. I didn't see anybody fight back.

E: Was there ever any speculation in El Paso with regard to the Columbus raid having been retribution for the [burning] that you told me about the other day?

M: Well, that's what we thought it was! That's why we thought it happened.

That was the story that went around El Paso.

E: Was it the general feeling? Did Anglos and Mexicans alike feel that?

M: I can't answer that.

E: You can't answer that.

M: I think it was a completely mistaken assumption. I've heard many theories about the raid since that time. In fact, I heard one only a couple of weeks ago--about Villa having had a large sum of money in a bank in Columbus. He couldn't get hold of it and that was why he raided. Whether there is any truth in that I don't know, but I just mention that as an example of how these rumors still go around in modern times.

E: General Marshall, during this period in the Revolution--the Mexican Revolution on the border--there were numerous Americans and foreigners who took part in the revolutionary fighting as soldiers of fortune. Do you recall ever having met any of these?

M: Sam Dreben. Sam Dreben I first met right after I came to El Paso and I don't recall the circumstances very well. But then in the post war period he became a pal of mine and we spent a great deal of time together. Colonel Shepard Philpot was the Provost Marshall of El Paso at that time and he was also a soldier of fortune. He had been in the Boxer Rebellion among other operations. I think Sam was in the Boxer Rebellion. We used to go to Juárez almost daily and have lunch together.

E: The three of you?

M: The three of us. We enjoyed one another's company very much. Each one would try to out-lie the other. Sam was probably as prominent a soldier

of fortune as the United States has ever produced. He was immortalized... well, that's probably the wrong word, by Damon Runyon [who] wrote him up--a story called the "Fighting Jew"; it ran in Cosmopolitan Magazine. He was, I guess, in his early forties when I first met him. He was small--well, not small, he was a little taller than I am, I'd say an inch and a half taller than I am--squat and quite swarthy; anything but beautiful looking; good sense of humor and he was a great braggart. Oh, he loved to boast about his achievements. He was quite a liar. But he was also an extremely courageous man. He became one of the most decorated soldiers in the American Army in World War II. He was a well-known character around town--quite popular despite his braggadocio. He was regarded as a local figure of some renown. His fame continued to spread in the years that followed.

E: Did you say he fought in World War II?

M: Oh, yes. He was with an infantry regiment in the 36th Division. I think it was the 141st.

E: That was the group composed of Texas National Guardsmen...

M: That's correct. He was with the battalion that went from El Paso. I think that he was first sergeant of one of the companies. He was in Richard Burgess' company, as I recall.

E: He must have been of a rather advanced age when he went to the Second World War.

M: Well, hell, a man being in his late forties--that's not a greatly advanced age.

E: I thought you said that he was in his late forties before World War I. I'm sorry.

M: No, I was talking about his age right after World War I. I would say he was around 30 or 40 when I first met him.

E: Is it true that he was born in [Poltava] Russia?

M: I think that's true, but I'm not sure of the exact place. I'm quite sure he was Russian. His English was not very good.

E: That's [P-o-l-t-a-v-a.]

M: Where did you get that?

E: That's some information I picked up. I can't recall where. Did you know Tracy Richardson?

M: No, never met him. But I know that they palled together.

E: Did you ever ask Dreben about his activities during the Orozco rebellion?

M: Oh, we discussed them at great length. But once again, it's like asking me what we talked about in World War II. I can't remember what our conversations were. All he described was in very vivid detail and always gave himself a big part.

E: What was his particular prowess in war? What was his ability? Why was he sought out as a soldier of fortune?

M: He was an extraordinarily good machine gunner for one thing.

E: Did you know any other soldiers of fortune during this time?

M: That's all I recall. I'd say Holmdahl was a soldier of fortune, but I don't think he was from here.

E: Did he have an accent of any kind?

M: No, no noticeable accent.

E: General, I'd like to ask you, do you know if the Cobb family has any descendents still living in El Paso?

M: I haven't heard. I haven't heard. I'm sure that Howell Cobb had children. Now whether they're still in El Paso, I don't know.

E: Did you ever know the Blumenthal family?

M: Very, very well.

E: Could you tell us about that family, what you recall about them?

M: Well, they were in the clothing business here. I would say they were the most prominent haberdashers in El Paso. I met the older people. I do not remember them very well, but Mike Blumenthal was a year ahead of me in high school. I saw Mike through the years that followed. Mike became the youngest Captain in World War I. I was the youngest lieutenant and he was the youngest Captain.

E: And both from El Paso?

M: Yes, and Dick Lewis, whom I mentioned the other day, became the youngest First Sergeant. He was a First Sergeant at the age of seventeen.

E: Do you recall if the Blumentahls ever had any business transactions with any of the Mexican revolutionary elements?

M: I think so, but I'm certainly no authority on that.

E: General, did you ever meet General Pershing...

M: Oh yes, indeed. I met him the first time at the mess tent of F Company of the 16th Infantry at Camp Cotton.

E: In what year, sir?

M: 1915. He came there just to inspect Camp Cotton. This was at noon time and he was inspecting the mess. I was introduced to him by the First Sergeant--a guy by the name of Sholtz, Fritz Sholtz, I think it was. I spoke to him very briefly. Following the death of his wife he used to go out with Mrs. Lanier, whose first name I don't very well remember. She had been my Sunday School teacher for a while. I met him again at her house. I think it was on Montana.

E: Did the General ever remarry?

M: Never remarried.

E: You mentioned the death of his wife. For the information of the listeners, his wife and one or two of his children were burned to death...

M: I think it was three.

E: Three of his children.

M: Three daughters.

E: There was one boy left who came out here afterwards.

M: Yes, Warren.

E: Burned to death at the Presidio in California. Isn't that true?

M: That's correct.

E: Do you recall, did you ever hear anything about the effect this may have had on him? Did he go into any deep depression after this?

M: Yes, I did hear this. I got it from the war correspondents. Incidentally, in connection with his [family's] death, I was in the El Paso Herald office at the time it happened. Norman Walker was working in the Herald. I mentioned him the other day. He was a famous figure here as a war correspondent. Later he was vice-president of McMath Printing Company. He was a graduate of Indiana University. News came in of additional information on the burning of the Presidio and what had happened to the Pershing family. It told about the daughters being killed as well as the wife. Walker called up Fort Bliss for the General's aide. He thought that they would want to get the additional information. He asked for the General's aide and a voice came on the line. He said, "We have additional information on the destruction of the Pershing household, the deaths in the family." The voice at the other end said, "Tell me about it." So he went into great detail telling the story and he didn't realize he was talking to

Pershing. Pershing had had no prior notice of it. When he got through talking he said, "And that's all. What is your name?" He [Walker] wanted to know what aide he had passed it on to. He said, "This is General Pershing." Pershing said, "What is your name?" He said, "Norman Walker." He said, "Well, thank you very much, Mr. Walker, for your courtesy." That was the end of the conversation. But Walker and others told me that during the Punitive Expedition that Pershing would leave his tent at night and go out in the desert by himself. They had mariachis moving along with the Army and he asked them to come along. He would ask them to play "La Paloma" because that was his wife's favorite song. He said that Pershing would sit there for a long time just listening to the music over and over. That was the only sign they saw of his carrying this weight on his shoulders.

E: General, that's an extraordinary story with regard to Pershing.

M: Incidentally, I never liked him. I didn't like his method of command. I could never discover anything that Pershing had contributed to military thought. I don't think his brain was capable of it. He was not really an oppressive commander. He was not as hard as a number of the commanders we had in World War I, but he was brusque. He had too much reserve, really, as a General. I saw examples in World War I that he did have a tremendous dignity and an understanding of troops, but this just came accidentally. Part of my interest in writing my World War I history was to get his reputation in focus because he was credited with doing a lot of things he did not achieve at all. I had that as an object--of putting him in perspective and also putting in perspective Ludendorff's reputation because Ludendorff had come out of World War I with the greatest

of all reputations as a strategist and grand tactician. I thought he was another washout and a damn fool and I wanted to get that part of it straight. These are two of the few themes that run through the book.

E: What did General Pershing's men think of him here on the border?

M: He was by no means a popular figure. As I say, he could not get close to troops. He was like Joe Stillwell in this respect. He was about five levels removed from the enlisted men. He didn't begin to understand the soldier very well. He was so overly self-contained to the point where he couldn't talk to troops easily. He had nothing to say to them. He didn't get over to the troops.

E: Was he very conscious of his authority?

M: Oh yes, I would say so. The idea that he did not seek high command for himself--that it was bestowed on him (this command of the AF)--is absolutely untrue. After the expedition got out of Mexico I met with George Patullo and Norman Walker and several other correspondents who had attended a conference in Columbus just as they got over the border. I think that was in February, wasn't it?

E: Yes, sir. 1917.

M: Right. He drew them together and he said, "Gentlemen, I'm certain that we are going to war and I'm certain that we're going to send an expedition to France. I want to command that expeditionary Force and each one of you knows something that you can do to help me." Patullo spoke up and said, "I'll see about writing an article for the Saturday Evening Post," and so forth and so on. The point is he went out and deliberately sought the job. He already had enough kudos and huevos that he got it. But he was a man that was truly ambitious for power.

E: Either at that time or later on, did you ever hear about any connections he may have had in Washington that might have facilitated this appointment?

M: Good heavens, his marriage was sufficient for that. His being jumped from a Captain to Brigadier General wasn't just an accident--it was the Senator's daughter who worked this out very well. He was quite aware of where the power roots were and how to get at them.

E: You mentioned the lack of relationship between Pershing and his enlisted men. The other day you mentioned, also, that you knew some rather well-known officers here on the border in the teens. Could you tell me what his relation ~~was with his officers?~~

M: No, I can't. If I implied that, I'll have to make a retraction because outside of the commander of the 16th Infantry, Wooden Willy Allaire I didn't know any high ranking officers. When I met Pershing he was alone with one aide. I think Captain Collins was with him. I'm not sure about that. I had no association with officers. There was quite an association in our home with NCOs. That came from my parents. They were church going people. A good many of the NCOs would come to church and my family would invite them to the home. We would have every Sunday and sometimes over a weekend five or six Sergeants at the place. I can recall their names, but I didn't pay any attention to them because I was not particularly interested in military affairs at that time. As in connection with the 16th Infantry association... the mere fact that I was mingling with them, I guess, had some effect in conditioning me.

E: When you met General Pershing was he civil to you?

M: Well, as civil as Pershing's personality permitted--that's in a

very limited way. He may have said a few words. I don't even recall the conversation.

E: General, once again getting back to your trips to Ciudad Juárez in these days: You must have...you had to have traveled through the South side of El Paso, the area known as "Little Chihuahua," I believe. What do you remember about conditions there? Anything in particular or generally speaking--could you tell us something?

M: I remember it very well only because I used to go to the Alcazar Theater which was the cheapest movie in town. This was in South El Paso. It was about four blocks below San Antonio Street on...what's the street that runs past the Del Norte? At any rate, it was otherwise wholly a Mexican audience from that area. As I said the other day, the red light district was the most prominent feature of that part of El Paso. I'll say this: I was never afraid of traveling in that area at night. I did it without any thought of fear. One was quite safe.

E: Was this a prevalent feeling? Did most of the young men your age feel this way?

M: I can't tell you.

E: All right.

M: Usually when I went to the Alcazar I'd go alone or with my dad. My dad really enjoyed association with Mexican people. It was more interesting than the movies uptown because the movies ~~were~~ attended by little purveyors that would go up and down the aisles at intermissions calling "cacahuates," "chocolates," "chicles," so forth and so on. So there was some atmosphere and ~~flavor~~ in those movies, whereas there was none in the Grecian and the Wigwam and so on. I

worked as an usher for a while in the Wigwam. That was a rather interesting experience because just down the alley from the Wigwam was the Lyric Burlesque, a block away. But you came out of the back door of the Wigwam and 100 feet away you'd see the gals from the Burlesque laying the soldiers there in the alley.

E: Very interesting.

M: I found it very interesting in those days.

E: I'm sure. Would it be safe to say that the population south of San Antonio Street was almost exclusively Mexican?

M: Oh yes, almost, almost. The street below San Antonio Street was taken up more by Anglo-owned stores than by Mexican-owned stores. That would be the one exception to it. Some of those proprietors lived in their own buildings, but south of that nothing except Mexicans.

E: Did you ever know any Jews that lived in South El Paso?

M: I don't recall any. Incidentally, I'd remark that the Jewish community here has always, in my recollection, been pretty much at one with the rest of the community--more so than almost any city I know in the United States. I've had a great deal of connection and experience with the Jewish community over the United States because of my interest in Israel and El Paso is an exception in that respect. I never had the experience of being in a community where there was anti-semitism, marked anti-semitism. My father had many Jewish friends and we were accustomed to having them in the home, so I grew up unaware of anti-semitism. A few years ago NBC did an hour show or half hour show on my life and they were trying to find out why I was so sympathetic toward Israel, prying for examples of my having

witnessed anti-semitism as a child. I said, "I can't add anything, it just wasn't that way." My experience in El Paso sort of capped experiences elsewhere around the United States. I never had lived in a community where there was a discernible anti-Jewish sentiment.

E: With regard to a lack of anti-semitism here in El Paso, was this the true feeling...do you think, to the extent that you could know, on the part of the Mexican populace--that they were not anti-semitic?

M: I never saw any signs of it.

E: You never saw any signs of it. Would you attribute...it has struck me throughout this interview that you considered relations between the various ethnic groups in El Paso to be on the whole pretty good while you lived here in the teens.

M: In the teens, no, I didn't think that they were between the people of South El Paso or south of San Antonio Street and the rest of the community. I thought there was very widespread prejudice against Mexicans--not in the high school, but among the real "Tejanos" in this area.

E: Well, that's interesting. Now, what kind of manifestations would that prejudice take between the "Tejanos" and the "Mexicanos"?

M: Well, I gave you the example of this mass beating that I saw. Outside of that, I have no impression except the careless way in which... the snide way in which many of the "Tejanos" I knew here would speak of Mexicans.

E: The other day you were very enlightening on a particular figure who seems to have played a prominent role in El Paso circles during the teens. That was H. D. Slater. What other newspapers in town do you

recall other than Mr. Slater's Herald? What do you recall about the people that ran them at that time?

M: I recall the City of Mexico. No, that wasn't the name of it. There was a Mexican paper here edited by...let's see what was his name... Carlos Cervantes G. Then there was the Times. Incidentally, the Times at that time was edited by Jim Black. Black, I think, was probably the most articulate and the best writing editor that this city had ever known--an extraordinary person in every respect. He was a Spanish-American War veteran. When I became a reporter I got more advice from the editor of the Times than I got from anyone around me, because we were friends. He would keep on telling me, "Here's a mistake you're making, don't repeat that mistake." So I knew him in a very unusual way considering that we were on rival newspapers. He would be among all the writing people in this community probably the most distinguished figure.

E: How long was Mr. Black the editor of the El Paso Morning Times?

M: Up till the time that we bought the paper which, I think, was 1926.

E: And since when had he been the editor?

M: I'm not sure, but he was editor pre-war.

E: Pre-World War I?

M: Yes. The paper was owned by Eddie Simmons who was a young sportsman-- tennis player...and a good one.

E: Do you have any idea who was the editor of the El Paso Morning Times between 1910 and 1922--1915?

M: No, I don't.

E: O.K. The name of the newspaper that Mr. Cervantes--the Spanish language newspaper that was here--by any chance was it La Patria?

M: No, that's the wrong name.

M: There was also a Mexican edition of the Times as I recall it. I remember the City of Mexico Store was having a removal sale and their ad translator was a man who had learned his Spanish in the United States. They ran a big double truck ad and the headline was to be across two pages "Gran Venta de Evacuación" and it didn't fit and it came out "Gran Venta de Deficación" [(Big Sale of Shit)] which was one of the great jokes of that period.

E: Did you ever know W. Tovar y Bueno?

M: No, the name doesn't ring a bell.

E: I believe he was the Spanish edition of the Times editor.

M: No.

E: How would you rank the quality of the Herald and the El Paso Morning Times during those years?

M: Far superior, not only to present-day journalism, but to the papers of cities of this size over the country. They were very well run, very well written, strong editorials; it was the heyday of newspaper business.

E: What were H. D. Slater's views about the Mexican Revolution?

M: I can't tell you., I don't think I ever discussed the subject with him.

E: Did you ever discuss them with Mr. Black?

M: I did at great length, but again I can't recall. I can't recall what his views were.

E: Do you recall if either newspaper favored any faction over another?

M: Well, when I first came here Villa was still a very popular figure along the border. He had quite good relations with the press. There was no real anti-Villista sentiment. Juárez was a sea of iniquity.

El Pasoans enjoyed it, but as for that having anything to do with the public sentiment, I don't think so. Incidentally, in later years at the time when I was city editor of the Herald and the Post by that time was in being--this was around 1926--the El Paso Post started a campaign to close the bridge at six o'clock. Their main idea was that there was too much booze coming across the border and El Pasoans were getting too drunken and that kind of thing. I took up the fight against them. No, this was 1927, come to think of it...I went to the Ministerial Alliance of El Paso to get their support for my position--that closing the bridge would work a hardship economically on both communities and that that was the primary consideration. They endorsed the position of our paper. After a month's fight, the United States government just turned thumbs down on the proposition of closing the bridge earlier. I referred to Joe Dunn the other day. I didn't know until that time that Joe was an agent for the Mexican government in El Paso. He was still officed in the Electric Building. He called me over to his office and we had a brief conversation. He said, "I've got something here for you." He handed over an envelope with five one thousand dollar bills in it. I said, "What is that for?" He said, "Well, that's for keeping the bridge open." I said, "Well, Joe, why? Why you?" And he said, "Well, you didn't know that I'm representing the state of Chihuahua and also the federal government and some matters of this kind." I said, "I didn't have any idea, but you know that I don't take that kind of money." He said, "I appreciate that fact. I didn't think you'd go for it." Then he said, "Have you got any objection if we have a big affair at the Central Café and spend the five thousand dollars on having a big party: the governor of Chihuahua, the mayor, and the Commander of troops present." I said,

"That sounds good. If you want to spend the money, go ahead and do it." It was a real wingding. We had a great time.

E: Who all was there? Do you remember the names of the principals there at that party?

M: No, I don't remember. Arnulfo Gómez, I think, was in command of troops.

E: He later took part in a rebellion, didn't he?

M: Yes, that was right after I left El Paso.

E: And he was killed, wasn't he?

M: That's right.

E: Along with Serrano, right?

M: Yes. I think Serrano fled to Canada, didn't he? I'm not sure. I think Serrano got away to Canada. [Here I confused Serrano with another general.] Ulises Irigoyen who was a great friend of mine and Tony Bermúdez and so on, all the friends I had in Juárez were at the party and some of the El Paso officials. I guess there must have been three hundred people there that night.

E: That's interesting. Did you write it up in the paper?

M: No, I don't recall that I did.

E: Thank you, General.

[3rd interview session, July 7, 1975]

E: General Marshall, toward the end of the last [interview] you had some interesting observations on El Paso--on its uniqueness, on its friendliness. Could you reiterate some of those comments?

M: I said that El Paso impressed me and impressed my family as being the friendliest city that we'd ever known and we had lived all over the United States. As soon as we came here, everyone made us welcome and made us feel that we were not in any sense strangers and that we were part of the society here. I kept telling my present wife that through the years...that this was the unique quality of El Paso. She hardly believed me and I...coming back just this past year in 1974...having been absent since 1927, we've had exactly the same experience. In fact, I had more friends in El Paso that continued through the years than I ever made in Michigan in more than forty years that I've lived there. My real friends have always been either in El Paso or in the Army. I can think of only one or two individuals in Michigan that I could say these are my close personal friends. I often pondered why this was so, and I think I told you that I attributed it to the fact that El Paso is so far from any other community of its size. Also, it's not really Texas; its interests are in New Mexico and Mexico, and it's a little kingdom on its own. In my case, for instance, I started here as a sophomore in school, a total stranger. Then when we moved to the new high school Chris Fox, who's still living, was not only the dominant figure in that student body, he practically ran the school. We all called him "General" because of his influence. He could do almost anything he wanted with the student body and with the faculty. I recall in my junior year and I'd been here then just

a year--I had a Spanish teacher, Ada Burke, who was the daughter of the Treasurer of the United States, John Burke. She was one of the three adult members of the student-faculty council. Chris was by far the most prominent student on the council. Ada Burke decided that he had too much power in the school. She put me up for two offices in opposition to him and I thought this was the greatest joke that could be imagined. To my total surprise I won them. Going back over that incident, it reminds me of a point I made in the Guide to Officership in Armed Services--that self-confidence and courage and that kind of thing, or if you will "leadership," is a quality that no one recognizes in himself; the normal person doesn't. It comes to you from without. I'd had a similar experience in high school in California when I was a freshman. There I really was a stranger. It was not very easy to get acquainted in California despite the fact that I had this job with the motion picture company. It was not easy to make friends. The big event of the year was what was called the junior prom. The principal, Professor Wright, was announcing the committee for the junior prom and he was naming one person from each class. He suddenly said, "Sam Marshall from the freshman class." I thought to myself, "There must be some other Sam Marshall here in this class that I haven't met." These things came to me as total surprises because I was not--except in music and so on--I wasn't trying to play a lead part in anything.

E: When you were elected to those offices in opposition to Chris Fox did anybody call you "General"?

M: No, not at all. He's still called "General," by the way, by all of us that knew him in those days. [But nobody ever called me general when I was young.]

E: All his close friends?

M: Yes, he'd have made a very good General because he did know how to mold human nature and get people moving with him.

E: Well, you, then, off and on have probably known Chris Fox as long as anyone.

M: Well, hardly, because there is still a number of his classmates around here who were born in El Paso. He's known Gladys since he was a child, (his wife). I knew her at that time. She was almost as prominent as Chris was in the senior class.

E: He is, without doubt, one of the most prominent El Pasoans throughout the years that this city has ever had. To your mind, General Marshall, why has Chris Fox been such an outstanding figure in the community?

M: Point number one, because of his personality and the nature of his career. But I think the second part is that no other person has been such a bonding influence at any time between the Army and the civilian community. You spoke of his reputation nationally--certainly this persists throughout the Army. You talk to anybody about El Paso--anyone in the Army--and they immediately bring up the name of Chris Fox. "Do you know Chris Fox?" There is no one else in that same category. He has been unique in his relationship between the Armed Forces and the civilian community. I think that El Paso probably is more at one with the Army than any community in the United States.

E: To a certain extent it's due to his efforts.

M: Yes, I think it's due more to Chris Fox than to any other one person or any group of persons.

E: General, did Chris Fox join you when you went off to World War I?

M: No, he went into the Marines.

E: He went into the Marines?

M: Yes, went into the Marines. He had a very good record in the Marines. One of the things that tied him to the Army so closely, of course, was that his son, Chris Jr., was killed in Army service in World War II. He was the apple of Chris' eye. So he has very good reasons for this deep kinship. Most of our chaps, I would say, from El Paso High School went into the Army. That was an interesting thing about El Paso High School. We spoke the other day about the fact that Mike Blumenthal was the youngest Captain and Dick Lewis was the youngest First Sergeant. This high school almost bailed out when war came along. Living in a community that was tied closely to the Army, it was a natural thing for young El Pasoans to go into the services. A number of my classmates went into flying immediately. I was not interested in going into aviation at all. More went into the Army than any other service. A good many of the youngsters went into the Navy because they found it difficult to enlist in the Army. We had one family I remember, four brothers... I forget their name. [It was Crane.] The youngest kid was fourteen and they all went into the Navy. I dare say that El Paso High School sent a higher percentage of men into the services in World War I than any school in this country.

E: In that last interview, or perhaps the one preceding that one, you also made the point that the young men in this community were tough individuals. You said that they were moral and upright and yet that they had a toughness that came from growing up on the border. Isn't that what you...?

M: Yes, that's right. There was practically no drinking among the kids in high school. They had, in that time, an extraordinary respect for their women, the girls--a desire to protect them. There was no looseness

among the sexes up there. That was, again, the thing that surprised me. When I said that they were more mature, more masculine, I meant that in the best sense of the term. They didn't seem juvenile at all, the preponderant number of kids up there.

E: And these young men that went off to World War I, did they for the most part perform well?

M: I didn't keep a record. All that I knew of performed well. That's all I can say. I cited some that had special distinction. Most of them went in early, however. They weren't last minute soldiers.

E: O.K. General, what year did you go off to war?

M: 1917.

E: When did you return?

M: Late 1919. The end of September 1919.

E: I think for the benefit of continuity perhaps it would be best to continue the interview with your experiences upon your return to El Paso. Perhaps later on we'll return to interview you on World War I.

M: I think that that's a good idea and for another reason. The Army War College at Carlyle Barracks has done about something like forty hours of taping interviews on my military experience. I'm certain that you can get copies of those tapes from them. They interviewed extensively, I think it was, eight Generals within these last two years who had performed in World War II. Of course, I was not a General in World War II, but they decided to include me though I was not a regular because my experience was more extensive than any of the Generals that they interviewed as far as war was concerned since I had, in addition to both the Pacific and the European theaters in World War II, two tours in Korea and four tours in Viet Nam. So I had a longer perspective on combat than any of the others. I believe it would be best to hop

back to El Paso when I returned.

E: All right. Give us the setting of your return to El Paso. Try to recreate for us the troop train or whatever it was that you came back on.

M: There was no troop train. I was in command of a Negro company when I came back to the United States and I demobilized them at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Then I came on alone. By the time I got back to the United States the war had been forgotten. There were no cheers in New York or at any of the camps. Nobody was paying any attention to us except the little kids in the neighborhoods. When I returned I was briefly on duty at Ft. Bliss for about three weeks. My only experience there, that I recall, was that for the only time in my life I was counsel for the defense in a court-martial. I got my man off, a sergeant who had been accused of stealing shoes. Whether he was guilty, I'm not sure. I went to the School of Mines immediately. In those days there was no GI Bill, no separation pay. It was just normal pay. You didn't get extended leave when you got out. I had lost thirteen hundred dollars in a crooked poker game coming back from Europe. It was a strange thing. We came back on a [ship] called Konigin du Wederlander, a Dutch ship. We were fourteen days at sea. Everybody was seasick all the way from the bay of Biscay to New York City, New York Harbor. We got in this game. We didn't realize that we were being taken by a professional gambler who was a Major. He was a gambler from French Lick Springs, Indiana. We caught him at it the last night. By that time we were all broke. Then we were up against the fact that if we preferred charges against him we'd have to stay over in New York for an extended period. We just decided we'd take our medicine and forget it. So I got back to El Paso flat broke. I recall it because I was coming up from the station--walking from the Union Station--and

I passed Norton Brothers Book Store and I had a dollar and fifty cents in my pocket. I saw a book in there--John Masefield's book on Gallipoli--and I figured that I might as well be broke as the way I was, so I went in and bought that book and walked home. We lived in Highland Park at that time. That book was the beginning of my military library. That book is in the collection at UTEP. I didn't realize at that time that I was going to move in that direction. But I got into the School of Mines for only one reason. I didn't have the credits to get in, but there was a special provision made that if a man had been away a sufficiently long time that he would be an adult among kids if he went back to high school, he could automatically qualify for college. Otherwise I couldn't have gone there even the brief time that I did. As I say, I had no money and my parents didn't have any to send me there; so I was figuring out ways that I could get by. I found that by putting a five dollar gold piece on a punch board and selling chances at a quarter I could clean up about twenty one dollars and twenty five cents a week. The other source of revenue was that being a mining school people bent on Engineering and Education, everyone had a contempt for English which was a required subject in the freshman year. We were required by Professor Taylor to turn in one essay every week. There were seventeen boys in the class and I was writing anywhere from twelve to fifteen essays every week and selling them for a dollar a piece to my classmates. Professor Taylor knew this very well. He would, for instance, listen to a recital of the essay and he would say, "Mr. Broderick, that's all right. You will get a passing mark on it." Then he would turn to me and say, "Mr. Marshall, you're not up to your usual form on that one." This didn't go on very long because I was on the football team. I got badly broken up in football. We lost two

quarterbacks, two Saturdays running. I was playing end. First, Preston Peneuot got a broken leg in one game, and then the week after that, Grady Weeks, who followed him, was shot through the heart with a high powered rifle while he was down in the Valley stealing watermelons one Saturday afternoon following the game. [It was a team lark.] So on Monday I became the quarterback without any understudy. The first play of the game I broke my shoulder in two places, my scapula. That is, I wrenched it out from the clavicle and then there was also a fracture. I didn't know; I thought I just dislocated it. I played the rest of the game in that condition. It didn't bother me to run with the ball or to pass. I completed four out of six passes with a broken shoulder. What did get me was when I'd run interference and come down on the elbow; then I'd get a terrific shock. When that game was over I realized that I wouldn't be able to play football anymore. It took me something like six years to get to the point where this shoulder was workable again so that I could play baseball again. I couldn't raise it above the shoulder level but I finally made the grade all right. However, the shoulder not having recovered, I still went out for basketball. I tried to play it with one arm. I didn't expect to get into any games. In the first... We had a very small squad and in the first game we played New Mexico State or the Aggies as we called them then. We didn't even have a gym. We played at the old El Paso YMCA. They had won four games already in the conference and we hadn't even played a game. In the first few minutes of the game we ran up the score something like eleven to nothing against them due largely to one forward by the name of Billy Race on our team who was also an ex-Army officer. Then the Aggies sort of went wild. On the next play a jump-off between their center and our running guard, a chap by the name of Lossee from Bisbee...

the center jumped for the ball and with the other hand hit Lossee on the jaw and knocked him cold. They carried Lossee out and I went in his place. The crowd saw the punch but the referee had missed it. Then when the play was resumed with me jumping for the ball again, because that's how the play with Lossee had ended, he hit me and dislocated my jaw. When that happened the whole crowd swarmed onto the playing floor swinging clubs and pistols and chairs and anything they could get hold of. The show broke up in a riot and they had to call the police. The game was forfeited, the Aggies nine to nothing because it had occurred on our floor. That ended me at Texas Mines. I said, "The hell with it. School's just getting too rough."

E: That was the end of your academic career?

M: That's right. I finished without any credits whatever.

E: General, did you ever go to college after that?

M: No.

E: No formal university education after that?

M: None.

E: I'd like to ask you: Thirteen hundred dollars--I can't get it out of my mind--was a lot of money back in those days and still is, and yet as you relate this story you don't seem to have gotten in some big, deep depression because of it. Did you?

M: No, there was no use in worrying about it; it happened. I realized I had been a damn fool, but so did everybody else in the game. So there was no use crying about it. When I quit school I worked at various jobs. I couldn't make good on any of them. I couldn't understand why. I went to mining at Bisbee, as a surveyor.

E: What year was this?

M: It was 1920. The mine closed down because of the low price of copper.

I worked as a cowhand at the Love Ranch in Sierra Blanca. Then that job just petered out. I worked as a coal salesman and as a paper salesman. I wasn't doing any good for myself at anything I tried. I went back in the Army because I at least knew I could function there. We've already covered how I happened to get on a job where I was writing and I found out I could write. I sold a couple of short stories to national magazines at that time. That was what convinced me I could write. But, later when I resigned from the Army it was because they passed a new Army bill cutting down the size of the Army. I was a First Lieutenant and it would have reduced me to a Second Lieutenant at the same pay that I'd been drawing pay as a First Lieutenant. I don't remember why there was that quirk in the bill, but I figured I'd had enough time as a Second Lieutenant. Also, I had this idea of writing--that I might be able to do it. As soon as I got out of the Army, however, I lost all confidence in my ability to write and started looking around for a mining job. I had applied for a job in Tyrone, New Mexico, and was waiting for the answer to that message at the time that I accidentally got the job on the El Paso Herald. It was just two days after I got the job on the Herald that I got a message from Tyrone to come on, that they had a place for me. So, once again, it was a matter of a career just turning on a dime. I'd had the same experience in France in January of 1919. I can look back and see a number of times when just a fluke happened that turned me in a certain direction. That's the only reason that I adverted to that experience in football in France. I was about to get weeded out. I had been sent to LaValbonne, France, as an instructor in the Infantry Candidate School. I arrived late and they gave me the Marine platoon because the Marines were the last to get there. I went out for football. You see, the football season

started late over there because the war had ended in the middle of November. I was about to be weeded out because I was small, unimportant, and unimpressive. Then our team played against the base section team from Brest. On the first play of the game--incidentally, our teammates, our schoolmates, had bet something like seventy-six thousand francs on us at the time that a franc was worth twenty five cents. So it was a very important game for them. On the first play of the game we have kicked off and their star halfback is returning the kickoff; left end and our right halfback (the left end was an Indian from Carlyle by the name of Herrera and the halfback was Hartelling from the University of Southern California) crossed scalps in tackling this man. Both of them ripped their scalps open and were taken to the sidelines. [The quarterback, Brownie Springer of Michigan State] motioned to the sideline for someone to come in and take Hartelling's place and for an end to come in to take the place of Herrera. The bench got the signal mixed up and they sent me in instead of Lou Missig who was supposed to go. On the next play of the game (their halfback had fumbled and we had recovered) I failed to explain that. On the next play of the game Brownie Springer, our quarterback who had been captain and quarterback at Michigan State, called for a pass over our right end because at that position was Norman of Northwestern who was all-American in the preceding year. Two halfbacks are to go out there also as receivers. Springer couldn't find any of the receivers. Two of them had been blocked out. I don't remember what happened to Norman, but Springer tried to throw the ball away. It came within five yards of me and I caught it and went thirty-eight yards for a touchdown. The game ended six to nothing. That's the only game I ever won by myself in my life. Because it happened that way, they couldn't weed me out. I made it in that one play. So

I went on in the AEF for another seven, eight months, and commanded three different companies in that time. I learned more in that experience than in any like period in my life, by far. This was my real schooling because in the case of two of these companies I was a free agent; I could do anything I pleased. I could experiment with men--find out what men were like. In the case of the White Company that I commanded at Le Mans, France, I had no one over me except the commander of the SOS who was a three star General and was paying no attention to me. So I could do just as I pleased. We were the Company that was guarding the great AEF Salvage Plant at Pontelieu Square and I was Camp Commander. though there were about ten Colonels in the camp. This was a great experimental station. It was a great experimental period in my life. I guess my basic ideas about command were formed in that time.

E: That's extraordinary. Do you ever marvel at the fact that your life, the course that it's taken, has sometimes been dictated by such flukes as you...?

M: Oh yes, I do. I do because I've had luck extraordinary--just one fluke after another. In fact, when I started writing my memoirs I recalled the story about the chap who...Fred Wardel, who had founded the Eureka vacuum cleaner and made a mint of money out of it. The American Magazine sent a reporter out to get one of their success stories, Fred Wardel being a very prominent man in the United States at that time. So he came out and asked Wardel, "Mr. Wardel, looking back over it, what factor in your life and your personality accounts for the position you now hold?" Wardel said, "I don't quite get the question. What are you driving at?" He said, "Well, what was it that made you such an astounding success in the business world?" Wardel said, "Young man, it happened because I had a shitpot full of luck. Now if you can make

a story out of that you go back to your magazine and write it." The story was never written. I also said that I'd heard many people make the retort, "Yes, but you have to make the most of your chances." Well, that's true. But you can also look back over your life and think about how many chances you missed. You have to consider the fact that I was unusually fortunate in being born in 1900 because from there on I had no difficulty remembering dates. Every date, everything that happened to me I could associate it with my age at that particular time. I could remember when a piece of popular music came out because it coincided with the year of my life. I didn't have to add or subtract. Do you follow me?

E: Yes, sir, I do. Now you were with the AEF for how long, sir?

M: Two years lacking two months.

E: And then what did you do?

M: After I came back to El Paso?

E: Yes.

M: Well, as I told you, I was a magnificent failure for a couple years. I would have fitted Robert Louis Stevenson's definition of the total washout in that period. There were times then when I certainly lost confidence in myself. I wondered what it was all about. I couldn't really figure out why I was doing so badly.

E: Then you started working for the newspaper?

M: Yes.

E: Would you consider that a turning point in your life?

M: From there on my life pattern was pretty well fixed. I don't think there's any question about that; I had, I think, a quicker and more dynamic rise than any newspaperman, certainly, that the Southwest ever turned out. Within three years, three and a half years, I was

running the paper--the editorial side of it. But that happened through, again, dint of circumstance. You see, the Klan was a major determinant of many things in the 1920s here in El Paso. I will speak of my personal experience with it. Slater was dead set against the Klan. He had a spotter within the Klan.

E: A spotter?

M: A spotter, that's a person who is an agent...

E: A plant?

M: Yes, that's right. And at the time, Slater made up his mind he was going after the Klan. He made the man report to him on who on his staff was in the Klan. I was, first of all, just a reporter on the paper, covering police and so on. Then I became sports editor. After that--I'm breaking continuity a little bit here--then I became city editor, then front page columnist on the paper. But it was in the period when I was still a reporter that Slater decided that he's going to engage the Klan. He discovered, somewhat to his shock, that out of an editorial staff of twelve individuals I was the only person on the paper not a Klansman--that is on the staff. So at the time of the Pete Gardner-Dick Dudley campaign, despite my greenness and lack of experience, I was suddenly made the political reporter of the paper in 1921. The Klan, at that time, had a strong hold within city government. The mayor was not a Klansman. I don't remember who was the mayor at that time. It had an absolutely firm hold on county government in the County Commissioner's court. My job was to see that both of theses..that this element was eliminated. The anti-Klan people wanted both control of the city government--that is, Dudley was elected which ended the Klan's bid for power in the city. Pete Gardner was a Klan candidate. The county election was a sweeping success. All the Klan commissioners were

wiped out. So, in effect, at a very tender age--I was still only 23-- I found myself in position where I was virtually county boss of El Paso and could do anything that I wanted. The fact that we had succeeded, of course, gave me tremendous kudos with Slater. Shortly after that he had a newspaper efficiency person by the name of Weill come out from the Baltimore Sun to see what was wrong with the Herald and how to re-organize it and so forth. Well, this must have been 1925 because by that time I was head over my heels in baseball organization in this community and elsewhere. Weill was here for about a month and I would take him out to baseball games. I was cultivating him just to find out what he was like. I would bet a quarter or a half a dollar on a play that was coming up--betting in order to lose to him because I knew the players well enough to be fairly sure of what was going to happen. Maybe by the end of that month I had lost something like eight or ten dollars to him. All I was trying to do was get a measure of him-- what he was like. But to my utter bewilderment and to the damnation of the paper, when the whole thing was over, he told Slater that there was nobody on our editorial staff that could be trusted except myself and that there were other ex-Klansmen in the business end of the organization. Almost without exception they were suddenly swept out with a broom and I found myself a senior member of the organization that I had been with only about three years. It was one of the worst fool moves that I've ever seen a newspaper publisher make. To me, it was inviting disaster. You might wonder the reason why I wasn't a Klan member. I couldn't stand the organization. I figured it was un-American and that it ultimately must fail. You can't imagine how it had permeated the community. It was in control, for instance, of the American Legion here. It was in control of the Masonic Lodge. It was in control of the National Guard.

I had been an officer in the National Guard and practically every other member of the Guard was in the Klan. But I couldn't take it. I say parenthetically that some of my relatives were in the Klan. I couldn't take it. It seemed to me a rather monstrous idea. Furthermore, it was fully alien to this community. There might have been towns and cities in the United States where it had some relevance. Here it was a kind of a social activity more than all else. Jim Black, who was the editor of the Times that I spoke about, was taken out for a ride by the Klan at that time. They threatened to tar and feather him. I made up my mind that that was not going to happen to me and I worked with a gun in my desk top drawer and I carried one in El Paso when I moved about because I just made up my mind I was not going to go for that kind of thing. The two elections damn well decided the fate of the Klan in El Paso. From that time on the organization just gradually petered out. The consequences to the newspaper were enormous. I figured, from my position, that once you have won a battle you don't continue to fight it. Slater didn't think that way. Having beat the Klan he was out to destroy every person who had been prominently connected with it. He couldn't stand the idea of any former Klansman being given any preferment in El Paso. That was something that we used to argue about a great deal. His...the venom in his system was something that I couldn't quite understand. Ultimately all of these things had a great deal to do with me leaving the community.

E: General, what do you know about the Klan's attitudes towards Mexicans at this time?

M: Well, as far as violence is concerned, there was practically none of it exhibited by the Klan here. I can't recall anything of real importance.

The Klan was opposed to all foreigners, to all Jews, and to all Catholics.

E: So they got the Mexicans on two counts?

M: Yes. That was just part of its credo. So I think by nature it had to be anti-Mexican.

E: You said, however, that the Klan in El Paso was more of a social organization than anything else. So it was nothing comparable to...?

M: Oh, they used to get out and burn crosses on Mount Franklin and they'd wear hoods. They made a lot of noise. Actually, in that period I was impressed by one thing--that there wasn't a hell of a lot of difference between the radicals in the two camps. They used to come into the office and visit me and storm up and down and rave and rant. I was getting about the same line from both parties--extraordinary vehemence, profanity, vulgarity, all that kind of thing. You'd think the issue was really something that would settle the fate of mankind for years to come. I mean, there was fanaticism both in the Klan and in its opposition.

E: Obviously there must have been something about the El Paso community that did not maintain an attraction for the Klan. It certainly doesn't seem to have left any vestiges to this day.

M: No, I don't think there is the slightest remnant here. I would say that by 1927, at the time I left here, the Klan was dead. But what wasn't dead was the animosities and the antipathies that had come out of the struggles within the city. Personal grudges continued.

E: This entire Klan episode and the animosities that resulted..these animosities were between Anglo and Anglo. Is that right?

M: Largely so.

E: Of course, we know that during the 1920s there was a tremendous resurgence of the Klu Klux Klan throughout the nation. Was this merely a reflection of that, do you think or...?

M: Well, the Klan had a very, very strong hold in Texas.

E: Tell us more about this.

M: It had a strong hold in Texas government, Texas state government. I can't go into details now because that's something that is pretty well wiped out of my mind. I didn't like to remember it. I can remember my personal experiences with it, but I could never really understand why it even arose in El Paso. It attracted a lot of people who like to be joiners and who thought they would get some political backing out of it. I think that this was the main thing. Certain individuals saw a chance to get a power group behind them out of the Klan.

E: You don't think the hatred element was all that extant here?

M: No, not in the majority.

E: What other burning issues were there during your ten years as captain of that newspaper?

M: I wasn't captain of the newspaper. Captain Slater was captain of the newspaper. Crime, Depression...

E: What kinds of crime?

M: Well, this city in the 1920s was still rampant. There was a lot of gun fighting. It had some of the **juiciest** murder cases I've ever run into in my life. The pioneer element was still present. I can remember one day, for instance, when I was city editor that we were looking for a headline. By ten o'clock in the morning our Juárez reporter said, "There's a new revolution starting over here. It seems

to be a revolution. There is armed fighting in the streets." I said, "That's it; we go with that headline." Then we get to around eleven o'clock and there is a call in from the man on the courthouse beat that a couple of deputies had been shot and one of them killed trying to evict a pioneer from his homestead. I said, "Knock down the revolution and put that story up." And then another half hour passes and we're already to go with the paper and a call comes in that the vice-president of the National Bank had killed himself and his body is out in the car out in the Austin Terrace area. I knocked down the story of the pioneer and put that story up top because I figured everybody who was a depositor in the First National Bank would be concerned about why Tooley had killed himself. That kind of violence was quite prevalent. I remember the G.H. and S.A. holdup, for instance, where there were six bandits--Mexicans by the way: Agapito Ruedo and José Carrasco. I remember those names very well because in the case of both of them I was with the detectives that found them. We found them the same day. I think there were four or five people killed in that holdup. That kind of violence was fairly common. I think we had more interesting and "writable" murders in El Paso than any city in the country, despite the small size of the city. It was a violent community. I spoke of the Depression. The time came when cattle and cotton and copper were all so far down that this place was on hard times long before the Depression hit the United States. This happened around 1923 and 1924. The community was having a real struggle to keep going. Incidentally, while editor I started what was called later the...in Eastern newspapers, the Good Fellows Club or something of that kind. That was collecting money for poverty-stricken children at Christmastime. I'll tell you how I did it.

I went first of all to the town gamblers because I knew they were more generous than anyone else.

E: More so than the bankers?

M: Yes, indeed. Then this is true about most members of the gambling fraternities. They are extraordinarily charitable people when one approaches them in the right way.

E: It's true even today?

M: Yes, I think so. It's just part of their nature. We'd had nothing of that kind in El Paso and this was a start. This was around 1924 that we got going on that. I don't want to make too many personal allusions.

E: No, that's interesting.

M: The same is true of my starting the Copper League. People said, "Why did you start an outlaw league?" Well, it looked to me like a good thing to do. I was impressed by the fact that the Chicago Black Sox, for instance, who had been kicked out of baseball, had never [been given a court trial; that is, they were not legally guilty.] They had never been found guilty. From that time on they were damned and doomed men. I thought they ought to be given a chance to come back. But the other consideration was this: that this Southwestern territory was really in a state of despond; it needed something to cheer. This was true of the copper towns. It was true of El Paso. It was true of Juárez. We couldn't afford big league baseball. The only way we could have high-class baseball was to go for the outlaws. So we went out and recruited them. As long as I was in the Southwest that league held together. I found in the course of it that the major leagues were just as crooked after the Black Sox left as they were before. For example, they had a proscription against giving a contract to anybody who played with outlaws. Yet we were sending as many players to the major leagues sub rosa as any class AA ball club.

They knew it. Judge Landis would come down here...

E: "Kennesaw Mountain" Landis would come down to El Paso?

M: Yes, would come down once a year to try to talk me out of the league... breaking up the league. I'd say, "You show me some other way that we can get just as good baseball and I'll go for it." Of course, he couldn't come up with anything. We had repeated conversations on the subject. [He was] a likeable old man--a considerable faker I thought. But when I left, the league folded because there wasn't any other personality that could hold it together, that's what it amounted to.

E: You speak very fondly of baseball and you have throughout the interviews. I get the impression that baseball was an extremely popular sport in El Paso back in those days. Is that true?

M: Very much so. Very much so--though we had trouble making the grade in El Paso as far as keeping the team going was concerned, much more than they had in Fort Bayard where it was government backed, or in Santa Rita-Hurley where it was company backed. The same was true of the Bisbee team and the Douglas team. They had money from corporations. When we really got into hard times and there was no money in the treasury, I'd just take a canvas bag and move through El Paso and go to see the merchants and say, "The team has got to have some money," and I'd collect a few thousand dollars that way to keep us going. The greatest contributor, once again, outside of Maurice Schwartz of the Popular--that man was the greatest sportsman I ever knew in El Paso--outside of him I could depend on the gamblers to give me money more than anyone else.

E: This was during hard times. You thought that this was a really good influence on the community.

M: Everybody thought so down...

E: Everybody thought so.

M: There was no opposition.

E: Perhaps when we continue this interview, General, we can talk about those hard times here in El Paso.

M: If I can remember enough to make it worthwhile.

E: Well, if not we'll go on to another subject. Thank you, General.

M: O.K.

[4th interview session, July 9, 1975.]

E: General, you have some recollections that you'd like to enlighten us on. Would you...?

M: Well, some are of a personal sort just to straighten out a few things with respect to my own career. I failed to say thus far that at the time that...right after I went into newspaper work, I gave up my commissions. I had organized...that is, I had recruited the National Guard Battalion here in El Paso. I had done it as a personal job because the ex-service people here would enlist if I asked them to and they wouldn't follow anyone else. Well, I was very much junior in years and there was no possibility of my taking command of the battalion. But I was then a First Lieutenant, both in the Reserve and in the National Guard. Right after I went into newspaper work I resigned both commissions because I had decided that if I were ever going to really persevere in military studies I had to do it on my own. I was having to write papers for the War Department on drills, etc. that I had already done as an officer. So I was just repeating forms that I'd gone through in a practical way. I knew more than they were giving me. I knew I was wasting my time. Then I started building my military library at that time.

E: This was in the late 20s?

M: This was in the early 20s.

E: Early 20s.

M: Yes. Having given up my commissions I enlisted as a private in the National Guard in the same battalion that I had formed. The reason I did that was because I wanted to learn more about the military with respect to officer-man relationships and I decided I could learn more

by going at the lowest rank possible and watching officers perform. So I spent the next five years as a private. People look at that record and say, "Well, this is sort of nutty. Why did you do that?" As it turned out, it was the most valuable thing that ever happened to me because it was largely due to that experience that when I got into World War II, I was able to get enlisted men going along with me and I could take them away from their commander and they would tell me the absolute truth where they wouldn't tell it to their own officers. I spoke their language, in other words. You follow me? The next point was this: I did not explain that while I was moving up from reporter to sports editor and then city editor of the Herald I was also taking on jobs as a Southwestern correspondent for the Kansas City Star and the Chicago Tribune and the Seattle Times and the Los Angeles Times among other papers. I was getting good money out of that and also a broadened experience. I think the thing that helped me the most was when Slater decided that I was going to be a front page humor columnist.

E: Humor?

M: Humor columnist for the new paper that he started. I can't even remember the paper, but it was a morning paper to compete with the Times. It had a rather brief life--a couple years. I had a column there called the "Tom Tom" and it was the first humor column not only in El Paso but in the Southwest. As a consequence of that, my column...my humor was being quoted in the Literary Digest and Life and Judge which were two national humor magazines, more than any other newspaper in the country. It wasn't that I was that good a humorist. It was just a happenstance that they would quote from the national press sectionally. Since I was the only humorist in the Southwest, whereas there were many of them in the Northeast, I was getting quoted about three or four times

as often as any humorist elsewhere in the country though some had it all over me. This turned out to be greatly advantageous to me because when I was hired by the Detroit News I was hired as a humorist not as a sports writer or anything else.

E: That's fascinating. What were the topics for humor in the El Paso Southwest in the early twenties?

M: Oh, for heaven sakes, I can't think of that now. Incidentally, I have most of those columns. But I was talking of writing humor about politics, foreign policy and about prohibition...

E: Oh, you'd write on national issues?

M: On Maw Ferguson...Oh yes, certainly. It was three hundred and sixty degrees as far as the subject matter was concerned.

E: That's interesting. Could you tell me what...now was it just the appointment to that job that made you start doing it? Did you have any interest on your own to write a humor column?

M: I had started it on my own when I began writing a sports column as sports editor. I had a sports column that initially was called "Sports and Verse." Then, around 1923 Tad Dorgan came to town and we went to Juárez together and we were having a beer over there. Tad Dorgan was the famous cartoonist of the Hearst Syndicate. He was the author of See What the Boys in the Back Room Will Have and that kind of thing. While we were sitting there at lunch he said, "You write a good sports column but," he said, "nobody will ever remember that name. That's one of your difficulties." I said, "Well, that isn't my real name." He said, "What is your name?" I said, "Samuel Lyman Atwood Marshall." He said, "Why are you using the name 'Sam L. Marshall'?" I said, "Because I shortened my name when I went in the Army as I figured that the time would come when I'd have to

put a lot of signatures on reports and I didn't want to go by my real moniker and so I shortened it to 'Sam L. Marshall.' Since that was my Army name I stuck with it." He said, "Look, you've got the best possible name for a sportswriter. SLA--'SLAM'--it fits. [Slam Marshall.] You start tomorrow going by SLA and never change it. Just stay with those initials." This was one of the best pieces of advice I ever got in my life. I did it immediately. He was dead right about it.

E: What year was this, when you started using SLA?

M: I think it was around 1924. [Actually, it was 1923.]

E: It served you well?

M: Yes. And the Army used it because the Army by that time knew me as "SLAM" Marshall and therefore in World War II I was permitted to use my initials, whereas it's a regulation requirement that you use your full name. But I would use "S.L.A." on orders because a good many of the guys who had been Majors and Captains at Fort Bliss were by this time Generals; and when I was moving overseas, then it was important that they knew that I was coming, because they were not only acquaintances but friends, and they would help me out. It came out in cabalese [cable language] "Sugar Love Able" Marshall, which I liked. I told you about the resigning of my commissions, which was collateral with my decision to build up my military library for my private studies, and that continued to build through the years here. By the time I left El Paso I think it was something like 1,000 volumes. We did not go into the nature of Mexican American relations in this discussion the other day, but I think there is something important here. It was just about the time that the Revindication Revolution--I don't know whether you're familiar with that term...

E: No, I'm not.

M: That was what we called the Obregón-Calles Revolution. And that was what they called it--the Revindication Revolution. Just about that time, that revolution began to get things settled in Mexico [and] an era of good feeling between El Paso and Juárez began to develop. This was a very pronounced change during the '20s. This occurred, I would say, not across the board, but mainly through interchanges between the middle class in Juárez and El Paso. It was very common for El Paso groups to go over to Juárez at that time--much more so than now, incidentally. For example, at the time that I was sports editor in El Paso and city editor of the El Paso Herald, we would customarily close up the paper about 4:30 in the afternoon and then we would all go to Juárez together to have a good time. We would fight like cats and dogs on the paper--while we were getting out the paper--arguing and so forth, but we had just a close basis of friendship that we always wanted a social time afterwards. So, regular visits to Juárez were part of the business. When we would throw our staff parties about once a month, which were beer busts, we would go to Peace Grove in Juárez for the parties. But this developed very, very quickly during the mid-1920s, and that began to change things along our part of the border. I referred to it as the "Era of Good Feeling" because it was a marked change in across-the-border relationships.

E: After so many years of abrasion during the Revolution.

M: Yes.

E: You referred to Peace Grove. Precisely where was that located?

M: That's located out along the Río Grande, on the Juárez side, about 3/4 of a mile or less this side of the El Paso Smelter. I'm surprised you don't know about it.

E: Well, I think I did. For the benefit of the listeners I wanted to have you talk about that. Do you know why it was called "Peace Grove," by the way?

M: Yes. That's where Taft met Profirio Díaz shortly before the Revolution broke out.

E: That's interesting. What was there about Juárez that attracted so many El Pasoans? Were the facilities better? Was the atmosphere better? How come El Paso itself didn't have meeting places where everybody could go?

M: For one thing, the beer was extremely good and it was served nicely. At several of the bars they kept aluminum mugs in the refrigerators and they became iced, and the beer would be served in these iced mugs. But there were better cafés there; the food was superior and the drinks were good and the hospitality was greater.

E: How was the boozing in [El Paso] in the '20s?

M: Well, the border was pretty damn wide open as far as bootlegging is concerned. Every man had his favorite bootlegger and you could get liquor on this side at maybe \$1.50 or \$2.00 more than it cost in Juárez.

E: Did the paper have a personal bootlegger?

M: No, no, Slater was a prohibitionist. [Laughter] No, nothing like that!

E: General Marshall, you made the comment just a second ago that liquor was about \$1.00 to \$1.50 cheaper in Juárez than it was over here.

M: I'd say it would average around \$2.00 a bottle more when it was bootlegged on this side, but it would be the same liquor. We didn't get bad booze in El Paso like most cities were afflicted with.

E: Did anyone ever try to smuggle this liquor back from Juárez over here? Was it a common practice?

- M: Oh, yes. That's how it came about. Two of my friends from El Paso High School, who had gone into aviation in World War II, got into flying again and were working as bootleggers flying liquor across the border. I'd prefer not to name them.
- E: That's quite all right. I take it it was a rather fruitful friendship in that case.
- M: Right, right. But I was not one of their customers.
- E: You weren't?
- M: No.
- E: I have interviewed other people here in the El Paso area who are your age or perhaps a little younger. Their recollections are that during the '20s, the '30s and the '40s, Juárez had sort of a cosmopolitan air in that people were beginning to travel here from all over the country; and they'd go and live it up over in Ciudad Juárez. That's probably more true of the '30s and the '40s, I gather. Is that correct? What's your impression of the '20s?
- M: Yes, that's true. There was a constant traffic through here, but it was not just tourists. You see, El Paso has had, throughout its history, a unique advantage. When the railroads were the means of transportation across the country--when automobiles, for instance, couldn't make any considerable journey here in the Southwest--this was a stopping point for opera companies and for theater groups and so on, and also a stopping point for people that wanted to break a railway journey between the East and the West Coast. This had quite an influence on the culture of the city. We would get, for instance, the Chicago Opera Company--an attraction that a city of this size was not entitled to; but it was just a convenient break. We'd get the Mexican [Mexico City] Típica Orchestra and the Mexican Army Military Band, and so on. All those kinds of

attractions came to El Paso. The San Carlo Opera would come here yearly.

E: Do you think all of these different elements may have had a composite effect on the culture of this city? [Do you think that] somehow the level of culture has been raised over the years because of it?

M: No question about it. The promoter in those days was Granville Johnson. Granville happened to be a close friend of mine. I talked about writing the publicity for [national tours of] the Mexican Típica Orchestra. I did it at his request. Whenever a star would come to town, he would put me on to them immediately. I remember Emilita Galli-Curci, who was the great coloratura of the Metropolitan, coming to El Paso with her husband, Herbert Samuels. I went to interview her at the Del Norte. She blasted Grand Opera. [She] said it was just billboard, that it was not art, it was of no consequence whatsoever. This made a national story. Associated Press picked it up. I did not know at that time that she was suffering with goiter and knew that her career was through, and that she was rather embittered. On other occasions Tito Schipa came to town, and he was at the Del Norte. I went over to interview him. He spent the first 40 minutes talking about his recent "amours" and describing his bedroom affairs in utmost detail, in the most vulgar way I've ever heard any man perform. Suddenly the door to the next room opened and a redheaded [virago] came in with an umbrella and started beating the hell out of him. It was his wife! It was one of the funniest scenes I've ever witnessed. I couldn't write it. [Laughter]

E: You couldn't? Have you ever thought about doing it in the years since then?

M: Well, Paderewski came to town on his last trip. He had a private car with a grand piano in it. He had given no interviews anywhere

in the United States. This was his last grand tour. The guy who had been my political manager in high school, Elliot Chess, had been an ace with the Royal Air Force and then gone on to be an ace in the [Kuskiuzco] Squadron in Poland's war with Russia. So, he was an old friend of Paddy's, as he called him. He took me down to the train, and Paderewski threw his arms around him and embraced him and kissed him-- "Cheski" he called Chess. We had a private concert there for about an hour with him playing for only the two of us.

E: That's wonderful. You mentioned that during the teens Pavolva had come through here, didn't she?

M: No, this was in the '20s. This was around '22.

E: Could you tell me about that?

M: I think that was her last appearance here.

E: Did she actually give a performance here?

M: Yes. The auditorium was in El Paso High School--the main auditorium there. Slater was an old friend of hers and he took me out to supper with her, just because I had recently squelched a libel case for him. I met her and spent the early part of an evening with her, and then we went to the performance.

E: Did people in El Paso generally take advantage of these opportunities?

M: Yes, they were well attended always. That kind of thing would be a sell-out. In the sports field it was the same thing, mainly, however, because of Juárez. We would get principal figures, for instance, in the boxing world. A good many of them reached the end of the trail right here in El Paso. For example, Australian Billy Smith, who was a rather famous middleweight, became a Sergeant of Detectives on the police force. Tommy Burns of Pueblo, one of the "white hopes" in

Jack Johnson's day, became a bum in El Paso. He was a garbage collector at one time, and then he moved on. Jack Johnson reached the end of the trail here in a fight in Juárez against Bob Lawson, who at that time was the Negro light heavyweight champion. Jack was on the comeback trail, and they had a fight there which ended in the fifth round with Lawson knocking out Johnson with a blow to the solar plexus; and Johnson claimed foul. It was obviously a fair blow. I was the timekeeper at that fight and was right under the punch and saw it very cleanly. And Cip Payo, who was our most famous referee, called the thing correctly. This was on a Sunday afternoon. Johnson came to my office afterwards-- I was writing the story--and said, "Mr. Marshall, I will give you \$500 if you will put it on the Associated Press wire that you saw that that blow was foul." And I said, "Mr. Johnson, I can't do that. It wasn't foul, and, further, I don't take that kind of money." He said, "Well, I didn't suppose you did, but I think you know that a good many people in your business do take it." I said, "Yes, I'm aware of that." I said, "Since you're here, I'd like to discuss the Havana fight with Willard. Was that on the level?" We discussed it for about half an hour. I think this is the only time that he came clean on what had happened. His explanation was that the largest part of the money that they were going to get from that fight was for the motion picture rights. He had agreed with the motion picture people to carry Willard at least eight rounds. He said he didn't realize what the effect of the sun in Cuba was going to be on him, and after the ninth round he started in to try to knock Willard out; and his strength was gone. He knew that he no longer had the wallpp. It was several rounds after that that he motioned to his wife to get out of the ring because he knew that Willard

was going to knock him out, that he couldn't take it any more. It was because he had motioned to his wife to get out, and she left, that people thought the fight was a frame-up. I think that's the true story of the fight. Now, I mentioned a minute ago about this "era of good feeling" that developed in the '20s. This was a reciprocity between the middle-class people here and in Juárez. It didn't work at the lower levels, and the hostility on the Mexican side would still be very pronounced in sporting events. Some of the scenes there were really frightful; for instance, the night that Tiger Flowers fought Gorilla Jones. Gorilla Jones was a great favorite along the border. He was a Black and I think he came from a military camp in Douglas. Tiger Flowers had never fought before--never had any kind of a fight. He was just a "rubber" in Walt Miller's camp in Georgia. In other words, he took care of fighters. The fighter we signed to go in that event suddenly became ill, and Tiger Flowers was sent out as a substitute; he was an absolute unknown. This was the beginning of his rise to the middleweight championship. By the time the eighth and ninth round came--the Mexicans had bet heavily on Gorilla Jones--it became apparent that he was going to be knocked out, and beer bottles started flying. They came in showers. The worst kind of a riotous scene took place. The mayor and the chief of police of Juárez had bet something like \$5,000. Jack Vowell was holding stakes. The mayor yelled at the chief of police, "Get Vowell and get Marshall." He thought I had some of the money, and we were both thrown in the hoosegow over there. Jack was a very badly worried man because here he was out in the open compound with numerous criminals, and \$5,000 on him. All the mayor had meant was to get hold of him and protect him, not throw him in jail, and the police misunderstood it. This same

kind of thing happened in the summer of 1927, just before I left here. Aguilar, who was the middleweight champion of Mexico, was fighting a Black from Detroit by the name of Whitey Black. There was a great deal of betting by the Mexicans on Aguilar. Along about the sixth round, it was obvious that Aguilar was going to be beaten; and beer bottles started flying. I remember I was acting as timekeeper that fight, and I got up and yelled, "Who the hell threw that bottle?" Then suddenly a shower of bottles came at me. I got down under the ring. The fight went on till the end of the tenth round, and Aguilar was just a bloody mess. He had scarcely laid a glove on Black. Cip Payo went to the two of them as the fight ended, and raised both hands, calling it a draw. The ring was littered with beer bottles by that time, and he ran over to me and he said, "Slam, put it in the paper tomorrow morning that Mrs. Payo raised her children to be game but not to be foolish." [Laughter] Well, that was the time when I wrote "No more fights in Juárez; we've got to stop this," because it could have led on to a really bloody incident.

E: This entire area during the '20s seems to have been, in a different way, almost as exciting as it was during the teens.

M: Oh, it was very exciting, very exciting. There was no bullfighting at that time in Juárez. There was briefly in the early '20s. I remember Sid Franklin, the American bullfighter, showed up one day at my office. He was to appear in Juárez on Sunday. I was very busy and I said, "Take a seat," and he said, "You don't understand. I'm Sid Franklin, the American bullfighter." And I said, "Well, in that case, take two seats," and I kept on with my work. But it was, I think, [the most exciting period] I ever knew in my life--the '20s in El Paso.

E: The '20s throughout the rest of the country saw the advent of machine guns and fast cars and Al Capone types. Was there ever anything approximating that kind of thing here in El Paso?

M: No.

E: No organized crime?

M: No, no organized crime. [There was] a great deal of use of marijuana. Slater had me write a series on marijuana to try to get the drug outlawed. I spent a month studying the drug and its effect on criminals in El Paso. I smoked it once to see what the effects were. All it did was give me a headache, so I never tried it again because I don't have a lot of headaches ordinarily. I don't think I've had more than one or two in my life, all from hangovers. But I went at the study rather thoroughly, and shortly after that Texas legislature wrote a statute outlawing the use of marijuana.

E: It was an extremely strong statute, wasn't it?

M: I don't recall that, but Texas was the first state to outlaw it. Then I went to Michigan, and the editor of the Detroit News [George Miller] asked me to do the same thing up there, which I did; and it was outlawed in Michigan. A federal statute followed some years later, but I can't repeat the history of it because that was my only connection with it.

E: You say you studied the use of marijuana here in El Paso. What elements of society smoked it?

M: Mainly the criminal element. Outside of that, no one that I knew of.

E: It wasn't smoked for pleasure by young high school kids?

M: No, no. I knew of no cases whatsoever of that. Never heard of it.

E: Was there a great approbrium attached to it? One would suppose so-- to the smoking of marijuana.

M: As a matter of fact, it was as little known to the population generally here as was LSD in the middle 50s in the United States. It hadn't appeared in the marketplaces anywhere. It was known mainly to the criminal element and we found, almost without exception, that the people that were in jail were marijuana smokers; and some of them were hard drug users. But the use of drugs was very uncommon other than that.

E: Did mostly Mexican criminals smoke marijuana?

M: Mostly, yes.

E: Did you ever find out why?

M: I think it was simply because they knew the sources of it. They knew how to get it.

E: Did you ever find out where their sources were--[in] what part of Mexico it was grown?

M: Yes, I found out. But, again, I can't tell you because that's escaped my memory. This was just an incident in my life.

E: But you did write some of this up in the paper?

M: Oh yes.

E: So it would be in the old files if we wanted to search for it?

M: Yes.

E: General, we've been talking about certain phenomena in El Paso amongst the criminal element. We also mentioned prostitution during the teens. Was there any marked change in how much prostitution there was or the areas where it existed in the '20s?

M: Oh yes. Yes, indeed.

E: What were those changes?

M: The "red light" district in El Paso was cleaned out during the War--that is, Utah Street and the part of it that was on Santa Fe Street. It was

just cleaned out, closed up.

E: Why?

M: I guess because the Army insisted on it. I don't know. I wasn't here; I was overseas. What happened thereafter was that there was prostitution in separate houses. The hotels in the southern part of the city, south of San Antonio Street, were whorehouses and they operated more or less openly. The police made no attempt to clean them out. This was well known. It was like gambling. It continued, but on an entirely different basis. I had to know a good many of the madams because they were sources of news and so-on. I remember one experience. At the time that Harding died we were all very much impressed at the Herald-- with the death of a President. He died in the afternoon, and it took us until 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening to get out the Extra about his death. It was a very solemn occasion to us. We were working late, and when we got through I said, "Let's go on over to Juárez and get a drink at the Central." So we went to Juárez and we moved into the café side of the bar instead of going into the saloon proper. There was an El Paso madam from South Stanton Street [in the first booth.] Her name was Billy Wilson. As I came in she said, "What's wrong with you, Marshall? You look so solemn faced." I said, "Billy, didn't you know the President of the United States died this afternoon?" She said, "Well, the hell with that old son-of-a-bitch. He's no better than I am." I thought it was terrible at the time, but a little later I realized she had his number before anybody else did. [Laughter]

E: She was a very perceptive woman. Did you know any other madams here in El Paso? Do you recall any names?

M: Bess Mahler, Jeanie Harmon; and that's about it. I can't recall many names.

E: Were they big madams--big names in the trade?

M: Oh no. I wouldn't say that any of them compared with these characters that have since appeared in books about the Barbary Coast, New Orleans. No, none of them had that degree of fame. They didn't pile up dough. But I do recall one other incident in Juárez. We spoke of Arnulfo Gómez the other day.

E: Yes. (Who for the benefit of the listeners was a General.)

M: I had been in the Juárez jail twice, and this was the other occasion. He had a girlfriend, an American, whose name I do not remember. We always called her "the woman in gray" because she always wore gray clothing. She was an habitué of the Central Café. I saw her there one afternoon. I had gone in by myself, and I went over to talk to her; and the next thing I knew a couple policemen had me and were taking me to jail. Arnulfo Gómez had said that no one was ever to bother his woman. As soon as he found out that he'd had me thrown in jail because I was talking to her, he came over and apologized and was very, very sorry, etc., etc.

E: Did you ever get to be friends with Gómez?

M: No, there was no basis for friendship.

E: Did you talk to him on several occasions, a few occasions...?

M: Oh, a number of occasions. I didn't like him.

E: What do you recall about him?

M: Well, in the first place, I thought he was an ignoramus. He was also a bad soldier. I mean, he didn't understand military affairs very well. I had some discussions with him along military lines, and that's how I happened to discover that. I disliked his personality; he was too damned arrogant, too self-important.

E: General, we're talking about life on the border. About what year did you finally decide to leave El Paso?

M: June of 1927.

E: What did you do upon leaving El Paso?

M: Well, I had received offers from the Detroit News to come up there as a humor columnist, and I had received offers from the [Los Angeles] Examiner to come out there as a reporter. The offer from the Examiner was twice that of the News, and I took the News because I wouldn't work for Randolph Hearst under any conditions.

E: Did you ever meet William Randolph Hearst?

M: No, no. I only had one collision with him. At the time he died, Time Magazine had sent a correspondent out [to see me], Pete Braestrup. They were going to do a cover story on me under the heading of "The Press." Pete was out there for a week and they had a photographer out getting all kinds of pictures. Just [36 hours before] they were to run the story on me, William Randolph Hearst died and he got the cover! [Laughter] That was my only experience with him. I felt like Oliver Hereford. When he was offered a job by Hearst he wired [that] the only thing in which he would join Hearst was a suicide pact! I felt the same way about him. But at any rate, my disagreement finally, with Slater, came out of the Thomason/Davis campaign. I think I told you that. At that time, we owned the Times also; I was working as City Editor and Columnist of the Herald and I was working as Sports Editor columnist and Editorial writer of the Times. I had four jobs, and actually it took three men to replace me when I left. But I was working 18 hours a day and I knew I couldn't keep that up indefinitely, so I was glad to get out of here. I made the decision to leave in June and I presented my resignation effective in 90 days. I actually left in September. I remember, two days before

I left, Slater called me in. He was leaving on a trip, and I told him I was coming in to take leave of him. He said, "Are you certain you will not change your mind?" and I said, "No, my mind is made up." He said, "Well, if you would stay on, of course, you know the place is open. I realize you are the only person on this paper who has really leveled with me on all occasions." I would fight with him, you see, and the others wouldn't. They'd simply take his orders.

E: Was he sorry to see you go, then?

M: Well, apparently he was. I would visit him when I'd come back to El Paso, but I thought he'd pretty well lost his bearings--that he was no longer accute about business affairs or about political affairs. I thought that the paper was on its way out--that it was failing under him. I didn't want to be held responsible for that failure. He would do very, very stupid things. So, I saw no future here. Also, I had concluded that I had gone as far as I could ever go in the Southwest. My income was actually \$1100 a month at the time I left El Paso, which was big money in 1927. I had, in addition to these retainers from Eastern papers, my salary. I was getting a salary from a copper league, you see, so I was well fixed. And I had made a stake. I think I'm repeating here, now. By that time I had money in the bank. I had gone through three bank failures, but I'd learned a little something from each one of them. So, I knew it was time to move on. I could afford to do it financially and I couldn't afford to stay here--that's what it amounted to. I loved the city--always have loved it. But it was no longer any place for me.

E: Thank you, General. Perhaps in the near future we could interview you with regard to what you did after you left El Paso.

M: OK.

[5th interview session, July 11, 1975]

E: General, in the last session we had, we talked about your leaving El Paso and leaving the El Paso Herald and going on to greener pastures. What did you do after you left El Paso?

M: I went to the Detroit News as a humorist. For about six months I had been doing a humor column for them down here in addition to my other work. I was getting \$50 or \$100 a week for it. They wanted it just to see if they wanted me. That was running in the Detroit News before I ever got up there. But on the day that I met the Editor in Chief of the Detroit News, the day after I arrived in Detroit--it was the 30th of September--we had a lengthy conversation in which he asked me what I wrote outside of humor. I said, "I can write anything on the newspaper." I said, "I'm a very good Sports Writer, I know that." He said, "You just forget about sports; that's no means to an end." He said, "If you want to, do it once in a while, but don't pursue it. Not one man in a thousand gets anywhere writing sports." Well, I said, "Apart from that I can do any job on a newspaper--I can do editorials, or write society, or do anything." And he said, "All right. That's what we're going to have you do. You'll be rated here as an editorial writer. Besides your humor column we'll expect editorials from you, but you can have the run of the paper. You can write for any department you want to. We don't have anybody in the newspaper that can do that kind of thing. You can go as far as you want to go." **Then** he continued--he said, "I want you to buy a house here and settle down. I recommend you look out in the Redford area--that's a pretty good residence area and I think you'll be happy there." I said, "Mr. Miller, I am not going to do that." He

said, "Why not?" I said, "Because anytime I buy a house here and settle down I'm fixed with this newspaper; and I don't ever want a newspaper to have me at its mercy. Anytime that I'm not making what I think I should earn here, I'll quit. I won't ask for a raise, because anytime that I'm not satisfying you with my work I know you'll let me go. So that's fair enough on both sides. That's the way I prefer to have it." And he said, "Something tells me you're going to go a long way in newspaper work." He put me out on the street for 30 days to learn the city, giving me various assignments dealing with the more well-known characters in Detroit and drumming up stories. Then I came back [to the news sanctum] and from that time on I was situated with the so-called brains of the papers--the editorial writers and the assistant editors. That's where I remained largely during the years until World War II, though I continued to write for sports and write for Sunday magazine and write for various departments. There was one Sunday when I had eleven articles in eleven different departments of the paper. [That was my top. I was described as "The News Roustabout."]

E: Precisely what year was this?

M: Starting the 30th of September, 1927.

E: I assume Detroit was a fairly exciting town, seeing as how Chicago certainly was an exciting town at that time. What are your recollections about the streets of Detroit, Michigan, at that time? What was going on?

M: Of course, it was a border city, and bootlegging was a main industry there. The Purple Gang was the well-known crowd of hoodlums in Detroit. They were as notorious in their time as was Al Capone's gang in Chicago. So, it was a very rough community in that sense. Miller wrote me before I went up there. He said, "You're going to be disappointed in this city. You'll find that it's not a city. It's not organic at all. It's like a mining camp. It has no direction. The community has no real leadership.

The heads of the motor industry are more interested in New York and New York society than they are in Detroit. They're like the lumber barons were in their time--they didn't care about the city either. And so the city goes along pretty much leaderless." I found out it was that way. I had told Mr. Miller about my interest in Mexico in our initial conversation. He said, "You'll be given an opportunity to pursue it. You can go to Mexico once a year for two or three months just to roam the Republic and dig up stories." That, of course, was a rare opportunity because the Detroit News did not go in for foreign correspondence to any large extent. They had one man in London, and that was about all. But that kept me in contact not only with Mexico, but with the Southwest during the years that I was working with the paper. I had had, as I said, unusual success here in El Paso. It continued that way in Detroit. I was moving right from the beginning in rather prominent circles in the community, but for other reasons that gave me influence in the Southwest. Once again I was with horses up there. Detroit had polo, and it was a great hunting community. [There were] several very prominent hunting and riding clubs in the city. Immediately I became affiliated with them and was shortly judging horse shows there; and by the time I was there the second year I was president of the Polo Association and was running its affairs. I was doing it because I loved it and it was an avocational pursuit with me. This, I think, had as much to do with my connections as anything else, because the presidents of the motor companies and so on were members of the hunt clubs. I got to know them very well personally, like C. E. Wilson who later became Secretary of Defense for the United States. We were on the same horse show board for about six years in Detroit.

E: Was this "Motor Charley"?

M: Yes-- "Engine Charley." Interestingly enough, I recall that in 1940, when General Motors had its exhibit of what it was making for the war effort, I went to it and I ran into "Engine Charley." He suggested that we have dinner together at the Recess Club, which was in the Fisher Building across from the General Motors Building in Detroit. We sat there with one of their men who I did not know at the time, but he was head of General Motors Public Relations. Charley said to me, "Slam, I want you to talk to me as extensively as you can on the military, because I know absolutely nothing about the military; and I'll talk to you freely about General Motors. You ask me any questions that you wish." Well, we started, and when he got talking on General Motors this other gentleman would interrupt and say, "Well now, Mr. Wilson, I don't think you should say that. Here's the way I'd put it." Finally I said, "Who is this gentleman?" He said, "Well, he's head of our Public Relations and I have to go along with him." But, the reason I make the point is [that] within a few years this man was Secretary of Defense for the United States, and he had told me in private that he knew absolutely nothing about military affairs. As a matter of fact, at the time he was appointed Secretary of Defense, I was flying in a plane with one of the Vice-Presidents of General Motors, Bill Boyer, to Cleveland, to see their light tank production down there. The message came over a radio that C. E. Wilson had been appointed as Secretary of Defense. Boyer said to me, "Well, that must be C. E. Wilson of General Electric. It can't be 'Engine Charley' because he doesn't know anything about the military." And his course as Secretary of Defense generally well proved that he didn't know anything about the military.

E: Why do you say that precisely? Could you give us some outstanding examples of what you thought were his deficiencies?

M: [He had] no sense of organization whatsoever. I was on the Special Operations Commission of the Department of Defense during the time that he was Secretary, and we spent three years trying to find out who could make a decision in the Defense establishment; and we never were able to solve the problem. He over-elaborated the organization; he had contempt for all military people; he talked to Generals as if they were scrubs. He'd say, "Get Bradley up here!" or "Get so-and-so up here," as if he were talking about a servant. He never understood that the military had dignity that needed to be respected.

E: He wasn't one of your favorite students on military affairs, then?

M: No. He certainly wasn't. [There was] one thing that did happen to me for the worse when I went to Detroit. Up till the time I left El Paso I was associating with individuals like Terry Allen and Lew Hershey, who later became head of the draft; and John Lucas, who became a Corps Commander; and Harry Chamberlain; and Hap Gay, who later became Patton's Chief of Staff, and so on. Out of this association I was also getting an education in the military. I refer particularly to a First Sergeant of F Troop of the 7th Cavalry, a man named Ed Carey, who was an old-timer. I learned more from Ed, I think, than from any of the professors that I ever had about what the Army was like. But, as soon as I went to Detroit those contacts dropped off, and up there I knew only Iron Mike O'Daniel who was then a Major and later became a Three Star General, and was a very good friend of mine at the time. I kept contact with C. P. Summerall, former Chief of Staff. But my military circle was very, very limited indeed up there. So I did practically no military writing for the Detroit News except as I would write about revolutions and work as a war correspondent, which is an entirely different thing than being a military critic.

E: You mentioned C. E. Wilson. What other prominent members of Detroit society did you converse with during that time?

M: I can't remember any that I didn't know, really.

E: You knew just about every prominent member of society?

M: That's correct. For instance, Frank Murphy, who later became a Supreme Court Justice, was a very close friend of mine. I saw him through the years when he was moving from Judge up to Mayor of the city, and Governor of the state, and finally Governor General in the Philippines, and then Supreme Court Justice. I have many letters from him in my scrapbooks. I recall at the time that he was running for his second term for Governor. The Democratic Committee of the state came to me and told me that they had tried to get him to change his mind on a certain issue--and I don't remember what the issue was now. He was adamant. He said, "I'm going to take that position and I cannot change it. That's the way my conscience tells me to go." And they said, "You have more influence with him than we do. Will you write him and tell him that you think he should change his position?" Which I did, and he wrote me saying, "If I've got to be defeated on this issue, then Michigan ought to have a new Governor, because that's the way I feel. I have no qualms about my position at all. I'm ready to take defeat if I'm wrong on it." He was that way all the way through. When he was Mayor, for instance, again my editor told me that he wanted me to talk to Murphy to get him to go for the Appointive Judiciary as against the Elective Judiciary. He said, "Tell Murphy that if he will do that we will support him." I went to him and he said, "Sam, I can't do it. I don't believe in

it. That's not the democratic way. Further than that, look at the Federal Bench. You'll find just as many corrupt judges in the Federal Judiciary as you'll find in the Elective Judiciary. Tell Mr. Miller that I'm sorry that I don't have his support, but I wouldn't change for that reason." Then, when he was defeated for Governor I wrote him again to express my regret at his defeat and he said, "I'm not chagrined about it at all. I should be defeated if the people want this other man--then OK." I think it was Fitzgerald, but I'm not sure who it was now. And he said, "There's only one job that I know that I'm supremely qualified for, and that's Attorney General of the United States, but I will never get it." Well, just a few weeks after that he was appointed Attorney General of the United States and he proved to be correct. He was a first-class Attorney General. Then when he was named to the Supreme Court I again wrote him "Congratulations" and he wrote back and said, "I get no real feeling about this at all. I'm not qualified to be a Supreme Court Justice. I was named to the Court simply because I'm a Catholic and that's one reason that I don't feel it's much of an honor." He was very strange that way. When I came out of Mexico the last time, Josephus Daniels told me to tell Murphy that if he ever ran for President he'd give him full support and work for him in the South, because he said that Murphy was the only genuine Jeffersonian of our time. I wrote that to Frank and he wrote back and said, "You tell Mr. Daniels that I would under no circumstances run for the Presidency of the United States because I'm not qualified to be President of the United

States." He was a strange person in many ways. He had absolute integrity, but he was suspected up there of being a homo. That wasn't it at all. He loved to squire the women, but he'd never make love to them. And I happen to know what the situation was because for months, while he was Governor, he was being taken care of by my friend Dr. Raymond W. Waggoner of the University of Michigan who was studying him psychiatrically. Ray told me in private, "This man has got the largest Oedipus complex of any individual I have ever run into. If he should meet a woman [and come to love her] that was like his mother he would probably be very happily married."

E: Supremely interesting.

M: Brucker, who later became Secretary of the Army, was a friend of mine from the word "go" up there. This was while he was [Michigan] Attorney General. The funny part of it was that while I was on the Tattler, the high school paper at El Paso High, I had interviewed him when he was a Sergeant with the Michigan National Guard down here.

E: They were here on the Border?

M: Oh yes. So I knew Willber immediately and was in association with him from the time I got there. He interested me in this respect: His Army career was always more important to him than being in the [political] hierarchy. To be Lieutenant and then, I think, a Captain in the Rainbow Division was the most important chapter in his life. So, when he was appointed Secretary of War that really capped his career. It was the most important job to him that he could possibly hold. He loved the Army as few people do.

A strange turn in my fortunes, again a pivotal event in my life, came about in June of 1939. I spoke about my intimate relationship with the hunting crowd and with the horse show crowd and the polo

crowd in Detroit. I was secretary of the Horse Show Association. We held national shows annually at the Bloomfield Country Club. I was on the microphone talking about the events to the people at Bloomfield Hunt Club at this national show around the 20th of June and I was hit by lightning. The only thing that saved my life was that the lightning bolt hit the power line and came through a transformer before it hit me. It knocked me down and I got up immediately and I thought I wasn't hurt. It was in a drenching rain of cloudburst proportions, and when the show was over I was taken to a nearby home of a friend of mine, Carlton Higby. [He] gave me some of his clothing to exchange for my wet stuff and we had a few drinks. I went home and still thought I had had a lucky escape. The following morning I was awakened with a sensation in my hands and feet as if there were iron claws inside of my extremities just drawing me up like that. Then I realized that I had been hurt. I went to the doctors and they discovered that the lightning had destroyed about 40% of my red blood cells. To make a long story short, for the next three months I was in a condition of invalidism. It affected my heart and my stomach. By September I was in a conditon where I had about six carbuncles on my rear end and was so wretched I couldn't move. I remember that night we had a dinner engagement. The doctors in Detroit wouldn't touch the carbuncles, by the way. We had a dinner engagement at the Waggoners, and my wife called up Waggoner and told him that I couldn't move. She explained what was wrong and he said, "Well, put the big sissy in the rear seat and you drive him out here." So we got out to his home. [He] took me down to his study and said, "Now, lean over the bed there." He took my pants down and he went over to a

candle and picked out a pocketknife and put it through the flame of the candle, and then went over and came "Bang, bang, bang" like that to the carbuncles and said, "Now, don't you feel better?" Suddenly I was greatly relieved. I was almost hilarious because of the relief. Here was one doctor who had the nerve to tackle the problem. I had failed to explain that Waggoner, in addition to being a psychiatrist, was the greatest diagnostician that I ever ran into in my life. And we sat up drinking Scotch until 2:00 in the morning. We got talking about war coming and I said, "Ray, it's right here and it can't be avoided. War is bound to come and it's coming quickly. It will come within a day or two. Just like that." And he said, "Oh, you're crazy. You don't know what you're talking about." And I said, "I do. I know it. I'm absolutely certain of it." Well, we went to bed about 2:00 and at 5:00 he came and wakened me. He said, "Come out and listen to the radio. They're bombing Warsaw." And that was the beginning of World War II. Well, I've explained this for only one reason. Had I been in good physical condition I would have gone to the War as a correspondent, which would have put me on an entirely different course. The Detroit News would have sent me over immediately. But because I was still invalided, I stayed put where I was. I started, two days after the War began, broadcasting twenty minutes every day over station WWJ for one reason only--there was a man running the station for the news, Harry Bannister, who later became a Vice-President of NBC. We had been commissioned together in France, and Harry and I would meet at lunch during the years and we'd start talking military affairs and he was absolutely flabbergasted that I knew so much more about the military than he did and that I understood strategy

and tactics in a way that he couldn't begin to. And so, as soon as the War started he had the idea of getting me on radio to talk about the War. My first broadcast was to the effect that Poland was going to be defeated and over-run within thirty days, which, of course, was an extremely unpopular view at that time. But, at any rate, it was his putting me on WWJ that a couple weeks later gave the Detroit News the idea of having me write a military column, a precis on the War, saying what was coming and what was significant about the day's events. I continued with the broadcasting and it had a tremendous following. I remember on one occasion we had 10,000 letters come in on one broadcast that I had made--some of them damning me as a Communist and others damning me as a Fascist and so on. But, at any rate, the column and the broadcast together were making me a central figure in the affairs of [the midWest]. I'd gone along for about six months with this and I got a proposition from the Goodyear Tire Company to come to New York to broadcast five times a week for them for \$2500. I didn't feel tempted by it at all. I turned it down. I gave my wife the reasoning. I said, "The United States is going to get into this War and I'm going back into the Army because I'll be needed because I can do it, and if I take this easy money (in the first place, I didn't want to go to New York under any circumstances) if I take this easy money, I'll be looking for easy money the rest of my life and when the War is over all of these so-called military commentators of the day will be worth a dime a dozen. Whereas, if I go into the Services and get recognized as an authority on the military, my reputation in the post-War years will keep me going. I'll still have a following." Well, that's the way it worked out.

- E: General, going back to Detroit society in the pre-War years, you've mentioned your acquaintances with political figures, with figures in the automotive industry. I gather that you must have been acquainted with literary figures in the Mid-West. Is that so?
- M: By accident, from time to time. It was more by accident than anything else. Bertita Harding, for instance, and Pierre Von Passen. I could name twenty or thirty like that that moved in and out of my life. Lowell Thomas and numerous novelists and so-on. I would meet them in various ways. Sometimes it would be that they were lecturing and I was introducing them--something of that kind or they would come calling.
- E: What element of society would you say that you were most comfortable with at that time?
- M: The horse crowd.
- E: You're a great sportsman, a great lover of sports. Is that right? Has that been throughout your life?
- M: Well, primarily horses, yes.
- E: How long were you in Detroit as a newspaperman before they began to send you out to Mexico every year?
- M: Immediately.
- E: Immediately? The first year?
- M: No, because I got there the end of 1927--the end of September. I was just finding my way around then, but my first trip to Mexico was in 1928.
- E: In the summer?
- M: I don't recall what time of year I went there on that trip. Since I made a trip annually, one sort of blends into another.

E: Do you by any chance recall where you were on your birthday in 1928?

M: 1928? No.

E: The reason I ask is because I believe the famous Mexican President Alvaro Obregón was assassinated on July 17, 1928, and I thought perhaps you might remember being in Mexico or something like that.

M: No, I was not in Mexico at the time he was assassinated.

E: Could you tell us about your trips to Mexico--your impressions of the country when you started going down there on behalf of the Detroit News?

M: Well, I think you'd have to parse the question--break it down into parts. Impressions of the people or impressions of the country side?

E: Let's start off with the people. That's what I'm primarily interested in, General. What kind of work were these people doing that you saw? Did you travel by train, by the way?

M: I traveled by train in the early years because there was no other means of transportation, except a limited use of automobile. Then, as rapidly as air service was established, I got with that. In fact, I made the pioneer flight between El Paso and Chihuahua City on the Cat Lockheed. I was the only passenger. It was quite an interesting time. I think that was around February, 1931. I know it was February and it was extremely stormy weather. We had to sit down on the desert three times between here and Chihuahua on account of weather closing in. We found landing places where we could also take off and we knocked down two telephone lines on the way there and then we got into Chihuahua City after dark and they didn't have

any landing lights on the field. By the grace of God, we made a good landing and taxied several hundred yards, and then suddenly hit something and the plane nosed over. That was my first airplane crash. What had happened was that the commander of the Chihuahua garrison was using the airport as a polo field, and we hit the sideboards. It wrecked the plane.

E: Well, at least he was playing your favorite sport. Getting back to your impressions of the people, do you have any recollections about poverty, for instance, in Mexico back in the late '20s or early '30s? Would you consider it any more severe than it is today? Does anything stick out in your mind about that?

M: Well, you saw poverty in varying degrees everywhere you went.

E: Was it more severe in the United States or in Mexico?

M: I think, probably, you would notice it more in the United States for one reason. This is an impression. I was struck by the degree to which, in most Mexican communities, the people around would try to help the poor. They would give them a hand here and there. There was no organized charity in Mexico.

E: No [organized] institutions?

M: No. I was struck also by the continued violence and bloodshed in Mexico. There was an amazing degree of it. I recall one time leaving my wife at Mazatlán and I was going over to the Gulf Coast states' while I was gone--this was around '33 or '34--there was an episode there, a rivalry between political parties. I don't recall exactly the nature of the thing, but there was suddenly an execution of 26 individuals. I mean, a thing much larger than the St. Valentine's Massacre in Chicago. My wife was shocked by it. But

by the time that I got back to Mazatlán the community had almost forgotten it. I recall another time I was in a bar [in the capital of Michoacán]. This was at noon time. A guy comes in, moves to hold the bartender up, and accidentally pulls the trigger and knocks off the bartender's thumb. The bartender picked up a pistol from the bar and just shot him through the brain. They dragged him out, and that was all there was to it. In later years--I think this was 1938--I was with Sherwood Anderson, a novelist; and Miles Furlong, who was Deputy Commissioner of Police in Detroit; and Gilda Gray, the old shimmy dancer. She was an old friend of mine from Detroit days. We were in front of the Seven Seas bar in the square there at Alcapulco. We were staying at the El Mirador Hotel. The guy who was the "jefe"--the mayordomo of our hotel--came walking down the sidewalk toward us. Suddenly from behind the wall of the building where we were standing, two guys jump out and put their knives through his back. One takes his pistol and shoots him through the stomach and they run. He was not killed, but you could tell he was in a dying condition. We left him with Gilda Gray and Sherwood Anderson. Gilda Gray was fanning him and giving him water, which was the worst thing to do with anyone who has been shot through the stomach. Furlong and I ran for the nearest policeman. The policeman said, "We don't pay any attention to anything like that. It's a Union matter; let it go." Furlong spoke good Spanish and was arguing with him. Then we went for a doctor. We found the doctor... no, they shot him in the back, I'm sorry, not in the stomach; it was in the back. But the bullet lodged in his stomach. We explained to the doctor what had happened and he said, "Where was he hit?" I

said, "In the back." The doctor said, "Well, if they're shot in the back they never get better." So we just went back there and stayed with the guy until he was dead. These were typical incidents, but they were shocking to me.

E: I just marvel at the amount of violence that you've encountered in your life--even by the time you were 40 years old. Do you attribute it to the breaks?

M: Oh yes, I think so. Strange, flukey things. Are we still talking for the record?

E: Yes. Would you like for us not to be?

M: No, that's all right. I can never quite understand it myself--how and why it happened. I recall one extremely interesting episode from that period. I was flying into Mérida and I wanted to get down to Honduras. I made a reservation for the next Pan Am plane that came through. When I got out to the plane they had sold my seat to somebody else. Of course, I was angry as hell. But that plane crashed on its way to Honduras and everyone was killed. So, I went back to Mexico City and arranged to take another Pan Am plane. The planes only came through once a week in Mérida. I arranged to take another Pan Am flight out of Mexico City and exactly the same thing happened to me. Somebody else had been sold my seat, so I didn't get aboard that plane and that plane hit the top of Ixtaccihuatl and everybody was killed. So I said, "I'm through with flying. The hell with it. I'm going to stay on the ground from now on." Then the War came along and I was doing more flying than I ever did in my life!

E: General, when you weren't brushing with death in Mexico...

M: I don't think this was brushing with death. I don't think you really have close calls. I mean it. If you escape it, it isn't a close call.

E: That's an interesting point of view. I'd like for you to tell me about your recollections of Mexico City during the 1930s. What places would you frequent--the restaurants, the nightclubs, that kind of thing; night life in Mexico City during the '30s? You must be an expert on that.

M: Not really. I remember one place that I used to always go to that was on the [Paseo] de la Reforma, a couple of blocks towards Chapultepec Castle from Sanborns. [It was] a French restaurant that always had good bouillabaise.[The Marseilles] I would go there quite regularly I didn't go in much for night life. It didn't interest me. Outside of that, I have little recollection of Mexican eating places [except Prendes]. I should add this: Mexico City always did something to me that no other place did, and I cannot explain this. Mexico City had an effect on me of this kind: immediately as I hit the city I became afflicted by an intense state of depression and I became a hypochondriac. All kinds of imaginary diseases would hit me--my stomach, my heart, etc., etc. And this would take about a week to wear off. During those days I was going through the tortures of the damned. It was not a matter of altitude because I'd go to higher altitudes. To Taxco, for example, wouldn't bother me at all. Being at a high altitude was a familiar experience, but I always got it in Mexico City. I remember when I was with Sherwood Anderson in Mexico City and Alcapulco, I described this condition to him. When I left him in Alcapulco after the incident that I just mentioned--I

got fed up at that time and went on back to Mexico City--and I said I'd meet him there. Then I went off to Pachuca or some such place, and I got back to the G  neve Hotel and here was a note from Sherwood--that he'd come back to Mexico City and that what I had described had hit him, and he couldn't stand it, and he was going for the border just as fast as he could go. So, I know that the condition was not just peculiar to me. At least one other person has experienced it. One general impression of being in Mexico at that time, that I've not touched on, was the infinite kindness with which I was treated as a visitor anywhere I went. I would say this was especially so in Yucat  n. The gentlest people that I ever met in Mexico live in Yucat  n. And incidentally, they're also the cleanliest people that I've ever met. You know, it's ironic, but there's no place in Mexico where water is as scarce as it is in Yucat  n, and it seems to have the opposite effect on them. They prize it more and they're more immaculate in their dress and more cleanly in their habits than people elsewhere. The only explanation I can find was that they prize water and make the best use of it.

E: A very interesting observation. General, I believe you once made reference to an evening you spent with Sherwood Anderson just before the outbreak of the War in a restaurant, at a hotel in Mexico City.

M: Yes.

E: Could you recount that incident for us, please?

M: Yes. This was in, I think, March of 1938. We were staying at the G  neve Hotel and there was a German restaurant about two blocks away. I think it was Belinghausens. We went there for dinner, and this was the day that the German troops had marched into

Austria to bring about Anschluss; and practically everyone else in the restaurant was German. They were having a greatly festive time on account of the German victory in Austria. It was getting on Sherwood's nerves and he said to me, "I'll bet you \$20 you haven't got nerve enough to say 'The hell with Hitler.'" Just then the lights went out and I yelled, "You're taken." and I jumped up and shouted, "The hell with Hitler." Within 30 seconds the lights were on again and the Germans were all looking around, wondering who the hell had yelled. But at any rate, Sherwood paid off. He was a victim of circumstances.

E: Did any of the people at nearby tables realize that it was you that had jumped up?

M: No, I don't think so. I displaced a few feet so they wouldn't know. We went on from there to Alcapulco, and I remember when we got to Taxco we stopped and had a bottle of wine. His wife was following us in the car with a friend of hers from New York--Mary Bennett, whose husband had made his fortune in Chesterfield cigarettes; he was the advertising wizard that had promoted that cigarette--and when we got through the bottle of wine, Anderson said, "Come on, let's get in the car and keep on going." I said, "You're crazy. Look, this is a good place to spend the night." He said, "We are not going to stay in Taxco." I said, "Well, look. The only thing ahead of us is Iguala, and it's dirty and flea bound. It's really a miserable place way down in the bottoms and we'll have a bad night there." "We are not going to stay in Taxco." I said, "All right. You're running the car. Go ahead." So we start on down the mountain and after a few minutes he said, "I guess you want to know why we didn't stay in Taxco." I said, "Frankly, I don't give a damn now." He said, "Well, I'm going to tell you."

I said, "Well, I knew you would." He said, "My first wife lives in Taxco." Then I really blew. I said, "Well, what the hell, Sherwood. If my first wife was in Taxco I'd go to her and slap her on the can and say, 'Kid, have a drink.'" He said, "Yeah, but you weren't married to my first wife." I said, "That was your misfortune." He said, "Do you want to know the story?" I said, "It isn't a case if whether I want to know it. You're going to tell it to me, so go ahead." "Well," he said, "when I was first struggling as a writer I had a small business; and at that time we were not doing too well. She would come up to my room and pick up my manuscripts and tear them up and say, 'Sherwood, what are you doing? You're just wasting your time and you're ruining the chances for our sons. Now, you get back to your work.' I said to myself, 'Some-day you're going to do that once too often and I'm going to walk out on you.' And sure enough, one day she did it just once too often and I moved out. Now, you may think that I did it because she tore up my manuscripts. No, she had a right to do that. Maybe she knew more about literature than I did. It aggravated me, but that wasn't the final aggravation. I moved out on her because I thought sex was wonderful and she thought it was vulgar." [Laughter]

E: Were you pretty good friends with Sherwood Anderson?

M: Very much so. I heard from him up until the time he died. He was killed, you remember, he choked on a fish bone. I think he was in Havana at the time.

E: Other stories have it that it was a toothpick sliver in Colón, Panama.

M: Oh really?

E: Yes. General, that's a good story. You have many more to tell us, I'm sure. I think we'll break today's interview at this time. Thank you very much.

[6th interview session, July 19, 1975]

E: Did you know Ulises Irigoyen?

M: Very well.

E: General, could you tell us the circumstances under which you met Mr. Irigoyen?

M: I'm sure that I met him prior to the time when I became well-acquainted with him. It was after we, as a Rotary committee from El Paso formed Juárez Rotary, that we became close friends. As I recall it, he was head of the Rotary over there. I saw him steadily from the years 1922 till 1927.

E: For the benefit of the listeners, this is concerning Ulises Irigoyen, who wrote a two-volume on El problema económico de las fronteras mexicanas. He was also an expert on various aspects of business on the north Mexican frontier. General, do you recall during these years--say the '20s in El Paso--was there a lot of discussion regarding the Free Zone or the re-implementation of the Free Zone?

M: I don't recall that there was a great deal.

E: Of course, the Free Zone had been terminated in 1905 by José Limantour in Mexico, and it caused great consternation here in Ciudad Juárez and it caused excitement in El Paso, too. Mr. Irigoyen wrote this book in order that the officials in Mexico be moved to reinstate the Zone. But you don't recall much talk about this?

M: No, no I don't. He was an extremely friendly person and did a great deal to cement relations across the border.

E: Did he speak English?

M: Oh yes, he spoke very good English. He was a very tall man, a very imposing figure and had a wonderful sense of humor--loved to laugh and tell stories, that kind of thing. People were just naturally drawn to him because of his disposition.

E: Did he seem to have many connections in Mexico City? Would you know?

M: At that time I was unaware of it. He had very definite connections with the state government. I mean, he was highly regarded by people in Chihuahua City.

E: General, you have mentioned L. M. Lawson in our discussions about the border during the '20s. Could you tell us who Mr. Lawson was and what role he played in this community?

M: First of all, I'd comment that the International Boundary Commissioners who had preceded him were not outstanding men. They were political hacks mainly. George Curry is a prominent name--former Governor of New Mexico and then Collector of the Port here, and so on. But George was a lush. He just couldn't stay away from the bottle. Lawson came on around 1923 or 1924 as Commissioner. He was aware that his main job was to create an atmosphere of good fellowship and friendliness with the Commissioners on the Mexican side--that until the interpersonal relationships had changed he couldn't do anything about boundary problems. He was a very fine pianist. During the period that he was here, and until I left El Paso, the Commission meetings took this form that we would usually go down to Zaragoza--there was an abandoned theater down there--and we would meet on a Saturday, and everybody would get together around lunch. He'd start playing the piano and I would start singing.

We'd sing Mexican songs, then American songs. We'd go on this way for a couple of hours--just having a time of fellowship where we could get better acquainted with one another. He was the one that conditioned the people on both Commissions so that they got together as friends and could talk things over without taking a national position as to what was the right thing to do and how to proceed to get to it. He was still living up until the late '30s I'm certain. Every time I came to El Paso I would visit him. By that time he had gone blind--I think it was from cataracts. He was still an extremely enjoyable person. But it was his influence as an individual--his far-sightedness that you've got to get to know people so that at the same time they're getting to know you before you can transact business fairly at the international level.

E: This sounds like an impressive individual. Do you recall anything about his background--how he got to El Paso?

M: No, I don't. I knew it all at one time and I think there are letters in my files that reflect his background, but I can't tell you right now.

E: Very good. General, in your experience, has this inter-personal interchange, interplay that you're talking about been important in relations between the two cities?

M: Oh, I think so entirely. Believe me, these were some of the great object lessons of my life. I realized, for instance, in the job of command that this was all-important--that these same things translated into military life. At the time that I was writing the [official work on the philosophy of] Officership in all of our armed

forces, I brought this to the fore as the most important point-- that the lack of communication between the officer and the enlisted man was the most serious gap and the failure on the part of the officer to realize that the enlisted man had just as much right to know about his family and his background as he knew of his subordinate's background, etc. This had to be a two-way current or it couldn't work. These are almost inevitable steps in the development of one's own character, personality, and out-look. I know that I learned much from Lawson during that period. I could see how it was possible to get hold of men in a really serious matter, and that the basis of it had to be mutual understanding between person and person before together you can really transact business.

E: So it was a rather catholic object lesson for you?

M: Yes. You know, we referred to Portes Gil the other day, and I told you that I knew him quite well. I remember talking to him on one occasion when he was Secretary of Gobernación, and we were talking about a deal that he was proposing between Mexico and the United States. When he got through, I made an objection. I said, "Do you think that that is really fair to the United States?" And he said, "Mr. Marshall, don't you understand that while it may not be fair to the United States, we are the smaller country and a smaller country has got a right to look for an extra advantage?" Well, I had not even thought about it up till that time, and yet it was his reflecting on that that led me at the time, for example, when I was writing out the paper, the

staff papers that took us into NATO and which became a first stepping stone in the forming of NATO, that I expressed the idea that in that alliance the United States would have to count on it at all times that the smaller partners would take advantage of the arrangement and that that would be part of the basis of the treaty organization. We had to accept this as a principle.

E: Very illuminating. To follow this train of thought, what is your opinion of the relationship of the United States with regard to the smaller nations of the world in the United Nations today?

M: Well, I quite agree with the position stated quite recently by Kissinger. I felt all along that the smaller nations (so-called), or let's say the "third world nations," were on their way toward the destruction of the world organization. I'm not at all hostile to the idea, [that is, its disappearance.] I recall a dinner-party conversation about six or seven years ago at the home of Paul Nitze in Washington. Dean Acheson was there with his wife, my brother and his wife, and the Ambassador from Pakistan and his wife, and the conversation at the dinner table turned to the United Nations and it absorbed the whole evening. The views expressed were, "The United Nations is no damned good as it is now, but on the other hand we've got to have it; we've got to hold on to it." I didn't say a word. My brother would grunt occasionally, make some interjection; but I didn't say anything until we retired for brandy into Nitze's study and Paul said, "Sam, you didn't say a word. What was the matter?" I said, "Look, I couldn't have gotten a word in edgewise because you were talking at such a rate; but had I spoken I would have

disagreed with what you said because you voiced two mutually exclusive propositions that this is no good but we've got to have it. The ideas do not go together. If it's no good, it might be better to see it explode just like that and get a world shock out of it that would lead to something better. But if you go along with an organization that you know is a losing institution, you're not only going to lose confidence in it, but we're going to lose confidence in the world future and in the position of the United States."

E: That's an interesting point of view.

M: Incidentally, they agreed with me when I got through.

E: They did agree with you?

M: That's right. They didn't argue the point at all. They thought it might be better to have an explosion and then look to something else to see what would happen as a consequence. Because the United Nations is following pretty much the history of the League, only in a worse way, because I don't think there's any question [that] the large part of the so-called developing nations are out to hurt the United States. They enjoy doing it. We shouldn't worry too much about that. I've always said about our line of propaganda through the "Voice of America" and so forth, that we have the wrong aim. I've said this ever since World War II--that it was stupid for the United States to try to be loved. As long as you are in the top position, you don't expect love. That is, you shouldn't expect it. There's no likelihood of you ever getting it, irrespective of

your policy; you'll always be the main target. If you can be respected somewhat and feared a little bit you'll be a lot better off.

E: Would you apply that kind of reasoning to relations between two cities on a frontier?

M: No, no I don't at all.

E: So it's different?

M: Essentially different because they have fundamentally a community of interests.

E: Within the past couple of years in El Paso we've seen certainly a lessening of understanding between the two sister cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. I'm not sure to what extent you're familiar with some of the conflicts that have arisen.

M: Well, I know some of them. And I know some of them are of a very piddling, silly nature.

E: Could you elaborate on that, General?

M: Well, I'm talking about the transportation difficulty--the failure to agree on a plan, etc., etc.--and the "niff-gnawing" that goes on between the two governments that are behind the cities, etc. I'm not certain that a pessimistic view of the present relationship is justified for the simple reason that we live in a period when friction due to economic and other causes is quite general over the world, and I would say that under the conditions, the relationship between El Paso and Juárez is good.

E: There have been studies done on El Paso and Ciudad Juárez since the turn of the century. One scholar has made the comment to me

that any time there is suddenly a decline in the economic stability of the United States, that authorities on the American side of the border have tended to point to the "wet back," to the migrant laborer, immediately and have singled him out as a problem-- as one of the bigger problems that the border community faces.

M: Correct.

E: Do you think this is true?

M: Yes, I think that's true. That will always be the politicians' attitude. Just whether there's sufficient justification for that attitude is quite another question. I think it's vastly over-emphasized. I'm quite sure that if there was not a movement from south of the border to north, whether of a "wet back" [nature] or not, the main sufferer would be the farmers and the other interests in the United States that depend on cheap labor. Jobs in the sugar beet fields are not going to be taken over by people who at the present time are on relief. They don't want that kind of work. What looks good to the migrant from Mexico because it's better than what he's had, still is not going to look good to the person who's on the dole in the United States. I think that is vastly exaggerated. I know of cases right here in this city. There's one case right next door, of a family that's being held together by their Mexican maid, by the woman who works for them. There isn't any possibility of replacing that woman with a woman from the United States that can do the same work and who'll do it in the same way. It happens that the wife is an invalid and her illness is of a kind that my late wife had for eighteen years, and it takes an extraordinary

nurse to adjust to this kind of home situation. I recall one year in which I went through thirteen changes in nurses under the same conditions. Yet right now Immigration is moving toward eliminating this woman because the rules so say. I'm doing everything I can to keep it from happening. And if necessary I'll go directly to General Chapman who is the Immigration Director of the United States, and whom I know quite well and point out why this is an extremely [injudicious] move.

E: General, have you ever given thought to how the United States government could ameliorate immigration problems along the United States-Mexican border?

M: No.

E: You've never given that much thought?

M: No, I've never gone into it, and I would not try to speak with any authority or anything that suggested I had knowledge on a subject that I haven't studied.

E: That's quite all right. We have been digressing a little bit from what we were speaking of the other day, but I think it's justified in view of the fact that you added to our knowledge on certain points, on certain figures. The other day we were speaking about your voyages, your trips to Mexico during the 1930s, during the late '30s especially. You recounted incidents with Sherwood Anderson; you recounted German sentiment in Mexico City in the '30s. Could you tell us when these trips to Mexico came to an end and more or less what you did then?

M: 1938 was the last year. The terminal point was reached because of the War coming on in 1939 and the War engrossing all of my

attention. So, from that time on I was following the War.

Incidentally, I failed to say that at that big party, that big bust that we had in 1927 before I left, I was made an honorary Major in the Mexican Army. That's one of the titles I own.

E: Were you ever promoted?

M: No.

E: Just Major?

M: Just a Major. I'm an honorary Colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps and an honorary Major in the Mexican Army.

E: That may be an honor.

M: I think it's time for them to promote me, though. They came to an end in 1938, and the last big adventure I had down there was in connection with Cedillo. I had started that trip from Mazatlán, went over into the Gulf Coast states, and wherever I went I was reading stories in the press about Cedillo having an Army of 24,000 men that were ready to start a revolution. And the other feature in the story was that his place at Palomas was surrounded by federal troops. There was no chance of getting there. Because this figure popped up in various newspapers about 24,000 troops--it was always the same--I figured it must be a government plant. I didn't know the background other than that. Well, I came back to Mexico City from the Gulf Coast states and I ran into an old schoolmate of mine, a teammate from UTEP--Toppix Sorrels who had been a senior when I was a freshman. We had known one another very well in France. He had been in the Artillery backing up my division on one occasion in 1918 when I had visited him over there. Toppix, by this time, was the head of Republic Mining and Metals in San Luis Potosí. We were playing

golf at the Mexico City Country Club and I kept asking him, "What is the real situation with respect to Cedillo?" He said, "Now listen, I'm a mining engineer and you're a newspaperman and you are supposed to go out and find out what the situation is. You don't ask me. That's no way to get your work done." I said, "Well, that's true, Toppix." We played on through the ninth hole and he suddenly disappeared in the club house, came back and said, "You're going to San Luis Potosí tonight." I said, "OK." So he put me aboard the train, and I was met in San Luis Potosí in the morning by a classmate of mine from what is now UTEP--Kenneth Hardy, who was Superintendent of AS&R in San Luis Potosí. And he took me out to his home. He'd married a Mexican girl and they had a number of children. I was there all day enjoying their family. Whenever I asked him about the situation of Cedillo and what was going on in Palomas he wouldn't say a word and I went back to my hotel very much disgusted and I was in the "cantina" getting a beer when into the room came Oscar Caballero, my old friend who had been Purchasing Agent for Villa.

E: During the Revolution?

M: Yeah. We had an abrazo and he said, "My friend, what are you doing in San Luis Potosí?" And I said, "I came here to find out what is the situation with El Jefe." "Well," he said, "I can't tell you, but if you want to see El Jefe, we'll go to see El Jefe tomorrow morning at 5:00." And then I realized that my friends had planned this whole thing. And I said,

"How do we get there?" And he said, "We just get in the car and we start out." It was about a 90-mile journey as I recall it now. And I said, "What about the federal troops?" He said, "Well, we'll see as we go along. By the way, do you have a firearm?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, I'll bring a pistol. You won't need it, but you might as well carry it." So we get out there and there's no one. We don't see a soul all the way to Palomas and when we get to the gate at Palomas there was a "mozo" standing there just tending the gate and Oscar whistles to him and he lets us in. We get up to the ranch house and here are four guys squatted down, working over a map. "If they go that way, then we move that way. And then if they counter, then we do this." I thought, "Well, here's the real thing at last." And I went up and looked over their shoulders and they were looking at a map of Spain. They were talking about what was going on in Spain--the Spanish Civil War. I asked them, "Where's El Jefe?" And they said, "He's down the road planting tomatoes." I said, "How do we get there?" They said, "If you want to get there, you get there like we get there--walk, that's all." So we started out and we had about a half-mile walk. When we got there, an irrigation bank had been broken through by the stream and the stream was flooding the tomatoes. We walked up to Cedillo, whom Caballero wellknew, and I started telling him who I was and he said, "I don't care who you are (talking in Spanish)--you get a shovel and start working." So Oscar and I got the shovels and we worked for the next forty minutes

helping them get the water under control. Then Cedillo took us back to the house. We had supper, a very enjoyable one. I remember he had several cactus dishes that night--dishes that I had never tasted before. Then, after that, we went out on the porch in the moonlight. I'll never forget him because he was a great bulbous man, very fat. By that time he must have weighed 270 pounds--a very fat face. The porch was unscreened and the flies would settle on his sweating face and he'd wait for a few minutes and then reach up with a hand like that and grab half a dozen flies during the conversation. And I asked him was the situation here on the ranch--was he planning a revolution, planning to fight? And he said, "Mr. Marshall, I know you're a military man--Oscar told me. I'll give you a horse tomorrow morning and you can go anywhere you please--Ciudad del Mes, anywhere else. If you find one sign that I am doing anything to raise troops, you go ahead and write it." (Subsequently I did take a horse...went all over the property.) And I said, "Well, then, what is this all about?" And then he told me the story about Cárdenas' hatred of him--that Cárdenas could not stand him because he had made Cárdenas and it was his weight at the Querétaro Convention that had brought about the nomination of Cárdenas. He said, "Cárdenas is determined to ~~destroy~~ me." I've oversimplified his explanation. He went into great details of the trouble that he had had with Cárdenas.

E: But that was the jist of it?

M: That was the jist of it.

E: That he had made him?

M: Yes, he actually nominated him.

M: Yes. And I said, "Well, what will you do if he comes after you?" He said, "Do you think I'll let any son-of-a-bitch who soldiered under[Manuel Mondragón] drive me off my land?" And I said, "No, I don't suppose you would. But are you sure you want me to say what you have just told me?" I had taken it down verbatim--wrote it as he said it. I said, "Because as surely as you do, he'll come after you." He said, "If it's time for me to die in Mexico because I'm speaking the truth and I know it, then I'm ready to die." And I questioned him again; I said, "You're taking a terrible chance." He said, "That's beside the point. Just go ahead and write it the way I've said it." I was there for the next two days riding around the place, seeing if there were any signs of revolution. All I found were a few old revolutionaries, some of them with an arm or a leg missing, working for him. That was all. [None had weapons.] Then I went back to San Luis and went to the City. I wasn't ready to leave Mexico City, but I knew that I dared not put this story on the wire. At the G eneve Hotel I ran into John Balaban and his wife, Myrtle. [He was] Balaban of Balaban and Katz of Chicago. At that time they owned Paramount Pictures and they owned a large part of the movie theaters in the eastern half of the United States. He was a multi-millionaire and a couple weeks before this I had saved him in a scene south of Cuernavaca. I was coming along the road in a taxi and ran into a hold-up where two Mexicans had pistols on him and were taking money from the Balabans. And I walked up and talked to the Mexicans and said, "Now, look. This should be negotiated. If you take everything he's got, that's a robbery. On the other hand,

you can say, 'It's so much to use the road and you'll have free way here,' and we can work out a business deal where you'll be perfectly safe." Well, they settled for \$100. If the Balabans would pay \$100, that would satisfy them. So John felt somewhat obligated to me and I asked him to get off the train in San Antonio and get this on the wire to the New York Times, Detroit News, and the North American Newspaper Alliance. It was about ten days after that time that the federal Army [under Cárdenas] marched on Cedillo. It took about thirty days, I think, to run him down. They killed him in a cave as I recall it.

E: That's right.

M: I recall that about three weeks after that happened--the date was sometime in March, around the 11th or 12th of March. About three weeks after that happened, Time Magazine had a resumé on this revolution and why a federal march had been precipitated and it told about a wealthy oil man from Tampico arriving [at Palomas] with \$5 million to finance the revolution and that was the tip-off--that was the thing that hooked Cedillo, when the government found out about [the oil man]. Well, I was the wealthy oil man, because I was the only stranger there in that period--it was the same date that I was at Palomas and I know that there was no other stranger there. So this story was made up.

E: Cedillo, of course, has been portrayed as one of the last of the caudillos in the Latin American tradition, in the Mexican tradition. He's been portrayed as being a pistol packing, mean human being. How did you find him? Did he pack a pistol?

M: No, sir. He was completely unarmed. There wasn't an armed man. Well, a couple of those fellows at the ranch had pistols [as I now recall. But I saw no rifles.] The people who worked in the fields were not armed at all.

E: And he was not armed?

M: No, not at all.

E: What kind of a man was he? Did you like him?

M: I liked him very much. He was a very warm man. He talked with a great deal of [earnestness, and no wit.] I'm certain that he knew he was going to die, but he could still laugh and smile about it. He was a very intense Catholic, no question about that. He had a great deal of faith. But as for him being a caudillo, gee, anybody seeing him in those circumstances was aware that he couldn't be typed that way. All he was trying to do was take care of a few old men who had been in the wars with him, that was all.

E: How would you characterize the influence that he held on that area of Mexico--the San Luis Potosí area?

M: Oh, there's no question about [his radiance.] He used the title "El Jefe." Everybody in San Luis Potosí called him the "Jefe"--they thought of him as a very big man. But there were not enough potential revolutionaries in all of San Luis Potosí to give him a chance; so that description of him in his waning years simply would not hold true.

E: General Marshall, did you ever meet Cárdenas?

M: No, never met him. I've been next to him; never met him. I told you why I never met him--because he insisted on having questions passed to him before he could be interviewed, and

he'd stick to those questions. The editor of El Nacional, Froylan Manjares, (that was the party publication, it was a daily publication), was interested always in getting us together and naturally he was in close to Cárdenas. But I told him that that was just a principle of mine and I would abide by it and he respected me for it. It caused no strain in our relationship.

E: Could you tell me what the occasion was when you found yourself next to him?

M: That was at that rally in the Zócalo where I showed you the picture the other day. He was making a public speech on some kind of a big occasion. I don't recall whether it was a holiday or what it was. It may have been in connection with the oil expropriation. I think that's probably what it was.

E: March 18, 1938 thereabouts?

M: Yeah. Is that the date?

E: That's the date it happened--March 18, 1938.

M: I was back in Mexico City by that time. That was one reason I wanted to stay on instead of taking that story to the border. Connor, who was the Vice-president of Standard Fruit Company, I had met in Tabasco much prior to this, when he was close to Garido Canabal. We had formed a friendship then because we felt the same way about Garido as did George Creel--that he was a good man. When I got back to Mexico City

at that time negotiations between the oil companies and the workers were in deadlock. I went to the Consul General, a chap by the name of Williams, and asked him what was the situation. He said, "I don't know, but Connor, whom you do know, is acting as the arbiter between the two sides. I'm

sure you can get to Connor. We'll call him up right now."

Connor said that I would meet him at the University Club at 4:00--but be sure to come in the back way; he didn't want anybody to know we were talking. And so, when we got together he said, "I am certain Cárdenas is going on the air Sunday night at 6:00 over radio to announce that expropriation is taking place. I'm absolutely certain that this is going to happen." We got through with the business and broke up. I went back to the U.S. Embassy to talk to Steve Aguirre and Josephus Daniels. I said, "Have you any idea that expropriation is about to come off?" And in the meantime I had wired the Northern ~~Amer~~ American Newspaper Alliance and the Detroit News that I knew [expropriation] was going to happen--I was certain it was going to happen, and how much did they want on it. They wired back that they didn't want anything because all the American people were interested in was FDR's attempt to pack the Supreme Court and there wouldn't be any interest in this story. You can imagine how I felt. I said, "Oh, the hell with it," and decided to spend the weekend in Cuernavaca. But in the meantime I had talked to Josephus Daniels and he said I was just dreaming--there wouldn't be anything like that. Then I got a call from him at Cuernavaca about the middle of the afternoon on Sunday...no, it was on Saturday, I guess, that he was making the speech. You can check up on the dates when Cárdenas was making the speech. I got a call from Daniels to come over to Mexico City--he wanted to see me. He was all broken up, crying like a baby.

E: He was actually crying?

M: Yes, sir, crying. He said his career was in ruins; he said, "Here I am reaching nearly the end of the road and this has happened to me and it's a total disaster." I said, "Mr. Ambassador, you've just got it all wrong." I told him what had happened in my dealings with the newspapers in the United States-- that they weren't even interested in the story. I said, "That's just how small a thing this is to the American public right now. You'll find out it's not going to hurt you one bit." That cheered him up. But Steve Aguirre, who was his private secretary, was an old friend of mine from El Paso, and I couldn't imagine Aguirre not being able to get to the people who could keep the Ambassador advised [on such an important matter.]

E: Was Steve Aguirre Mexican American?

M: Yes. [He was] a very well known kid in El Paso when I was growing up. [I thought the world of him.]

E: Do you know what became of him?

M: I think he died about ten years ago.

E: Do you have any idea if he would have family in El Paso?

M: I'm sure he has, yes. I'm sure the family is still here.

E: We'll have to follow that up. General, you once made a comment to me that you considered Josephus Daniels one of the most naïve men you ever knew. Was that the basis for it?

M: I guess so, but there were other conversations. I was at dinner with him a number of times and there was just an air of ingenuousness about him when it came to world affairs. Another example: telling me to tell Frank Murphy that he'd support

him for President of the United States when he had never met Murphy--he had no idea what he was like. I'd call that ingenuous.

E: This is interesting because Josephus Daniels, of course, was Secretary of the Navy at the time of the American invasion of Vera Cruz in 1914--in April of 1914. I don't know what bearing this insight into his character may have on the history of that particular affair, but perhaps historians should take note of it. Did you ever meet Mr. Daniels after this incident in 1938?

M: No. I met him immediately after that. I met him within the next week or so when his feelings were very much relieved and he was once again happy.

E: In Mexico City?

M: That's right. But I never saw him again in the United States that I recall. I thought a lot of him; I enjoyed him very much. If I said he was naïve I was just thinking out loud. He was naïve, but he was also a very, very likeable gentleman. He told me, for instance, that the reason that he had taken the Embassy in Mexico City was because he had never really stored up any money in his life. He figured that down there he could save around \$20,000 a year. That was why it attracted him.

E: Is it your opinion that this naiveté had any bearing on his competence?

M: Oh, I think so. I think, for instance, the Vera Cruz expedition was very ill-advised.

E: But some would have it that Woodrow Wilson was more responsible than anyone else for that.

M: Well, I imagine that's true. But if the Secretary of the Navy takes a strong position on the matter that could have changed the President's mind.[It might have restrained him.]

E: That's very interesting, General. Did you ever have occasion to meet Dwight Morrow? Of course, this was before the '30s.

M: No.

E: The late '30s.

M: No. The only other Ambassador that I knew was Warren.

E: Did you ever meet Lindbergh?

M: Yes.

E: Where did you meet Charles Lindbergh?

M: I met him in an apple orchard at Royal Oak, Michigan--the first crash that he'd had after his trans-Atlantic flight. I thought he was a stuffed shirt from the word "go." I didn't like anything about him--highly opinionated, imperious, nasty. He was as nasty as the people around him on that occasion. The idea of talking to the press was, to him, repugnant. He was in a plane with George Landfair, Major George Landfair. I talked to Landfair at great length about the accident, but not to Lindbergh... oh, a little bit. As soon as he found out I was from the press... I was there alone; I just happened to be passing by and saw a plane land in the fields, so I got a scoop out of it. It was his first crash, or first forced landing, after he became famous.

E: You never met his wife, Ann Morrow?

M: No. She must have been a remarkable woman to suffer him all those years.

E: Of course, she was Ambassador Morrow's daughter. You once mentioned to me, General, that you were acquainted with Francisco Mújica.

M: Yes.

E: What were the circumstances of your meeting with him?

M: I met him on several occasions, always in Mexico City. I never saw him outside of Mexico City, and it was on official business where I'd go on to him with something--questions that I wanted answers to. He was pleasant according to his lights. I said a few minutes ago that he always struck me as a frustrated college professor type--a very unhappy man, very solemn-faced, very brief in conversation, courteous enough but never extending himself; no warmth to his personality at all. He was not an imposing figure in any sense of the word.

E: What position was he holding at this time?

M: I don't remember. I think he was in the Secretariat and I think it was Education, but I'm not sure.

E: We can look that up. So your visits to Mexico terminated in 1938?

M: That's right.

E: And you went back to Detroit after your last visit to Mexico?

M: That's right.

E: Could you tell us, more or less, what are your recollections about being a newspaperman for Detroit's leading newspaper leading up to World War II? Were you writing on military affairs?

M: Not at all. I had no chance to. The press of the United States was not interested in military copy; it still isn't interested in military copy. It doesn't understand it. The average editor of the United States is anti-military in thought and philosophy. I wrote as much, I guess, as anyone did, but I would write feature stories mainly, out of my contacts with the Mexican Army and the United States Army--the people at Fort Bliss or the Spanish Army where I was working as a correspondent.

E: You mentioned the Spanish Army. You were witness to some events in the Spanish Civil War, weren't you?

M: That's right.

E: What year was this, General?

M: 1936 and the early part of '37. I got there in August and I think I left in February.

E: Let's go across the ocean for a while, from Mexico. What was happening in Spain at that time? What was the military situation at the time that you arrived?

M: The military situation seemed to be hard set against the so-called Loyalists at that time. They were holding fairly well at Teruel. This was at the time when the General who preceded Franco [Mola] was killed, I think, in an air crash; then Franco took over. It was while I was at Araujuez that Quiapo de Llano got on the air and talked about Madrid being the next target and that this General had four columns marching on Madrid and a fifth column inside the city that was going to turn. There were five of us correspondents at Araujuez. We picked it up on the radio. We turned "the fifth column" into a household expression so that by the time World War II came along it

was [a household expression]. It did look to most of the correspondents at that time that Madrid was about to fall. It didn't to me.

I wrote from Spain and I saw no chance of Madrid falling within the next two years and I was certain [it would not happen].

E: So it didn't look to you like Madrid was going to fall?

M: I was certain it would not fall within two years. I thought that it was a strong enough bastion militarily that there was no possibility of it being taken in main strength by the people who had started the war. But at the same time I was writing that the Loyalist cause was defeated--and it would be defeated within about two years. My calculations on that came from the fact that I had seen the last cotton delivered to the docks of Barcelona--the last shipment of any materiel from the outside, and I knew that all of the war material that the Loyalists could depend on was already in Spain and they couldn't possibly do it with what they had. By that time, the Russian influence there was already very pronounced. They came in around October or November, 1936.

E: I'd like to go back for just a second to that term "the fifth column." So that was really where the term was coined?

M: Yes.

E: And four or five American newsmen were the ones who did it?

M: That's right. A couple of them were Englishmen.

E: Was Ernest Hemingway in that group?

M: No. He hadn't arrived in Spain yet.

E: About what year did he arrive?

M: He arrived just after I left. I didn't see him in Spain.

E: You never saw Ernest Hemingway in Spain?

M: No.

E: You did know him, however, later in World War II?

M: That's right. Well, I had known him before Spain. I told you about the conversations we had had in Key West where he told me that he would not go over because he had friends on both sides and he didn't have any feeling at all about the war. That was his viewpoint at that time. That's when I told you he was a chameleon-like character.

E: Very interesting, General. I think this is a good time to break today's interview. I want to thank you.

M: OK, sir.