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Interview no. 1623

L.A. Gladstone

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: L.A. Gladstone, M.D.

Interviewer: Barbara Dent

Project: El Paso Medical History

Location: El Paso, TX

Date of Interview: March 22, 2000

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1623

Transcriber / Summary: Jose Miguel Leyva

Dr. Gladstone was born in a small town in eastern Czechoslovakia in 1922. He was the oldest of three children. He lived there until age 7, when his father moved the family to a larger town where the children could get more education. Dr. Gladstone dedicated himself to becoming a physician during high school after watching his mother die painfully. Due to WWII, he was unable to go to the university immediately upon graduating. In 1943 he was drafted by Germany to serve in a battalion of Jewish laborers. He worked digging ditches, fixing roads, and repairing bridges under the Schutz Staffel. At one point his battalion was sent out walking to set off any mines left by the Russian army. The Schutz Staffel eventually marched them to a concentration camp in Austria, where many of the battalion starved. When the Russian Army arrived, many people died from the sudden intake of food. Dr. Gladstone went to the Jewish Council in Vienna where he was given clothing, and he travel to Prague. He eventually got in touch with family members living in El Paso, TX, and moved to the United States with their help. He attended the Texas College of Mines (UTEP) for his pre-med studies. He describes professors that influenced him during these early years, as well as his adaptation to speaking English. He returned to El Paso in 1956 to practice medicine. He worked as an intern at Thomason Hospital for several years. He also discusses being interview by Steven Spielberg in association with the movie *Schindler's List* and a museum built in Hollywood to house the stories of Holocaust survivors. Dr. Gladstone also discusses his courtship with his wife during his med school years in Dallas, and life in the fraternity. After returning to El Paso, Dr. Gladstone served as physician for a number of African American families, and details his memories of segregation. Dr. Gladstone also recalls returning to Europe to visit the concentration camps and other WWII sites.

Length of interview 61 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a