

LATANE TEMPLE

Interview 83 c-f

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Megan Lambert, Interviewer

Retyped by Courtney Lawrence

ABSTRACT: In this interview with Megan Lambert, Thomas Lewis Latané Temple III reminisces about his experiences in World War II, working for Temple Cotton Oil, and his management of the Great Texas Lumber Company. Mr. Temple talks extensively about his wartime training in the United States and his combat experiences in Italy. He discusses his family and marriage and his business successes and failures, as well as his feelings about business.

Megan Lambert (hereafter ML): Okay.

Latane Temple (hereafter LT): Hope I can get cranked up again, I've been thinking about this and that my preamble is that I believe I am one of the most successful, happiest people that I have ever known. Because I have been a philosophy that, and I have ever known, religion that, seems to have just brought all the good in the world in the way of health, supply and love, but have brought I have a triad of failure out of which I have submerged. These are marriage, a war and business, a roll in business. In the case of the first which I won't spend too much time on, I must say that I don't think I would have ever married, ever. I don't think, I'm not sure that I am the marrying kind, not in that old cliché, but just that I ever have been able to think of myself as getting up to marriage if circumstances had not been such that when I married that I didn't feel any way to run including my own attachment and love and attraction to the woman I married. I couldn't have been married for 31 years if there hadn't been great depth there. We were married for 31 years but in areas no one has ever replaced her. Mother of all my children, but anyway it came to an end after 31 years. For Alice, really, she did everything she could within her power but we were different people and different types.

The second is a longer story – back in – well, we were married in 1939 and I was restless in my marriage and dissatisfied with the way the company I was working for was operated. All my life I felt that I was one of things that was expected of me, if our country went to war I would go. All these combinations of circumstances caused me to volunteer into something called the “Volunteer Officers” – VOCO – something. You could volunteer even though you had had an exemption, mine was marriage. If you didn't make officer's candidate school, well, then you could drop out and take your place back in line for being called. So I did that and, one thing interesting to me, is that when I was growing up I had two nightmares. One was that I would marry. I found myself getting married when I really wasn't turned to marry.

ML: Was this actual nightmares or figurative nightmares?

LT: No, nightmares, I would dream it. And the other was that I would be in combat, war and would fail there. Both of those dreams, in my opinion, came true and I don't want to disparage my wife and, certainly I am the luckiest man in the world in all that came out of that marriage. It brought me out in many ways through her that I adjusted to sex, and had a glorious sex life and through her that I overcame a tendency that was laid on by my mother to feel sorry for myself. She didn't have any patience with that and made me realize it and, I must say, today she and I continue as best of friends and we touch base at least once a week, care of what we are going and for the children. We were living in Texarkana at the time, where I was in Temple Cotton Oil Company and I had offices, I was inducted there in the courthouse in Texarkana, Arkansas and we were put immediately on a bus to Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas, which was the induction camp. Something that I remember, there was sitting next to me on the bus, was a very rough lean, not rough in the sense that is tough, but just an unpolished man. He had light, long sideburns that weren't anything that any townsman would wear in those days. He was a – he wasn't from the hills but he was a real hillbilly from the back woods. I remember him telling me that his wife was pregnant and that the cow needed milking and he didn't know he was going to be just swept off like that. I am sure he was illiterate and I often wondered what became of him. But, anyway, I went through, was sent to Camp Walters in Mineral Wells. I was in about 10 other VOCO's. We were with a group from Minnesota for basic training. It was a heavy weapons company, basic training. We didn't have rifles until the 13 weeks were half gone. I was not made a squad leader at first, a squad leader was a very nice man who was a lawyer, and was not a COVO but he was college educated and had a small degree. He was the squad leader, his name was Eldon Spencer from Minnesota. But the officers, non-commissioned officers, thought to replace him with me, something that an ordinary person would have taken hard. But he and I became the closest of friends and, of course, I was bucking because I wanted to go to officers candidate school. Those 13 weeks, I went there and doing all those things.

I remember there was one man in the company, his name was Rooter. And where the rest of us just detested any routine, like kp or washing down the barracks (we had to do that every week before we could go into town and drink beer), Rooter liked those. He hated the drilling, the things that required coordination. The story was told of him by one of our members that was close by when we were on the rifle range, when the battalion commander came by. Of course, at that time, it was somebody way high in the hierarchy as far as we were concerned, and we were – but he was there at the range and the Colonel asked Rooter, "Do you know the name of your company commander?" And he said, "Yes." The Colonel said "You're supposed to say 'yes sir.'" And he said, "Do you know who your company commander is?" And he said, "Yes." "Who was it?" He told him, it had been in the camp paper and the commanding General of the camp had been reported to have just shaved his moustache and finally go to the commanding General and he said "Do you know who your commanding General is?" He said "You mean the fellow that just shaved his moustache?" Buy anyway Rooter was somebody there. We had a 3.2 beer, I don't know what kind of beer it was but we had a beer thing that over across the little draw with a bridge across it. As soon as we got off duty every day he would go across the little bridge, is what he would say. But anyway, I did get – I was interviewed and did get to go to officer's candidate class at Fort Benning, Georgia. They speak of the officers

candidate – graduate officers school as a 90 days wonder which was sort of a disparaging remark, disparaging description, but anyway, I was in the 30th company of the third student regiment so there were three student regiments of 30 companies each and since we went for 90 days it meant they turned out 200 second lieutenants each day. But they hadn't even finished this (this was out in the Harmony Hill Church area) they hadn't finished it when we got there so we bathed under an outdoor closet and had very primitive accommodations. They were finished before we got through, when we had showers and stuff. They rated the officers in each of these companies and the way they rated them, the officers rated them and then the men themselves, we ourselves, voted on who the best candidates were. The only time in my life where I really did what we ought to all do, I never criticized to anybody in the company (anyone else in the company) but I felt if any of them screwed up, that anyone else could see it as well as I could. I think this contributed because probably I – but I worked hard and in time it was good. I remember one thing in particular that pleases me, and what I recall is that there were two squads, each squad had a platoon and I guess there were 20 platoons with 10 men in each tent and two of those were black officers candidates. In those days we were still segregated and I sat next to a man named Thomas, who was black, and we were friendly, but I was also a good friend, knew the rest of them and they regarded me as a friend, which pleased me, and I would help them with their homework and, of course, I had a good education and not all of them had had one. I would help them with their map reading and arithmetic and things like that that we had to do and was generally the white confidancy, the white person that had they most appreciated, and this pleased me because I'm out of the South and most of them were northerners, which sort of puts the lie to – and also, as far as I'm concerned, I was and have been, in my early 20's liberated in that respect, and I was pleased that, and of course, this taught me something else, that we, in the South, literally do speak the same language so we – and I can lapse into only slightly difference in my accent into and accent that is a black accent, not a jive accent but the old Southern. So we did speak the same language, we knew one another's background and that contributed to me receiving what I still consider about the highest honor I have ever had.

I was the No. 1 man in that officer candidate class. I remember one incident that scares me even now. Getting close to the graduation we had a massed battalion which meant the companies, four companies, marched on to the parade field and massed, as they say, then marched in review before the reviewing stand of some generals on the reviewing stand. Well, they made me company commander. I had not commanded a platoon in drill in basic training. I had taken my turn, I guess, in commanding a platoon there but I had never commanded a company. What we had to do was march on the field, four platoons, and then on the opposite side of the field was a football field. Then we did a left face, addressed the reviewing stand on the other side of the field and I got us that far and I got the order arms, which is getting the rifle off your shoulder and down to the ground, and one of the young officers, one in our company, was standing behind the General and I saw him making a – mimicking doing the parade rest – I'd overlooked doing and I commanded them to parade rest. We got through that, and, of course, we had to do a right face and march around the field. I don't know what – whether we were the first one or not and then, of course, eyes right in front of the reviewing stand, but what I am leading up to is the crisis, a tremendous crisis, when we were marching then. I don't

know if we were the first ones, the first company and we may have been, but I had no precedence but we were marching right straight into an obstacle. Well, your choice there would be to halt the company or to do a flank, a right flank and then a left flank to get around it or the opposite, but there was another command that I had never used but it's called oblique, you can go right oblique or left oblique – it's, the word is oblique, but you can understand it and I shouted company "right oblique," so God took care of me because I called a right oblique, which means instead of going this way you go at sort of an angle and left oblique and what would have happened if I hadn't come up with something – but anyway, I remember that.

One of the duties I had there, I had on my mind all these years, is there was a black man who was suspected of having communist leanings and as they do, in the Army, they have what they call F-2 which is intelligence, and that is responsible for all sorts of things such as knowing where the enemy is, but also for, I guess, discovering any kind of subversion within the outfit. They assigned me to this man, he was college educated, grown up in Chicago. We got acquainted and we took a walk after supper at night. Because I was in the early years of my civil rights persuasion and awareness of discrimination, etc, he and I hit it off beautifully. He told me one of the most poignant stories I have ever heard. And that was, he went to school in Chicago, he went to a private school, had blacks and whites in it and one of the little boys had a birthday party, primary school, and he arrived at the door with his Buster Brown collar and his present under his arm, he rang the doorbell and the little boy came to the door and started to close it and said "You can't come in." He said "Why?" And he said "Because you're black." Well, as an aside I have to say he was almost as white as I; he actually had blond, though kinky hair. He said he looked at his hands and he looked at the little boy. He didn't know what he was saying but he said, "The world just fell out from under me." Well, I learned from him that he had attended in Madison Square Gardens the National Youth Rally; there was a fellow traveler group called the National Youth something and he had attended. He told me he had attended and that it turned him off, that it was – he wasn't interested. Of course, as a college graduate, he had read some Karl Marx, and of course, I reported this routinely. I think I also reported that I did not think he was a Communist. But I was doing, you know when you are in the Army you do what you are told to do and particularly if you are bucking and this was, in a sense, an honor to have this assignment. I don't know how many others there were in the company, maybe there were others. Well, for some reason our term ended in December. Well, for the reason that it was 90 days our officers candidate class, this is in Fort Benning, Georgia, ended on December 26th. Well, we didn't do anything on Christmas Eve; we didn't do anything on Christmas, only they did have a big turkey dinner. Christmas dinner and that's all. We had the actual graduation commissioning exercise on the 26th. They could have turned us loose two days early but they didn't. When we were filing into the mess hall he came running up to me. I think that Jo had joined me then, my wife, for Christmas dinner. He came rushing up to me, the orders had been posted and he said, "My name is not on there." He came to me as his best friend to say my name, "I'm not being commissioned. What do you think happened?" And I had to say, "I can't imagine," but he was denied his commission and that's the last I have ever seen or heard of him. I don't remember his name.

Jo and I drove back to Little Rock for a delay in travel, or whatever they call it, and then reported to – back to Fort Benning because I was assigned to Ft. Benning school troops who trained other officer candidates and who put on demonstrations, battle demonstrations. One person I was associated with and particularly interesting demonstration, was how to attack a pill box, flame throwers and all that, but I was in that with a fellow named Tom Parks. As a matter of fact, he and his wife had had, well, when my wife came, I found a place out in the country that wasn't satisfactory and his wife was with him in a little efficiency apartment, but then she went home and through him we were able to get this nice place, a home with somebody named Croughlin, I believe, that made good homebrew, but Tom and I got to be friendly. He told me that he had been a juvenile delinquent, had stolen tires and things but then when he came before a judge on time, the judge's treatment of him straightened him out. But then, at one time, he told me that he and his wife were Communists and I think he probably regretted it. Nobody ever asked me about him. If this wasn't another case, but he was without doubt, the best officer in our 124th infantry, which would be a national guard out of Florida, what I was assigned to, and he was in it, too. Many times he said all he wanted to do was kill Nazi's and he trained harder and was the best officer in the company.

Nothing much else that is interesting there – well, while we were there, my wife was there and it was a rather happy time for us, I remember one incident that I'll repeat. A friend who had gone to school with my wife's mother, at some southern school of some kind, this was in Columbus, Georgia and she – when we called on her, she said she felt like Jo was her own daughter and made a lot of fuss over us, but Christmas day – it must have been that Christmas day, but anyway, we were there on Christmas day and we had no place to go. All the restaurants were closed. I can't imagine how that ties in but anyway, it had to be the following Christmas after that – are we about out of tape here? I'm doing an awful lot of superfluous relating, but I remember we went by there on Christmas day hoping just to have some Christmas cheer and we were met at the door by somebody and turned away so we strolled the streets, but we did see somebody a delicatessen was closed. Somebody did go down there from home and they did sell us something, so we had some sandwiches there on Christmas day and ate them on the curb. Shall we stop now or –

ML: I have a question I would like to ask you. Just to make sure, you were saying about your black friends who were turned away from the door of the birthday party. The way you said –

Second Side of Tape Dated July 14, 1985

ML: Okay, just say that bit again about high pressure salesmanship and how it was -

LT: Well, you asked if I thought there was a connection with the little boy, who is really not black, but a black boy and the fact that he was inquiring around about Communism and went to the youth rally in Madison Square Garden and I said, in effect, "No, he was a college graduate and he was probably a little younger than I but not much younger than I and in my own time in college, but for the grace of God I might have been Alger Hiss

myself because we were inquiring into other forms of society. I don't make the mistake, and I think it is a mistake, of equating Communism as opposed to democracy, it is Communism and Capitalism, Totalitarianism and Democracy, otherwise it's apples and oranges. But anyway, we were – it was in our democratic rights that we were interested and other forms of economic forms. I would fancy that Alger Hiss was a casualty there that may have drifted on into whatever it was, whether it was true or not, so I don't think necessarily that he was, although any intellectual black then, or even now, would have to be a little bit critical of our democracy and might be looking for other avenues. I related what he told me as being part of us reflecting on the black experience and discrimination and segregation and the things that I was already unhappy about.

We went from Fort Benning then; they broke up the 124th infantry and sent us all out to other assignments. The Captains and above were assigned, I think, to what we call the zone of the interior but by that time I was a First Lieutenant, I'd had one promotion. We went to – it slipped me – anyway, it was a camp in Columbia, South Carolina and we were just held there pending shipment overseas. What we did was go on little mock maneuvers and keep in physical shape doing a lot of experimental things like fast marching, which is run and march, run and march. Then we went to [Camp] Patrick Henry for debarkation. One thing, my wife and I had, - this was a happy period really and we were friends with some people, particularly the Mulchaies but somebody named Tom Hardy from Memphis and I remember another name – Townsend. We all had a cottage out at Sesquicentennial Courts. It was an old – we didn't...call them motels in those days, it was a tourist court but it was an old tourist court and we had a kitchen and everything. We had a nice time there with these other people. Then we went to Patrick Henry and we stayed – Jo and I stayed, it was winter time, in a rooming house there and then, finally, it came time to go – the reason I was stopping and thinking was because our friends, J. D. Cobb and Katherine Cobb, from near Little Rock, had been friends of mine before I went in because I called on them to buy cottonseed and sell fertilizer, but he was at the University of Texas. We didn't know each other there, but anyway, we were friends and we had seen them in Washington when I was going through – when I was taking a special course as Regimental Gas Officer in the 124th infantry, but anyway, we had known them when they were in Washington. They came over to get Jo when we parted for me to go overseas, and I think I can say that was maybe, the unhappiest day, or thing in my life when we parted. Of course, I didn't know if I would ever see her again and I remember going down in the boiler room of the barracks we were staying in until we embarked and I wept more convulsively than I ever have in my life. I remember that time and I think it is pertinent in light of what I've said about me wondering if I would have ever gotten married.

So we went over on the Liberty Ship, we left on, as I recall the last day of February and arrived on the last day of March. There were about, not over ten Junior Officers and then there was a Lieutenant Colonel who was in command of the attachment, about 500 men slept in hammocks in one of the holds, the Liberty ships were built for that and we were in a convoy. Some of the things I remember about going over on that Liberty Ship was I'd bought, in the PX, "What to do aboard a transport" and it had the constellations. Well, after we got started I elected and I was free to take my bedroll up from the deck and sleep, the deck was covered with trucks, weapon carriers, and I slept on the bed of one of these trucks. You'd look up at the stars, of course,

everything was blacked out at night, and find the constellations. We had, there was a new group of people, as I recall, maybe some of them were from my company but I don't think so. I was with strangers but there was no Chaplain on this boat and the commander, the Colonel was a very nice guy, I had lots of good reasons to like him but he asked if any of us would volunteer to hold Sunday services and I said that I would. We had it up on a hatch cover and I don't know how many of the 500 men came but maybe there were 30 or 40 and I talked and we sang "Onward Christian Soldiers." I guess not because it was military but because it was the only one all of us knew. But I talked about God's goodness and divine protection, brotherhood, love and that was interesting. I'll jump way ahead to when I was back in the depot to load, coming back and one young man walked up to me and called me "Reverend." He remembered me as being a preacher, which of course, was wrong. Anyway we arrived in Italy. We crossed with American destroyer escorts that we could see around us.

Oh, another thing on going over, one of the other Junior Officers volunteered to help the armed guards, which was the Navy contingent on there of about ten men with whose commander was a Lieutenant, I believe, in the Navy, this is equivalent to being a Captain, ensign, Lieutenant J. G., I don't know. But no matter, he stayed drunk all the time. I don't remember seeing him more than once or twice, but we joined the armed guard at daybreak, before daybreak because that was when the stukors were supposed to come in out of the sun and I wasn't particularly – after I volunteered for the Army I never volunteered for anything unless you'd say volunteering to hold that service. I never volunteered for anything after that, you don't do it in the Army. But he volunteered us. We had a big 3" gun on the back end that was never fired because the Detachment Commander didn't know how to fire it, but we had anti-aircraft cannons and I was assigned to a 50 mm., no, it was a – anyway, it was a heavy machine gun of some kind that you could guide, aerial protection, and I was never a marksman, but they would shoot up these bursts with the anti-aircraft guns and then we would fire on those bursts with this other gun. Well, I was the best one, I remember that, because I was never any kind of rifleman. But the irony of it was that the Navy crew that had that gun in cleaning it, after one of these practices, lost an important spring overboard so I never – the last part I didn't have a gun to man, I remember that part.

But we arrived through the Straits of Gibraltar in March of '44. The U. S. Navy turned us over to the British Navy. This was in the Mediterranean and we had just about half as many ships protecting us and there were destroyer escorts coming in. I don't know what there were but anyway, they were British and we had about half the protection. We arrived at the coast of Italy. We didn't know where we were going, by the way. All of us thought we were going to England until we saw – nobody told us where we were going. We weren't supposed to know for security reasons, until we saw the Straits of Gibraltar and then we knew we were going to Italy. We arrived when Stromboli, which is a volcano island, was erupting and I remember that sight. We arrived in Naples when Vesuvius was erupting. This was impressive for many reasons. One was that we felt that was a beacon for German bombers and that we were potential targets and I can remember also, something flying over at night, undoubtedly a German observation plane because it dropped nothing. But seeing all the traces from the allied guns there over Naples, the sky was a display and scary. It later was reported that the month of March in 1944 more

Allied ships were sunk in the Mediterranean than any other month of the war. We went to – we were unloaded in Naples and we got on little boxcars, but you’ve seen them, as the 40 and 8 – I don’t know, after World War I there was a veterans group called the 40 and 8 because they had been transported to Verdun or someplace and these little four-wheel European boxcars didn’t have the trucks under them. The reason they were called 40 and 8 was because they were marked that they would hold 40 men or 8 horses. Well, we were transported from there out to Caserta which was nearby, maybe 15 or 20 miles and it was where the – one of the royal palaces was. One thing I remember on that trip, standing in the boxcars and seeing the Italian girls for the first time, we would wave at them and the Italians waved and, of course, it was a big deal, all these girls waving at us as if to say “Come on.”

We went out to the replacement depot, the “Repple Depple”-lived in tents and some of the officers that I had known had already gone into combat. This was at the time of Cassino where the whole invasion of Italy was held up by Monte Cassino. I don’t know if you are old enough to know anything about that. Of course, you’re not old enough to have heard about it but it was a medieval monastery with a lot of caves underneath it and it was at a key point in there in the mountain – I don’t know what they were – but it is going up the boot and there were terraces all below which were vineyard terraces. The American troops were repelled with great casualties over and over again because no amount of shelling could affect the German troops because they were all down in these caves. I can remember one fellow, he was not athletic, I remember how hard it was for him, anything athletic. He had already gone up by the time I got there, up to the lines which were, maybe, 40 miles north but I remember seeing him in the chow line there at the replacement depot and his mess kit just rattled, but he had been there and he told us about it and, of course, it didn’t improve my morale much, my going on patrol. Well, he went back in there and was killed, I remember that.

We were in tents. It seems to me it was sort of messy there, but, one of the things that I noticed was the younger officers used profanity every other word, profanity or obscenity. It was so clear that they, like me, were scared and they were really telling themselves that they were real tough men and that was why they would do it. There was one fellow that was on the ship with me, he was a charmer, but we had a little tent there and he would come in that tent. He would burst in and he’d say “The world is not my home, boys, I’m only passing through. If Heaven’s not my home, oh Lord, what will I do?” I’ve never forgotten that and the second verse, also.

So we were then put on trucks and sent up to a line which was on the Adriatic, anchor end was at Minturno, and here begins my disillusionment. We went up the Old Appian Way to this town of Minturno. We went up in the daytime but we didn’t go into the lines until night, but we – there were signs along the highway, billboards, if you can imagine it that said, “Can you afford these fines? Pants out of boots, officers \$5.00, enlisted men \$2.00. Sleeves rolled up, officers \$3.00, enlisted men \$1.00.” Well, here I was a volunteer, I was going to serve my country. This was the greatest thing of my life and I was in something that petty. There is only one word for it if that’s not petty. Then we stopped some place and General Coulter, I hope I never forget his name, met us. He was the Corps Commander, a corps is made up of 4 regiments I believe, our 2nd Corps I believe. And he gave us a little talk. I would hope that he would given a talk where “You are the key to this thing, you are the Junior Officers, our success or failure is in your

hands and you are the real heroes of this war.” He didn’t say anything like that, of course, I had gone felling high. He said, “You all are getting ready to go into combat and a lot of you are going to get scared and run and I want you to know that you are going to get court-martialed if you do.” And the whole tone of it was like that. This was our pep talk going into combat for the first time.

ML: Oh, a bad idea.

LT: So we did go in the line and nothing much at first and that was on April 18, I remember the date.

ML: I’ll bet I know why you remember that date – because of the poem, Paul Revere, April 18, 1775, hardly a man is now alive ---

LT: No, that isn’t – but I can remember my platoon that I joined was in a rock house over looking this no man’s-land and I can remember the men going on patrol and that was something that was as scary as it could be. They blacked their faces and they would go on patrol in combat. In ground combat you always have patrols because you have to know where the enemy is at all times, that’s your feeler, your contact, and these men would go out with black faces and one of the things we all dreaded was a trap where, if patrols repeated on the same route, and the enemy found out about it they would get a – well, that’s not the name of it, but it was a V shaped thing, you would walk right into it and then they can fire straight ahead and you are caught right in the middle of it. But, anyway, I can remember that. I never – I didn’t go on any patrols then but I can remember the first shelling and how serious it made the whole thing seem.

If I can remember one thing, and this is another item, going back to the company commander and, I believe his name was Brennan. To this day he has never seen the enemy or looked out where the enemy fire might come from. He was dug in a hole back a hundred yards from where we were, or more, and we would have to go back there to report to him. He never came up to the lines. I remember his First Sergeant was a career soldier and I can remember him complaining, he said, “I’ve been in this damn army for 15 years and here war breaks out and what happens? They send me right in the front lines with all the recruits.” I thought “He’s been eating out of the troughs for 10 years and he thinks we are just cannon fodder. We are the citizen soldiers and he is the professional soldier and he shouldn’t be exposed to what we were exposed to.” This was an impression I had. Well, we came out of that line for a short time and went through the showers, the way they take care of you when you are in combat and we technically were in combat, already in combat. As you dump all your GI garments and you go through the shower you pick up new ones and your personal things, of course. We went into – back of the highway to a place that wasn’t anchored, it was right near Turno – it was anchored on the Adriatic on the left and we were “A” company and we were between this highway, straight pavement. We were responsible for that area, from that highway to the Adriatic, the dunes and stuff. That was “A” company – “C” company was to the right over there, of course, then in combat you have two units in and one in reserve always. Even with platoons you have two platoons attacking with one in reserve and two companies

attacking with one in reserve, two battalions attacking, etc. We dug in there and my assignment was patrols.

I made a real great mistake during that time, but anyway, I killed my first German on one of these patrols. They were daytime patrols and they had told us where the mine field was and when we were on – well, on night patrol we would have to go on the beach. I made – I don't know what the sequence is here but I went on the, as we were supposed to and we had to check out this little town, Scauri, where the Germans were supposed to be and I came back the wrong way, came through a mine field. Something I, as an officer did, I stayed between my men and the enemy. I led – men will follow you anywhere, but you can't tell them – "You go there." That's the reason the Lieutenants enjoy the most casualties than anyone else. But, coming back, I came back a different way and I followed my platoon, a squad actually. It was a squad out of my platoon and we went into a mine field and my platoon guide was killed, his name was Kiley. One of the personnel mines – you step on something and it comes up waist high and explodes. Ironically hitting you in the groin more than any place else. Well, I raced through this mine field and went back and I remember almost getting shot because there was some barbwire there, but I hollered who I was and we got the aide, the man and a stretcher out there to get Kiley. Kiley wasn't dead but the little platoon aide, of course, was unarmed. He was Red Cross. You know, they carried a Red Cross. Well, he was killed coming there. Those were altogether my fault. There was another patrol, a patrol in which I had the laugh, the first laugh of the man on men was when – it was a daytime patrol and we were ---

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ML: I wanted to ask you what your age was when you first went into the war?

LT: I married at 24. Let's see, I went in, in May of '42 so I was, seems I must have been 28 no, I was 27.

I was telling about this patrol. This straight concrete highway was our right flank and an American anti-tank gun, which was behind us, would pull out on the highway, I think, every 5 minutes on the minute and would fire a round straight down that highway in case there was any attack mounted by any kind of tank. That was a very loud resounding metal sound. It was almost deafening, but we got used to it, we didn't – but we went on this particular patrol and we were fired on. The Germans had a concussion grenade. If it had been a fragment grenade I would have been killed. It was right close to me and I was near the corner of a building so we pulled into this building, went down into the basement. Well, we were taught in combat that you never get close to a window if you are scouting, or patrolling, because your faces would be apparent, but if you are back in the shadows they can't see you. Well, across this highway there was a young German, I can almost see him, blond. He was too close to the window and I reviewed all the things you are supposed to do as a marksman, zeroed in on him and squeezed it off and he was gone. We – they were a patrol also obviously. That's all I remember that particular time except we did go back on one of the night patrols, across that highway. We would wait until the cannon had fired and then you knew you weren't going to have any chance. We went there and I actually found the blood and the – he didn't have on a helmet, he had on an overseas cap, and I found that cap so I of course remember that.

When time came when the line was broken, the Cassino Line, they never did – they had made all these frontal assaults on Cassino, but a flanking route was found back or some battalion showed the Allies finally how to – a way around Cassino, and I believe it was Polish troops that actually led that, because on this line the British were all way across the boot but it was all held up by Cassino. The British were on the Adriatic and we were on the Tyrrhenian but when the big attack came and it was time for us to jump off, well, the defense was on the other side of the highway and here “C” company was in the attack and I remember learning, and of course, these were pill boxes were firing directly with flak trajectory into the attack and machine guns and rifles, of course. “C” company came over and they were cut up and had to back off and because our trajectories were anti-tanks, you know, like armor trajectories, armor piercing, they had to be low into these pill boxes on the other side and a lot of our fire was falling short, hitting the top of this and so these poor guys were shot up from back and front. They pulled “C” out and put “B” in and all the time we were sitting there waiting to move forward until they’d gone. Finally they put “B” company in, but I’m not sure but – I don’t think we ever broke them there. It was the line that broke and they were pulled back. Incidentally one of the things I remember observing there, we knew where the Germans were, they were on the hills, or mountains, held, seeing one of our observation planes flying over spotting positions and seeing it get hit and I believe the man parachuted, I’m not sure. But finally the time came to move forward.

There was a period there that was before what I’ve just been describing, before we were on the hilltop and I saw the first shelling and the time we got in those foxholes there, when on the other side of the highway and a little further back, my platoon and I were in one of the stone buildings, nearly all rural houses and other houses, I guess, were laid of stone masonry, but we were in a basement there and our principal duty at that time was to probe a mine field, probe for a mine field to open up a lane for this attack where it turned out that “C” company and “B” company were over on the right. If you can imagine just a straight highway here with little cluster of houses, not even a village but along the highway and then farther up, more or less open country, there was the beginning of some hills there where the Germans were in place in this little town of Scauri which they occupied, it was in their zone.

If you can think a little farther back where these houses were, we were in one of those and my platoon and I would probe each night for, to make sure there were no mines. We didn’t run into any mines. Anybody who comes through infantry combat has to have an awful lot of luck and I had a lot of luck which meant that I just didn’t get into the worst of it at any particular time, but what we did, we probed about a ten foot wide area on our hands and knees. I was, of course, the – I was directing but just probing across, I don’t know what distance, maybe a quarter of a mile. I don’t know how far it was, I have no idea, no recollection. We laid tape along that path so that when these troops eventually moved up, I guess they had a land that had been probed. We would go out each night and I can remember going into farm houses. I’m having a little trouble connecting this up – but there was another time of going on patrols and going in these country houses, this was in May, and all the night fragrance, the night jasmine, particularly, and we had to check out these houses and we would go in, and I can remember the smell because all of those houses were two stories and down below was the wine press and the stable and the living was up above and that particular smell, fragrance

of the stable and of the sour wine leavings, etc. Then going upstairs in the dark I'd feel on all the shelves hoping to find a bottle of wine. The gardens were just coming on and, at least on one occasion we brought back artichokes. Nobody in my platoon knew how to eat an artichoke but we were, as I say, in a farmhouse, down in the basement and we were eating, we weren't on K rations, whatever it was called 10 and 8 or something, but it was one day's ration for one squad and among one of the things we would get in, was some canned butter that wouldn't melt. It had something that would keep it from melting. We were told that the Russians, when they got a big shipment of that one time when we were helping them, shipping trucks to them and other things, they thought it was axle grease and they used it to grease, but anyway, I remember that I ate the artichokes but I couldn't melt that butter. That was also the time I remember and we were probing.

One time though, I was on that path and I was in the direct spot of, a beaten spot or something, or some artillery that came in and I was, it was night, but it came in and I was prostrate and it was so close to me that it heaped dirt, clods of dirt, this terrific, I don't know how many rounds, maybe 5 or 6 rounds, came in there right where I was, all around me. It was one of these cases where I was just being protected some way but this was the greatest danger that I was in up to that time, and maybe ever – but I remember thinking and having it really come through to me that they mean to kill me. You know that but unless it happens they really mean to kill me. After it was over I made my way back to where we were and I can remember jumping every time one of our guns went off. You can tell the difference between your own artillery and what's coming in because your own is just one explosion, but, as a duel explosion when the fuse strikes and the explosion it's kind of a kar- rack. It's not one. But anyway, I remember making my way back in. But anyway going back to where we were. That line was broken, not by our company, our battalion, but it gave way and we moved on. I remember going into, our map showed arnois – I guess that's what it is – no, fornoism and I never was sure what a fornois was but actually it was a big clay, big kilns.

ML: I thought it meant ovens.

LT: Yes, and I remember going in there and we had been told about booby traps and they were heavily booby trapped. That's where the Germans had been staying, their little squad, or company, or whatever it was, but there were candles burning there and it was a sort of double take. They wouldn't have lit candles and then retreated, I don't think, but obviously they were booby trapped. So we moved on then up the boot, went to Forli, I believe was the next place. Well, on the way I can remember, one of the things I can remember was a German mule man. On the mountains, on both sides mules, supplied the troops in the mountains and they would meet them. But here was a German and his mule, both of which had been killed I guess days before, because he still held the rope. Both he and the mule were swollen, you know, the way you see a dog on the side of the road that is bloated and swollen. We moved on up and I'm not quite sure where any of these, most of these other things occurred but I do remember that as we were rounding a curve and crossing a bridge the whole battalion, I guess, we began receiving machine gun fire and my company commander told me to go and find it and we did. We made our way up this hillside, and I remember and I think it was the same place, as we were going up the Germans were retreating, the Italians were returning to their homes. I remember looking

down at one of these homes where these Italians were and they got into a mine field. I saw some of them stricken. But anyway, we went up and found these machine guns, and of course, there were the delaying tactics to slow up the advance and I used the school solution. I established a base of fire and then went to one flank to put them in a cross fire. We didn't kill anybody but we drove them out.

And for some reason, I think it was the same time we went on up and kept on climbing until we looked down on a coastal plain. It was Red Earth, as I remember it, and there was a Roman house that could have been out of an illustration, out of a Roman book, or an illustration or something down here and here was this man with an ox plowing this green, that had cover crop on it and he was plowing it and the terrain off to the left. What exquisitely beautiful scene it was. When you are in combat, you live right now because you don't know if you are going to be alive five minutes from now. You don't know what is going to happen. It teaches you to just embrace every moment, every living moment and having the most wonderful sense of value of being alive and I never felt it more than that; it dazzled the sun on the terrain and this ancient Roman plow, just out going back through centuries –

ML: Did that feeling stay with you through the rest of your life?

LT: Yes, I'm reminded of it every time that I am inclined to be a little despondent; I remember that this is the exalted moment right there in life. Well, we went on, I don't – I remember one other little fire fight. I don't know where it was. You see, I was never in a real pitched battle. These were all little skirmishes that I was in. We ran into another delaying force and we routed it, did the same thing – I was in a position with the automatic rifleman with me, to have done some real harm but I didn't bring myself to fire on them because they were in Khaki, the same color of ours, and I was afraid it was some of our men that had gotten there, but anyway, we routed them and we wounded and captured the typical, I mean, sort of archetype of German, blond, young. While we were doing whatever it was to send him back to our lines, he was wounded, but not seriously in the leg or something and he asked – “Why are you all fighting us? Why are the Americans fighting us? We haven't done anything to you? I've lost all my family in the fighting of Cologne, my mother and father.” Well, that's kind of a – you can't answer that in a word and I've thought about that question – how would you probably answer somebody in a situation like that, other than that we are at war.

The next thing I remember is that we came to Foscotti and, of course, all this was - - no, no, a very important time. There was a little town in Latina which is a state or province south of Rome where I was the point on the approached march, as they call it. One unit is assigned to lead and it all ends up with one man, one squad, one platoon and you are spread out in a sort of – no, you are moving on the approach march, but your position to move up into a battle formation if you run into anything but there is one man out in front, and of course, if he is fired upon, then of course, the platoon moves up and the company moves up. We were the point, our platoon was the point so I was up at the front and we'd gone through the night and I had fallen into a stream that we went through and I had a lensatic compass and it was ruined and when – so there was a man in my company who had an Army issued wrist compass that I wasn't acquainted with, but anyway when dawn came we were supposed to be enveloping this little town of Sonino,

moving in on it because it was a potential strongpoint, for defense. It was on a hilltop with houses all around it in this medieval fashion and, if you have been to Italy?

ML: No, I haven't – just a little bit in northern Italy.

LT: Anyway, old medieval towns were built in a way that they could protect themselves and so many of them are just like a sheep's fold on the top of a mountain. Well, this was that kind of town. Here I am leading, you might say, the whole regiment on this surprise march, or maybe it was just a battalion, and I read the compass in reverse. I got a "possible" in map reading while going through officers candidate school, which means I never made a single error, but power of self deception being what it is, and not knowing that compass I had the map and I could see Senino here and we were moving after daylight. We had made this surprise march all night and my company commander called me and said "Temple, you are going in the wrong direction." I said "No, I can see Senino" – he said, "Turn around and come back." I said – "I can see Senino." He said "Just fall in behind us because you are wrong," and of course, I was, so then we went on into this little town of Senino from the south and I was the – gosh, there are so many of these incidents and I'm not getting them in succession but it doesn't make any difference – because I didn't know where I was anyway. But we had a firefight there in the town and, on the streets of the town, and there was some machine gun fire coming up one of the streets that approached, so I took part of my platoon around and we got up to the place where we could actually get close to the machine gun and this German machine gun crew came running in the street and ran into a house across the street over there and hadn't seen us. One man leaned over and I shot him in the head – and this is something else that is on my conscience because I couldn't see how he could be alive, but after that I ran in there, which was a stupid thing to do because one of them could have killed me, but I ran in there and saw him there and I ordered one of my men to go ahead and finish him off which I should never have done, but I thought I was doing the right thing at the time. We were taken in by at least one squad. We were assigned a certain part of the perimeter of this mountain town looking down in the valley and a local man and his family gave us a meal and it was the most wonderful meal I have ever had. Of course, we were on "K" rations and I would like to say that "K" rations will keep you alive but they won't keep you going but he had a little beef tender and wine and bread and it was the most marvelous feast in the world and we stayed there.

Then we moved on out toward Rome. There was another place along the way, one of the things that happened to me, well, at that battle, not that battle. There was other exchange besides this particular one but there again it was a delaying group. There was some mortar fire killed the – our weapons platoon leader, a rifle platoon had a weapons platoon which is a small mortar – a 60 mm mortar and light machine guns and then it has 3 rifles platoons. Well, the command of the weapons platoon is just a notch up from being a rifle platoon leader. The rifle platoon leader is the lowest of all the combat officers. You know, I was a first Lieutenant, I had been promoted in the States so after that, I asked the Captain, I said "Now all my basic training was in weapons, not in rifles and it seems to me that I ought to be the weapons platoon leader," and he said, "Temple, you know you are the only one of my rifle platoon leaders that I can depend upon." Well, I did get most of the assignments, nearly all the assignments. Well, he wrote my death

warrant right then, in my mind, because as long as I was doing well I was going to be held in that position and that took something out of me. There was another – we occupied there, and then we went on toward Rome. I don't know when it happened but we had another little pitched engagement in which we were chasing the enemy and I remember there was this large hill, described as a hill or mountain, and the company was going over here but he assigned me to clear the hill, which meant probably a mile or two miles around, so we took my platoon and, of course, this was all – you are totally exhausted walked these miles and miles and not sleeping and sometimes in contact with the enemy. But I walked around – by the time, and I remember one thing there, ran into a shepherd who came out of a little hut and he gave me some hard cheese and – he gave me half a loaf of hard, whole ground black bread that was the most delicious thing, I believe, I have ever had.

Side 2 Tape 83d

LT: We moved down to where the company was and there was a little valley with a railroad embankment running through it and I was told to, then there was resistance there, machine guns and mortars, and I was given the job of clearing it out. Another platoon, I don't know, I said to the company commander, "Why me, why my men, why me, why not whoever his name was?" He said, "I can't depend on him." The same thing. So we moved out there and we knew they had mortars. I had, in my platoon, I had about 5 or 6 young guys, 18 years old who had just come up to us in the night. I didn't even know their names really. I led with the first two squads through this open exposed area up to this embankment. There was a little railroad section house or something there, and took them real fast and had the reserve behind me. Well, that was another mistake I made because by the time they got there this mortar fire came in. Mortar fire is terrible. It was ack-ack – and it hits and just explodes the minute it touches the ground and spreads. Well, I don't know, 3 or 4 of those men were killed before I even knew their names and we got into a fire fight and one of my men said something about it – I wasn't – have to go all the way back to Ft. Benning, Georgia going through basic training when we had an officer who had fought in World War I, talked to us and he said, "You'll get where – you'll get where rifle fire doesn't bother you." He said "It's mortar and artillery that will bother you." And that's true, they just scared the living God-damn hell out of you. But it was sitting out there returning fire with small arms all around me – not out of any great bravado or anything but I just remember it. But I remember turning to my left and seeing Karatoo get killed. I have to go back – when I joined the outfit, it was an outfit that had already been together for a long time and I went in as a replacement officer, replaced Lt. whoever he might have been, and as we moved along we would dig out actual slit, trenches on these rocky hillsides, the hardest digging in the world. If we were going to be there very long we would dig a fox hole which meant we would down. Karatoo would dig his and then he would come over and say, "Lieutenant, you are no good at digging." And he would dig my hole for me. He was a wonderful guy, he and – anyway I saw him killed there and by now, this force, whatever the size of it was, it was probably maybe platoon size force, it had moved on because we didn't assault anybody. We didn't kill anybody. We just sat there and exchanged fire and it was Karatoo dead and these boys. We took our wounded to go back a little bit.

Another thing I remember at that particular time that is hard to recall is that the Italians had apparently taken refuge in a culvert under that railroad dump, embankment, and we heard voices in there and we shot in there and I guess, killed them, I don't know. But it was in the heat of all this. We went over to a little stone house and I can remember, you know how you always see the wounded crying for water? Well, that's what our wounded were doing and all of us, we used up what little water we had and we stayed there until dark when we could move back and join the company.

Well, those are the only little fracasas that I can remember. But I can remember on well, up until we got to Foscotti. There was one man in my platoon that came up to me one time, I had two men who were both from Georgia, who couldn't read or write and they were the most difficult men because one of them, I remember, when we were in those patrol situations, he would say – we would be out on it and he would spook the whole bunch, he would say – “Lieutenant you hear that bird? Well, you remember we heard that bird the night Jones got killed.” You know this sort of thing. Well, before we got to Foscotti, I remember one thing that I ought to mention. Well, I'll finish with this – this other one came to me one time and he said, “Lieutenant I don't know what we are fighting for, I don't know why I am here. I haven't done anything to anybody” and I remember saying to him – whatever his name was – I don't remember these names, you know. But I said, “I'll tell you what, Smith. The next time we have a fire fight I want you to just take your white handkerchief out and just wave it and go over to the Germans. If you think we don't have anything to fight for and you want to be on their side, you can go over to them and I promise you nobody will shoot at you or anything.” Well, I'll come back to him.

ML: I think you'd better, after that, you better come back to him.

LT: But I can remember one thing in particular and we were again on the approach march going single file and we came under a cherry tree that was loaded for cherries and I was so hungry for anything fresh that I let the column go on and I stopped and picked cherries and then had to run of course, with all my gear to catch up in my place in line. We got to Foscotti then. There was a monastery there, Franciscan I guess, I'm not sure, but it is where the monks that had been at Cassino when they were driven out by the Germans, and it was where they had been put. So we got there and we had a firefight again. We spread out and this man came back to me and he was so proud because he had been with it, he said, “Lt., I killed a German.” And well, anyway the – and he was, I'm not sure but in our next engagement he was killed. We were in an olive orchard there and one of the monks brought cheese and brought white wine for Scotty and some uncooked lamb. Of course, we couldn't make a fire or anything but that cheese and bread and wine, I remember, was wonderful and we were always grateful.

Then that was the last conflict that I can remember and we marched on into Rome, then which was about 20 miles, I don't remember – it's where the Pope's summer home is and as we approached there was sporadic gun fire and shell fire around but we were stopped and then we would move on and then we went in [unintelligible] through Rome and the people were throwing flowers at us and bringing champagne out and I remember we stopped one time and this man came up to me and said “Where's your officers?” I said, “Well, I'm an officer, a Lieutenant.” He said, “You are? You don't look

like it.” He said, “Our Italian officers have all sorts of stuff on them.” But we marched right on through. I remember going along the Seine, [Tiber River] where Castel San Angelo is. Well, I didn’t really have much medieval history but I had Roman history and that was Hadrian’s tomb and I asked an Italian what that was, and he told me it was Castel San Angelo and I said, “ I don’t believe so.” I had put it together, but you remember that Chilin, in his autobiography talked about being there with the Popes and a battle from there, but no matter – we got into another firefight before nightfall. We marched right on out and out on this sort of dairy farm and we were stopped there by some tanks with – gun fire and some of their shells. Well, anyway, my platoon, we moved out and the first round, I guess, was armor piercing. In other words, it wasn’t explosives. It was hitting the ground right near me and then there was a detonated shell and there were about 4 of us and, no, the way it happened, we moved out and were fired on by small arms fire, so we fell back against, behind something, and my company messenger was hit there, Riley. He was out there crying and I was, I’d like to say that I was just getting ready to go after him but my rationalization was – well, - if I went, there would be more gunfire and he – if he was alive he would be more likely to be killed, but my platoon ran out there and, sure enough Riley was killed. But then we were ordered to move out against this and that’s when the tanks appeared and, so help me, a shell fell among us, the four of us close here, and the other three got hit, I didn’t. The smell, the terrible stink, whatever the explosive is, that the smoke of it was in my nose. Well, I took them over to a little draw. What we had left came back and got back with the – what you call the headquarters group, actually the company commander and the company sergeant, etc., and I guess again they withdrew. I remember I found a store of Nazi flags and helmets, I sent two of the helmets and one of the flags back home because that was the last combat we had in our particular phase.

Somewhere along here during this time, we – I remember one time we actually got to go in swimming in the Tyrrhenian and it was wonderful. This was in May and I believe Rome fell June 6. I’m not sure, anyway, it was in June, early June, June 6th it seems to me was VE Day. So we were encamped there, I remember one thing that this water streaming out of a spring, or something, into this place and we bathed there and drank the water. The medics tested the water and they said it was so impure, so polluted we shouldn’t even have swum in it, much less – then all of us were down with diarrhea and while we were there the Company Commander, wasn’t Brennan any more, Brennan – I will say something about Brennan, in a minute. I believe by coincidence the other was Brandon. We called and he said, “One man from the company can have an audience with the Pope. I want you platoon leaders to draw straws to see whose platoon he comes out of.” And I won. So I went back to my platoon and I said, “Unless there is some objections we’ll leave it with only Catholics here who get this audience,” so we used some kind of system like drawing straws and a man named Gonzales from San Antonio won and when I took his name to the Company Commander, he couldn’t go because he was suspected of DWI – no – SWI – SWI- self inflicted wound – it happens in combat where men will shoot their foot or something and I said, “Brandon, this is my man and, goddamnit, he’s got a right to go.” He said, “Oh, Temple, all you do is gripe.” Well, I griped about my men. I remember one place when we were – after we had been through a hard period of time, we were pulled out. We were allowed to pull out and the kitchen fly [unintelligible] came up, this was before Rome which meant that we had hot meals in the

kitchen and I was taught that you don't eat until your men had eaten and so I got at the end of the line and all the other officers had gone right to the front and were over in the kitchen fly eating. I went, I saw that all my platoon had eaten before I did and I went over there and the company commander said, "Temple, you are always showing off before the men," or something like that, all of this succession of things. Well, after that the Germans moved back to another line which was north of Florence.

ML: Can I stop you for a minute and put in new batteries?

LT: Yes, okay.

LT: Well, let's see – where were we? We were in camp there and the thing with Gonzales was over.

ML: You were talking of the Germans moving their line –

LT: Yes, they moved on, incidentally Gonzales, after I left the platoon, was killed and nothing was found but his foot. I've often thought what it would have meant to his family if they had known that he had had an audience with the Pope. Another one of the things that dispirited me.

Well, that was the last of my direct combat – we moved on up north of Florence to a little town of Firenzuola, and by that time I began to get news of some of the other people because you do run into people from other outfits and we were all in the same regiment, I guess, but McCabe had been killed, and Townsend had been killed. McCabe identified with [unintelligible] because I thought as close as he and I were. I remember one big fellow that I never was very close to in the 124th infantry, and that is what we were out of, was almost a giant. They told the story of how he died. He was in a firefight and he was hit. He got up and they hit him again and he kept moving. They had to shoot him three times before they killed him, but I remember he was a tough courageous fellow.

We went into – north of Florence and, somewhere in there I had met the regimental executive. He was a friend who went through West Point with a friend of mine from Lawrenceville, and I had met him somehow or another and he was a very nice guy. I can remember the regimental commander, you remember I remembered Coulter as our corps leader and what impression he made. Well, when we got out – at one point, word was sent back to us that subordinates could recommend their superiors for medals and this fellow, Brennan. Oh, I can remember another time with Brennan, back here – we had marched and marched, he had ridden up on a jeep. He rode on a jeep, but we, of course, had walked day and night and we had to go up this steep hill and he showed us on a map. When I went through officer's candidate school the company commander on the field showed you where you put your platoon but he showed us on a map. It was a hard, steep climb to the top of the hill. So I took my men up and put them out there overlooking some kind of a big valley and he sent my company messenger up to me to come down – he sent for me, so exhausted as you always are, it takes everything out of you. When I see movies of men in combat, they are never realistic because you've lost all your weight and all your fat – he sent for me and I came down that mountain and I can't even remember

what it was, but it was something trivial and I said, “You mean you sent for me to come down that goddamn hill and go back up that hill to tell me that?” He never got to where the enemy could have seen him, so anyway, that was something I remember about Brennan. But the word came from regimental headquarters, he was promoted to be Regimental Headquarters Commandant, that is the sort of administrative head of the regiment, looks after all the records and stuff. It come down from this Colonel Commander, I can’t remember his name, I’m sorry, that subordinate could recommend medals and he wanted us to enter a recommendation for Brennan and I said, “No way in the world am I going to do that.” But that was another thing. They had given him a medal simply as an eye-wash thing and they were virtually commanding us to commend him, which I refused to do. This Colonel also got the Purple Heart because he was riding in a jeep one time when shell fire came in and he jumped out of the jeep and skinned himself up. That was the story and I believe he was if you’ll – I may be forgiven and this is not a – anyway his whole manner struck me as a sort of a popinjay and a gay. That is something I remember, but anyway, I went to his executive officers and I said, “I would like to get out of combat, I’d like to get back in the regiment,” and so he assigned me to personnel. Technically that is combat but we were in a stationery position there, up in the Apennines this time, south of the Po Valley and I helped the regimental Personnel Officer, mostly just signing stacks and stacks and stacks of service records because everything had to be noted, all the campaigns, etc. But then it came time to jump off for the last campaign, the Po Valley Campaign, had finally routed the Germans in Italy, we had come through the[unintelligible] line and some other line, I believe that the German general was [unintelligible] . Anyway, when that time came I was called to go back into combat and it was night, we had somebody leading us and I dropped out, I sat there and I seriously considered shooting my foot.

ML: You seriously thought about it?

LT: Yes, and I went back then to regiment and said I can’t go back in. So they sent me back through the medical thing and I talked to a psychiatrist. It wasn’t very hard for me to make a case but I was not fit for combat, it – they called it combat fatigue. Of course, I wasn’t fatigued then, I just wasn’t able to go back up there. I didn’t have the guts, I didn’t have the courage to go back and it was easy with my degree of education to make a pretty good case. I had had a case in my youth, when I was a boy, about 12, when I was on the verge of a – what was then called a nervous breakdown for family reasons. So they sent me back through and put me on a boat at Livorno back to Naples and where I was assigned to military mission to the Italian Army. I remember I shared a bunk with a black medical officer and that was sort of an interesting little experience I had there, but no matter.

When I was in the hospital during this period I got acquainted with a black officer. They had a black regiment, the 90th, all blacks and he and I exchanged. At this time I was interested in any kind of exchange with blacks because having grown up in the South I’d never had any exchange with the peers. They were all servants. So here was a black officer and I remember one of the stories he told me which was very influential in my thinking, a couple of stories. He said, “How many illiterates were there in your platoon?” I said, “Two.” He said, “I had two men in my platoon who could read and

write.” He said, “Rumors would start, they were on that line up there, rumors would start and they would – **END OF TAPE**

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LT: Well, that was one story he told me about the difficulties that that regiment had. But then he told me he was out of Mississippi, I believe, and played on a semi-pro ball team and they won their championship and went to some kind of national championship, black, I’m sure, up in New York and he said, “We had been told that there was no – that blacks were well treated in the north, and we won. We went to a restaurant to celebrate and we sat there and we were all high, we waited and waited and we waited and we weren’t waited on. Finally we did, through some kind of insistence, get service and then after they fed us they broke the plates.” He said, “This would never have happened in the south because we knew where we stand there but to have it happen in the north was just absolutely destructive, it just ruined the whole thing.” But anyway, as I said at the beginning, I had two dreams that I was going to marry and not really be wanting to, and the other was that I would fail in combat and, of course, that’s the main point here.

I also want to make a point of the abuse, as I saw it, of all the things we were taught about combat, the demoralizing leadership that I experienced. I was giving to my men all the time and every one of them affirm me in that. I was out in front of them in any kind of firefight. I saw that they were fed. Another thing I did was, if they needed a squad leader in one of the other platoons I would promote men in my own outfit. If someone got hit, I would promote them when they needed others and they knew that they were going to be rewarded, and of course, just the opposite happened too because I was going to stay a rifle platoon leader until I was hit.

ML: Can I ask you something?

LT: Yes.

ML: When you were making your case to the psychiatrist were you able to talk about this demoralizing leadership?

LT: No.

ML: I wouldn’t think so. So you had to talk about personal weaknesses?

LT: That’s right, I had to talk about my own emotions.

ML: Which was itself further demoralizing, I imagine, to have to take it all on yourself.

LT: Oh yes, because, to a large degree I was faking but I wanted out. Well, I went to the military mission to the Italian Army and that was after the Italians surrendered. Much of the army was integrated into the Allied Army but not in combat roles. They were made, what do they call it – mule leaders, but anyway, in the mountains, and they knew the trails and knew how to do it and also as Stevedores, Longshoremen unloading the ships.

So that's what the military mission to the Italian Army was. That became an easy, comfortable and rewarding period, era, although, much of Naples, where we were billeted was something that had been bombed. I was able to get stuff out of the port to make a little suite. A friend of mine and I, that I met there in military mission, had a nice life, and we could bring things from the kitchen and buy foods and have our own little meals, just improvising out of things and, although I have never made any big thing of it, since I was a married man, but I'm sure it's no surprise that we had some nice young women friends that we saw. This friend was more resourceful than I and he was a Captain but he – we could – I've forgotten what we used to call them, liberating but you could commandeer certain things and he was a good sailor and we would sail out to Ischia and there was a place up the coast where we would go and swim and it was idyllic, which was an idyllic period and I got to go to the San Carlo Opera, have many happy memories there.

But then there was a man who had been in the office of Southern Pine Lumber Company, as it was then known, who had been in the National Guard, Tommy Rose. He found out that – he was in the Allied Command, he had been in the Texas 35th civilian – 36th, I believe, and always in – well, actually he was in the medical administration. He had become a Lieutenant Colonel, he found out about me so he got me transferred to the Allied Command in Rome. I didn't particularly like this pull being – I was sincere in not – I never had to go in the infantry – I could have had a commission before I left Texarkana in the transportation corps without ever going through basic training. I wasn't fixing to do it, I was going to be in the Army. If I was going to be in the Army, I was going to be in the part that did the fighting and if I was going to be an officer, I was going to get my commission the hard way, the right way. So anyway, Tommy got me in the Allied Command in Rome. To tell you the truth, I had a Sergeant when I was in the MMIA in Naples – what's his name? Anyway a Portuguese name, he was from Providence, Rhode Island. We did all the work, he and I were good buddies and I got well acquainted with the officers in the Italian regiment that we ran, had marvelous meals with them and things. Anyway, went to Allied Command and shared the quarters in a nice villa there in town and I never knew what was happening. It was a combined headquarters and I had a Sergeant there who was a British Sergeant, Davis, who did everything and I shared an office. I had a desk in an office of one Colonel Howard, who was represented to me the best of British aristocracy and he was very critical of the Italian aristocracy. You know, it is clear that all the titles of the aristocracy of Italy are sort of acquainted, or kin, or whatever because they are all inner-married. He was very critical of the Italian aristocracy, who served their country so poorly, and I agree with him, but there was a Lord Howard on The Council of Queen Elizabeth the First. He was a descendant; he was the honorable Henry Howard, which meant that when his father died he would succeed to the title. I remember him in and – we had this nice house in Rome there. We had all the good of Rome and the war ended. Well, the officer out of the 36th division, who was the, I don't know exactly what you would call him, but in a billet like that one officer is assigned the job of procuring the food and bossing the servants and that sort of thing. And it's, in a way, I don't think the word "flunky" is right but it's sort of a gopher job, in a way. This Peter Rodino, you know Peter Rodino, Peter Rodino is Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee who prosecuted the Watergate thing.

ML: I was thinking the name sounded very familiar but much more recent than I thought he was.

LT: Yes, so years later I ran into him in Washington, that was before he had, by seniority, risen to that job. I've seen him several times since then. Well, I was identified to Tommy Rose for all this but I was never an admirer of his. He was sort of crude and had many qualities that I didn't like, a little arrogant but to me, he was like an office boy who had come to this place and I didn't like being indebted to him but I am, I was and I am, and he womanized a good deal. I saw girls, women there but there was no real womanizing. He and I made a swan one time, where we went to Venice and Milan and back by Livorno and on that trip I was debilitated and didn't know what it was until I got back and I remember we had to change a flat and it just wore me out. When I got back I went to the dispensary, the one in the Allied Command Building where I was, down Via Veneto and the medical officer didn't even get up out of a deep chair, said "Go to the dispensary, you've just got a cold or flu or something." I knew I didn't have that. I never went on sick call, so I went on out to the base hospital and I had hepatitis, so I was in there, I believe they kept me for 6 weeks. It was a pleasant experience because all I did was sleep and they would wake me up to give me their version of steak or milkshake, high protein stuff is what they did and I read. In the bed next to me was the Vice President of Export for Coca Cola. He had fallen ill some way and he and I had long visits and he told me when we got back to the States he would like for me to come to work for Coca Cola, which I never did. So – I was in the hospital when the bomb was dropped that ended the whole war.

Well, eventually on points I got to come home, came back down to Naples which was the port of debarkation as a casual – the word "casual" means you are not attached, you are on separate orders and they assigned 200 men to me. I was by then a captain, thanks to Tommy Rose, and they assigned 200 men to me, which meant I was to be responsible for them and the things that had their service records in them. I can remember calling roll call the first time and I came to a man from North Little Rock and since I had been in Little Rock in Temple Cotton Oil Company, married in Little Rock – when I called his name I called him – whatever it was – Jones from south Argenta. No, he was from Little Rock, and I called him from south Argenta and that is a local joke because North Little Rock used to be Argenta and it is the other side of the tracks so the people from Argenta would speak of Little Rock as south Argenta but, anyway, then we came home.

ML: That must have delighted him.

LT: Yes, because he knew that was such an end idea. We came home on the Mt. Enterprise which was a converted aircraft carrier, converted to carry troops and it broke the world's record coming back from Gibraltar to Newport News, which is wonderful. That's 30 days to get over there and 4 days to get back. The were up in the front of the aircraft carrier and since it was half a mile long, it seemed, when it would ride the swells God knows how high – how much we rose and fell – 20 and 30 feet, I am sure. It was the closest I ever came to being seasick. I've never been seasick, and we arrived back home. I remember riding old rickety cars that had been in mothballs, I'm sure, some of them, I

think, had pot belly stoves back to Jefferson Davis, I guess, in St. Louis where we were discharged.

And incidentally when I was in combat, there at the beginning when the Battalion Commander would call for somebody to go on patrol from “A” company, my company commander always sent me. Now this sounds very paranoid and perhaps it is, but I was – the point I would like to make is that I was an idealist, and when they gave me a job to do I did my best to do it. I never used any pull. I did gripe when things were not done right but I remember one time when he had asked for somebody to take a patrol, and this was back there at the first, one time when I came he said, “It’s you every time, Temple, it’s you again.” But that was the only little communication I had with him other than orders but I learned somewhere along the line. He was reassigned and when we came to Jefferson Davis in St. Louis for discharge, he was there and he recognized me and I recognized him, but I didn’t have him really in mind. I would have loved to have been able to share with him what I’m sharing with you now for the first time.

I returned on the train to Little Rock and there was my wife. I remember I had – when I was at [Firenzuola] north of Florence I got a three day pass, or so, or something, came back to a hotel that had been taken over for officers for a nice time there. I met an interesting woman who was Hungarian, I believe, from up, she was from Forely, it wasn’t Forley in the south that I was talking about, but she was from the Po Valley, a very nice woman. I never had the nerve to follow through with her but one incident I remember – in the cocktail lounge I met a pretty little, dark Italian woman who was on me – whatever – get by – I don’t think of as a prostitute, but I took her up to my room and we made love and I remember she sang little operatic airs and we made love again. This is not the type stuff – but all of that – and then she asked me if I had anything to give her and I told her “no” and I’ve always regretted that. She gave without demanding and it was a beautiful thing and I particularly remember this singing in a beautiful voice. Of course, she didn’t sing terribly loud but – there was a little woman who worked in the American Red Cross in Naples with whom I guess you have to say, I had a little affair and we’d go out to this idyllic Mediterranean cove where you could see 20 feet down in the water. She and this friend and his friend, and we would swim nude there and we’d go down the coast and find a fishing village and rent a row boat and could row up the cliffs there and we’d find a little narrow beach under one of these cliffs and we’d take wine and cheese and bread and have picnics there. That’s enough of that.

ML: You are ready to stop on that?

LT: Yeah.

ML: Okay, then we are all set –

LT: All right, we’re here on July 14, I guess that is, sort of unloading on things out of my past, my 3 failures. Somehow or another it all flowed into what I think is a successful place in life which is to say that I have everything that a person could want and all the good of life. I’m sorry of anything that I have done that hasn’t been up to my standards and standards of others, but anyway, here we are. We are going to talk a little bit about my business career. When I was growing up I never gave it much serious thought to

going to any place except to Southern Pine Lumber Company, and if you don't know by now that that is the company, that is the family company and it is mixed in with family so much that we, as many of us have in the past, didn't know which ended and started. But although I really considered the arts, I went off to the Arts Student League in the summer before the year I graduated from the University of Texas, studied under Reginald Marsh and Harry Sternberg. Although, that same summer, I believe, I took an introduction to a director in New York, thinking that I might go ahead with, I might undertake a career in the theater because I've always believed that the best talent that I really have is my talent for acting, but that will never be proved except in the amateur theater that I was in, in my college years. But when I graduated from the University of Texas I reported to my Uncle Arthur, who by then was head of the Temple family and head of the Temple Enterprises, to be assigned a job. At that time he expressed the idea that the forest products industry was going to be a thing of the past and the cotton oil industry had a future. Well, he was – nothing could be farther from the truth, but I know that he believed it to be the truth, but I was steered into the Temple Cotton Oil Company.

ML: Can you tell me the origin of the name of that company?

LT: Temple Cotton Oil? Well, it's a cotton oil industry. It's an industry that buys cotton seed and by pressing and further processes, produces cotton seed products. The most valuable one is Cotton Seed Oil which used to be the principal ingredient of any kind of vegetable oil, or hydrogenated cooking fats, and the second most valuable product is high protein cottonseed meal for feeding animals. The third product is linters, which are a fiber. They are not really cotton but they – there's a little coat fiber that's left on cotton seed hulls after ginning, and finally, cotton seed hulls which is a roughage that is a cattle feed, which is generally mixed with cotton seed meal, which is the ground slab after oil has been repressed. The competition was for buying the cottonseed because the product was sold on the market, on a commodity market in effect.

So he steered me into that. It was a company then that was about 30 years old and had never produced a profit. It had been raided by a couple of administrations, which is to say it had been abused and its monies misappropriated, perhaps. When I went into it, it was under Jimmy Webb, who was operating it and it was 5 sites actually, with mills at four of those sites. They were all in Arkansas. My first job was at \$85.00 a month and after some orientation in the office with some instruction there in book I went on the road buying cottonseed and selling fertilizer. That was in 1936 and I worked there, traveling in the state of Arkansas on the road in those days and staying in the little country hotels at \$1.50 or \$2.00 a night. I think when I married in 1939 I was raised to \$125.00 a month, I believe that's right. In about 1940 I was moved to Texarkana to be in the main office, which is in the old Temple mansion, it had been converted for an office for Southern Pine and for Temple Lumber Company, and after a few months Temple Cotton Oil took over the management of the little already moribund cotton oil company there in town, Farmer's Cotton Oil. The history of cotton is that it was originally raised on high, well drained land but as time went on, with the bottom land was where cotton was raised, and our mills were located. They were old mills that had been bought from bankrupt American Cotton Oil, most of them, something that my grandfather's brother, William, had gotten him involved in. But Farmer's Cotton Oil was the most moribund of them all,

with no real territory and strong competition there in town. But I operated that for a couple of years with very modest success. At one time I wrote a critique to my Uncle Arthur about the whole business about the way it was run, with a copy to Jimmy Webb, which he took as an offense.

But anyway, I went into the Army partly to get out of that, I think I mentioned that when I talked about my Army career, I was dissatisfied so I went through the war and when I came back I thought I'd get into something else and didn't participate in the development of an apartment.

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LT: Well, I participated in that little venture to take a whole reconstructed house, something built right at the end of World War II by a carpetbagger – not World War II, the Civil War, by a carpetbagger, but then I had no sense of how to start any-place else, so I went back to Temple Cotton Oil after a brief time.

I had taken my accumulated terminal leave and went back to work for Temple Cotton Oil at which time I was charged principally with collecting a lot of receivables, a mismanagement of the company. It was a small company that was capitalized at about a million dollars, had receivables of about 6 to 8 hundred thousand dollars which was slow. The parent company, which was Southern Pine Lumber Company had pumped money into it over the years, so I proceeded with that and was pretty successful and I don't remember everything that happened along then, but at one time Jimmy Webb had never forgotten that I had written that particular letter and I was – did consult with Uncle Arthur from time to time. I would go down regularly and talk to him and at one time Jimmy Webb said if I stayed in the company he would leave and my Uncle, bless his heart, said, "We are keeping Latane," and that was wise from the company's point of view because the way Jimmy Webb had kept the books... he hadn't taken the depreciation, for instance. Well, I did collect, did get all of our receivables, notes and accounts receivables in good shape, reorganized and wrote down properties, got rid of bad properties and got down to a company which had a sound value of about two thousand dollars which had been shown on the books as being about a million two hundred and fifty. This was back in the 40's, of course and those figures don't sound very big now but they were. So getting back and we were competing with big national companies like Swift and Armour and Proctor and Gamble, which are out of our league – but anyway, I – it was a small company. I made a small company of it and we produced a profit each year after that until it became apparent that the industry had moved away from us. We had an old method of manufacturing which had been replaced by new technology and our so-called territory was not close to where the real production was. So I recommended that we liquidate it and when we did we recovered most of what its book value was, but of course, it had been owned for 30 years and had never produced a profit. When that time came I was offered a job with – and I liquidated it successfully – when that time came I was offered a job with Olen Mathison Company, who were manufacturers of fertilizers and chemical company, but their fertilizer division, and I must add we had a small fertilizer mixing plant where we mixed the components of commercial fertilizer and sold them in the spring of the year. I must confess that in my entire business career I never had any serious idea of working for anybody else, not so much as a matter of loyalty as it was

just a matter of not being able to leave the family “tit” I guess. So I told Arthur, who was by then head of our Southern Pine Lumber Company, that I had this offer and if he wanted me to stay in the company to let me know, which he did, and I went to Diboll then. I was pretty independent actually because I had the security of being in the family. I was made General Sales Manager, Temple Webber, Sr. had been General Sales Manager and I took that job on but I didn’t handle it in any respect like him. He sat at his desk and talked to the different salesmen around the country and would have a stock sheet knowing what we had and he would largely see the prices according to what the competition was. I re-vamped it to suit me and I am fairly confident that Arthur and Temple were both tolerant of me, but I had good people and I put good people in charge of every part of it, somebody in charge of the Southern Pine sales, someone in charge of hardwood, we already had them, someone in charge of treated material sales, someone in charge of toilet seats sales, etc. I oversaw them but I didn’t do the nitty-gritty.

I carved out for myself something that was a sublimation of what I considered my talents to be, or my inclinations to be which are acting and the arts, so that I’ve concerned myself with customer relations with public relations with the company image and with, to a large degree, employer relations. I worked at Diboll in that fashion until 1960, that was – went there in January 1953 when I went there and was there until ’60. My father had been responsible for getting my grandfather to go into the retail lumber business; it started with a yard in Houston. I was very largely motivated in my being in the company by the desire to somehow or other to vindicate my father or to erase his image of the prodigal and to somehow or other to restore my line in the company. However, he had thrown most of his money away by the time he died and his branch’s share was only a small fraction of what I was able to get him to, in the year before he died, to put in trust. It was a small amount compared to the others. So I frankly always felt that I was sitting at the second table as far as when it came to governing the company and felt, really, that I was largely at the sufferance of the others. I was pretty naïve in every respect and Arthur’s prime supporter in all matters to do with the company and at the board meetings, I don’t know that he particularly appreciated that because he didn’t need me, particularly as his echo – but when the man who was running the retail division, which was by that time 38 retail lumber yards spread all over Texas, in a manner which was already archaic. Arthur and Temple decided to make me head of the retail – I’d had the success in the –

ML: All of them?

LT: Yes, I was to be General Manager – I went in – in the time I was there we made it a separate corporation and a subsidiary of Southern Pine Lumber Company and I tried to – it was my intent to modernize it, to put in new merchandizing methods to analyze the different types of sales we had and to incorporate some of the new techniques of distribution yards and that sort of thing. We had some very successful yards and most of the yards were not paying what the return on the capital to any extent. I went too fast – in later analysis I – this may be rationalization but I don’t think so, when I hit there it was my idea to perform a miracle, to reorganize this company and make a successful company of it and get out. I wanted to train somebody under me who was capable of taking it over and when it was producing as it should, to be able to walk away. Well, this was – and I realize I unconsciously motivated every sense I graduated with from the

University of Texas to go through this and to come out on the other side where I could do my own thing. I – this turned out to be a debacle for several reasons. One is that I entrusted my subordinates, my immediate subordinates and believed what they would tell me which didn't turn out to be true. It was a little bit like that Emperor's Clothes, and I allowed myself to believe it, and furthermore, I tried to put in a new account system. We were doing so much and making so many changes and then trying to put in this new accounting system, actually the company got out of control. We didn't know – I wouldn't know until the first of September what our July results were, maybe. By the time we finally came to a screeching halt I had expanded a lot and acquired some other yards and

ML: Was it in '65, '55?

LT: Actually I went in '60 and sort of officially began in '61. I took over in the middle of '60 and my family followed me down in '61. So when it finally came to a place where something had to be done and Arthur came down to Houston and said we were going to close yards and clean up the mess and that I had a choice of going back to Diboll if I wanted to. I said, "Well," I didn't hesitate a minute. "I'm ready to resign." This was easy for me because it was really where I'd been going except the story that Adlai told when he was defeated in running for President. He told the story that Abraham told when he was defeated one time. Said "I feel like the man who was tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail. If it wasn't for the honor of it, he'd rather just walk out of town." Well, I got out and that's really what I had been aiming for but I'd rather have dropped out another way. Arthur, with great compassion at that time, said he envied me because now I was free to do what I wanted to do but as long as you keep winning you have to keep on playing. If you succeed at one job then you advance to another.

ML: Like what happened in the war, when you were in a position that you were doing so well you knew you were going to be out there in the front.

LT: Well, it was the opposite of that, really. In a sense there I was doing what I was supposed to do there. Well, I was going to stay there until I got killed and in this one if I had brought it off then I would have been successful in expanding that company or taking on new responsibilities. I've forgotten that law that people speak of but it's the law that – somebody's name is –

ML: Is it Murphy's Law?

LT: Murphy's Law that you keep on getting promoted until you get the job you can't handle and then you get fired. That is a very quick sketch of it. Bill Bass, I had one man that I expected to be my successor. His name was Bert Folford but he made some bad mistakes. He was the District Manager of one of our most important districts. One of the things I did was to set up districts and have District Managers, have regular meetings, etc. Then this Bill Bass came along; he was the man – he was a fellow in the Emperors Clothes. He convinced me of anything. He told me all the things he was doing and everything but it was around his activities with a construction yard in Houston and with

some apartments that we supplied that came crashing down. The promoters, the owners, were living out of the interim funds. Loans and riding high and it finally all came to a head. That's when I got out. I became wrong headed down there, too.

It's hard, it's been hard for a lot of people to work under Arthur, not because he's not fair and good, but because they expect to emulate him. What many others have done is emulate his style and his boldness, but his type of boldness, but hasn't had his genius for these things, nor his energy. One of the qualities Arthur has is his tremendous nervous energy. Bert Wolford, the fellow that I said I was hoping would be able to take my place real soon, I went much too fast, hoping that if I had taken one yard at a time and applied my ideas, and my ideas were all good ideas, but I didn't have control, that's the whole thing to the thing, I didn't have financial control. But if I had taken one yard and made it to the model, but I tried to do all of them. Some personnel engineer, I think he called himself, came in one time and he stayed with me until I agreed to let him examine what I called my headquarters staff, which Bert was one, and he came to me afterwards. He said, "I know how much you think of Bert but I have to tell you something about him. Most people would class him as a lazy but, in effect he has a low energy level." It turned out that Bert wasn't handling his job as he should and I did discharge him, but I have never forgotten that about energy levels. My energy level is about medium, not over medium because I remember when some blow would hit me where someone would come in and say that we are taking a fifty thousand loss on something, I would, by that time, would have put so much of my energy into things that when the blow came all I could do was just go home and have a drink of booze. Arthur, on a contrast to that, is like a boxer who gets up off the canvas and wins the fight. He's never so much at his best except when he's got a real problem. I'd see that in coming, he would be bored to death until one of his divisions would falter and then he would throw himself into it and rebuild it, or do whatever was necessary.

ML: Did you go through a bad period of feeling that you were letting the family down?

LT: Yes, a totally bad feeling and it's still – I have – I don't feel about my marriage because I felt that – I did my best in that and we came out on the other side in some way with a fine family and being friends and everything. I feel bad about the war but I have – nobody will know how pained I am when I go to Diboll and realize – and reflect on any of that career and I wake up at night grieving over it because it was a debacle. It was – when I went to Houston, I was smart in Arkansas because I sort of obsorbed and emulated old country traders who always tried to act dumber than they were rather than smarter than they were. They weren't afraid to say "Will you run that by me again? I don't believe I understand. I'm not real smart so you have to take me through it real

ML: Did your acting ability probably help out there?

LT: Well, that was good up in Arkansas but when I got down in Houston I was a big shot with two martinis at lunch and taking people out to lunch and making these big plans and playing a role rather than staying close to things as I should have. So we did big things. I had district managers. We had district meetings and we analyzed the business and classed the types of sales in retail and in regular lumber sales and construction and home

remodeling and all these things with certain goals and targets. We had our projections and our actual figures to go by but our figures got so far behind that – and even at the end I was thinking that we were on our course so that, in effect, is all, I may have talked through it pretty fast, I may have left –

ML: Brenda said I should mention the name of a Mr. Van Zandt and ask if you would feel like discussing a business problem that came up with him?

LT: Well, it was never a business problem with Van Zandt. He was my roommate at the University of Texas and he was my closest friend. I always felt that we could go to each other with anything when needed. When we got out of Texas I went to Texas Cotton Oil Company and he went to work in Gulf Oil as a scout, going around checking on oil fields, that kind of open spies on what is going on, what dept the competition had driven and what their results showed in depths and things and we continued as close friends. I married and then he married. I don't know maybe he married first. It doesn't make any difference. We stayed close; he volunteered for the Marines with an automatic commission. This is something – he was getting ahead of me a little bit on that and he wound up in a nice soft work as a General's aide and one time when I was in combat and the mail came up he sent me a picture of him sitting by a pool, I think, with a nurse in Honolulu, and got out of service and he used the GI Bill to get his law degree, practiced a while, then went back to Gulf and then by this time, I was down in Houston, I guess, but anyway, I was with Southern Pine. He was rising very fast with Gulf and was in the London office and was negotiating some big deals in Europe and Africa. When he decided his next move was going to be Pittsburgh, that seems to have been at that time heaven for people in Gulf Oil. That's where the head offices were. The Mellon Company – the Mellons were founders of Gulf – but he decided to come back to Texas because he was gone from his family so much and he went back to Ft. Worth, but he was at loose ends then and I offered him a job under me. It might have been very good if he had taken it because maybe the two of us might have done a better job. He might have made me more realistic than I was, because there were people who were saying things. You are trusting these people too much. But anyway, I was there for him and he decided to go on and he wound up as a Vice President with Ft. Worth National Bank and their fair-haired man, but again, he stopped them from advancing him any more, but all that background is to say that he and I were best friends. But when my roof fell in on me I went to see him and his response was absolutely opposite of what I wanted and needed and he did terrible penance for it. But he – when I went up there for some reason he was almost too busy to talk to me. We didn't get to talk about it – he let me leave under my own steam and wrote me a letter in effect, "Quit feeling sorry for yourself and get off your ass and go to work." Well, that actually just completely – I haven't pretended, I haven't felt vengeful, I haven't felt hatred but it just pinched the bud of my – our relationship and subsequent to that he wrote a book and dedicated it to me. He was a writer. He wrote one book that was fairly successful. This one he dedicated to me I don't think had much of a vogue, and he wrote letters and my response was – I don't forgive you because there is nothing to forgive, but it's just that. He died not long after that, I'm sure that was part of his grief, but his father had died fairly young, too. So that's all there is about Van Zandt, but he was my dearest friend and that curtain fell. So – do you have some other questions?

ML: I do. If you've finished telling the things that you said –

LT: Yes, those three – those two primarily – of the war and the company, and actually having stated them they don't – I hate to use the term, but it has been very therapeutic to get them out and over with.

ML: You know, it's been my experience too, when I hear a lot of other people, when things are inside they seem much bigger. When they are out there they may be the exact size but somehow the proportion – public domain. It's a mystery.

LT: Yes, I do have a great feeling of guilt about the war because I've been in combat, my platoon turned over more than once as far as casualties were concerned. The other platoons didn't have half the casualties and that was because I was carrying out the assignments. Talking about my men killed and wounded, but I feel very bad when some people know - -

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LT: I do feel a great sadness and, I don't like the word guilt, but I went into the war with my ideals and tried to live them and I'm given credit, people know I was in the infantry, platoon leader and I don't hold back to tell people because I'm proud of the fact and I've been right in there. As I say, I was never in any pitched battles where I had to crawl up and saw something in that sense, but I put myself there and I did the best I could and I didn't live up to what I wanted. I feel guilty that I was never hit, never wounded or anything. I feel guilty to a large extent that I came back and some men that I had – didn't come back. I would like for that phase of my life to have been more up to what I wanted to be, I would like to have been a hero, I saw people getting decorated for doing less than what I did because they – for whatever reason – I shot my best stick and that's all I can say but I wish that it had been different.

ML: You are so honest about talking about your limitations. I would imagine that a person who is able to be as completely honest as you seem to be would take solace in that ability because many people bury their guilt so deeply from themselves that it keeps gnawing at them. So I think you are very fortunate in a way.

LT: I guess so, and of course, I do know the place I have come out is a good place. When people ask me how things are for me I say, "Everybody should have it so good." My catalog of blessings is so long and it gets better all the time. As I say, I thought about this on Friday when Kate finally delivered this child and it was a boy and it was named Latane – Kate and I get along so well. She loves me so much, and of course, I adore her, and then on the west coast with my daughter, Helen, and she and I have this deep rapport and sharing. My son, Thompson, and I have gone through the young bull and old bull ordeals, but at this particular time, we are closer than we have ever been and he shares with me – he has been going through some difficulties, and then with the oil depression his business was much affected because he puts on hunts over in the hill country and

raises exotic animals and things. My daughter, Alice, I understand better than I ever have. Of course, there has never been any doubt of her divorce devotion but she has certain blocks in communication that she knows and we know but she and I are very, very close. I am most worried right now about my son, Hal, who, it seems to me, doesn't face up to realities and he's - lives beyond his means and doesn't live in reality but I'm hoping he will get along better. Right now I don't think there is much working between him and me because he's afraid of me first of all, as he says "preach" to him about how to run his business and I know, by the same token, he is afraid of having another failure in his life and not having me say, "I told you so" but know that I was thinking I told you so. But anyway, my relationship with my former wife is better than it was the last ten years of our marriage, certainly. I have wonderful friends and - most of them women. I love women and I love woman - now I've - what I conserved and guarded and invested, or reinvested, but mostly what I've been able to guard in Temple Industries has well, I've gotten into something that is terribly personal, I guess, but it's important for me to attest to the fact that, by grace, I have everything anybody could possible want, and it gets better all the time, including what we say in Christian Science "supply" and thanks to my betting on Arthur, taking his advice and his guidance. He really is an extraordinary person. He is a genius and he is a genius with heart. I think I have made that point over and over again.

ML: Can you talk about "supply" a little bit more? I want to talk about Christian Science next.

LT: Well, this is, I guess, important in context to the war because before I went overseas I felt absolutely bankrupt personally; I felt unhappy in my marriage. I felt I was going to combat with no strength or resources of my own and when I was young I was an atheist, not that - not a big proselytizing atheist, but I just didn't believe there was a God, by all logic that I could see. I thought it was rationalization in product of fear, etc. The only reservation I had was that if there was a God he would find me. He wouldn't punish me for being honest, my faking it. I think that actually happened, before I went overseas, I went - I thought I would give religion a chance, so I went to the Catholic Church and it didn't do anything for me. The Baptist Church was not in any sense to my liking. The Methodist church which my - some of my great grandparents were big in it, didn't. I went to the Episcopal Church in which I was raised and I found an elitist treatment there, which I shouldn't hold it against the Episcopal Church, but I found the minister of that particular church was rather elitist and superficial. So, but my father was a Christian Scientist, my grandfather was a Christian Scientist, as you know. He was an early Christian Scientist and my wife's mother, who was a gentle and wonderful human being, I had resisted her because, just the in-law resistance. When I married, as I say, I had misgivings about marrying when I did and this family just took me in - it was almost eating me, ingesting me and I resisted this loss of individuality so I always resisted her. But she was a model and we had to go to church, or we felt we had to go to church for her on certain occasions so when we went back before I went overseas, I think it was, but anyway, back then I went dutifully to church but because I was reaching out there was something in there that consoled me. I didn't like the language of Mary Baker Eddy or the strangeness of the service but when I left I had something and also I noticed that

Christian Scientists, it seems to me, lived their religion more than others and they had a peace about them, a joy, so I started going into it, giving it more weight and thinking about it and going to church, and even holding services on the boat, as I said. But I had so many demonstrations of protection, it seemed to me, like when a shell would break right in the midst of me and I was – seemed to be protected and the more I've gotten into it the more blessings have come to me. I was active in the Christian Science Church in Houston when I went through my thing there. I believe I was, I certainly was, I think, afterward.

One of the terms they use in Christian Science is "supply." In other words it's to wherewithal, but I've had healings and I've had - other people can laugh at, or scorn at, as reasonable or coincidence, but with my children, for instance, one incidence, my daughter, Alice, when she was small in the summer time, during the Polio season and there was no Salk vaccine then or anything in those days. I remember one evening she was happy at supper time and at bedtime she was running a very high fever and I went in and stayed with her. It was my privilege to have night duty with the children. Joe had them all day long and I was trying to use my Christian Science and finally, I realized that I didn't have to worry about her, that she was God's child and only lent to us and I had to worry about my own thing, my own thinking, and knowing and accepting the illness of God and that she was His child and under my hand she went cool, or something like that happened with just a little bit of faith. Another incidence is –

ML: Somebody told me that.

LT: There was an incidence that – after I moved to Lufkin and was working in Diboll, Arthur was over one afternoon, one Sunday afternoon, that Boots Nichols, not Boots – but anyway the man who ran the TSE Railroad for us, for the stockholders, was about to die. He had a problem with alcohol, but in this case, he had pneumonia. So Arthur and I went over there, and of course, Boots and I were friends but he and Arthur were very close and Arthur went into the room where he was supposed to be dying and I thought "Well, now how can I use my Christian Science" and the phrase came to me – "Perfect love casteth out fear" and so I reviewed everyone I knew where I might have some resentment, or anger or hatred, and I applied the rule of love to them and a nice calm came over me, and at that same moment a nurse walked out of the room and said he is breathing easier and he – Boots may still be alive as far as I know. But my life has fallen into shape so nicely and I have everything, including health. I'm not one of the Christian Scientists who is a paragon by any means, but I have to claim its benefits just as much as anyone in the world. I've had my own instances where it has carried me through a little. Somewhere in Christian Science it said that there is no problem too big or too small to be solved by Christian Science, or too big, or too small for God. I've had Kate call me about her little dog one time. She called me because she was heart broken. He had been run over, a little tiny dog, and I told her, "Well, Katie, he is already taken care of, so just put it out of your mind." God is all in all, God is everything and it is already taken care of and that little dog is – she still has a number of things. I do use doctors in the limited fashion usually, and I can explain largely from reasons of vanity, I guess, which is a sin, father of sins, but my urologist discovered something that he said he needed a biopsy, and I never gave it a thought. As a matter of fact I didn't like it that I even let myself be

suspected of that, but by all apparent reasoning and precedence there should have been something there but it wasn't and there isn't.

I think my relation with my ex-wife is a demonstration because I think she wanted it to be something hostile, or she has tended to want it to be and I've – wouldn't allow it to be, wouldn't let it be like that and it's – we are very, very close and are going to be buried side by side. We've got our cemetery plot, at least that's the plan, the present plan. My only prayer is a prayer of thanks, as I swim in the sea of plenty and health. By grace, not through any merit of mine – you turn toward – I call it my philosophy religion because I feel that both philosophy and religion are concerned with truth and truth is what works. At that time when I was so low and bankrupt, as I say, of anything I thought "Well, I would eat feces if that would cure me, I would do anything" including trying Christian Science and almost equate it and it worked, you know, just, and it has continued to work as I slip into some kind of a sense of my own importance and of my own desserts which I don't feel at all.

ML: I would like to talk to you a lot more about that sometime just for my own personal reasons. I've been thinking a lot about these things. Now, maybe for the rest of this tape though I really ought to ask you some questions. I don't want to go into minor things on this tape for sure. But a little bit more about the Christian Science Church. When I spoke to Arthur Temple the other day, he told me about your grandfather bringing a lady to Diboll from St. Louis who was a Christian Scientist – do you know who that was? I assume he wasn't speaking of the same lady that you were telling me about on Long Island.

LT: I don't know who that was and I have only – if I have any recollection it's because you mentioned it but I don't remember anything about that.

ML: Okay, you also mentioned the last time we talked that there was a reference that I might read about the Christian Science Church in Texarkana, what reference was that?

LT: I think there was an article in the newspaper, maybe a new building or a new dedication or something that would be in the "Texarkana Gazette," it seems to me.

ML: Okay, that referred to your grandfather?

LT: Yes, I think it did. I may have just gotten hold of that second-hand.

ML: I have some little short answers that I need to catch up with if you don't mind. Tell me again what age your grandfather was when he came to Texarkana, was he 13 or do you know exactly?

LT: That seems right to me and only very recently have I come upon something, maybe in all this cleaning up, that he was born in about 1861, I think, but it seems to me he came to Texarkana in about 1870. Of course, that would have been – too bad Temple Webber is dead because he could give us all this information.

ML: Arthur said he thought he was about 13 but he didn't know exactly. The next question has to do with advertising and public relations for the company. Since you were so involved with that I think you would be the appropriate person to ask about the company logo, the family crest, Temple wheel, and the Free Press Dragon. Could you tell me about those things starting with the Temple wheel?

LT: Well, the Temple wheel is something that someone else did, the original wheel someone else did, I don't know who it was, but it's been around for a long time, there was an original which I guess was – I don't know.

ML: Basically a genealogy?

LT: Yes, I've just – you've seen them in the – yes.

ML: Is Sally Barnes doing them now?

LT: Sally Barnes did a new one. She brought it back to John Temple and Mary Latane Temple who was the grandparents of our grandparents and that is the center of that wheel. The other one was Joseph Temple who was the first Temple in our line to migrate to the United States, to Virginia back in 1740 or something like that. But she had done a new one and brought it all up to date. Of course, they don't stay in date with new additions all the time.

ML: Has she been sending them out to family members?

LT: Well, I don't – they have been handled through the library. Brenda has been handling it and taking the money and sending them out.

ML: Okay, I've heard one story from Paul Durham about the Free Press logo but I wondered if there was more to that story. He told me that it was supposed to be St. George challenging the Kurth Dragon.

LT: That, in effect, is what it is, it's St. George and the dragon but the dragon is the Kurth dominance of – but again, that was Arthur's idea and I got an advertising agency to do that. I thought it was poorly done because it is clearly just a copy of – drawn from some classic of St. George, but Paul loves it as it is and I have suggested that – we get an artist to do it in more original fashion but he says no. But that was Arthur's suggestion and I got an advertising agency to do it. You see, at the time, again this is Arthur – Ernest Kurth, the great manipulator of people and of things, but he owned the radio station, he owned – and when TV came in, he owned the TV station; he controlled the "Lufkin Daily News." I don't know what other media there was but he owned all the media. Well, Arthur got a license for KTRE, not KTRE, anyway the local – KSPL television station and then he – Paul had labored with the paper which was largely almost a house organ, but he assigned me to the Free Press to make it independent, I think. I hope I'm not taking credit for something that is not true, but to make it, with Paul, a voice and that's when the logo was originated, to get another voice, to get – and I told you what the

Lufkin and Diboll interpretation of KTRE was, you know, that's the TV station there. It's the Kurths and the Temple run everything.

ML: No, I never heard that –

LT: There are some stories. Has Arthur told you any of the stories of Ernest Kurth and the Temples?

ML: No, I haven't heard any of them.

LT: I don't know that he particularly likes to have them told but back when Uncle Arthur which was a sweet and gentle, honorable man, honest as anybody could be honest, there was a big block of government timber that was going to be sold. Ernest Kurth who I see as being like the serpent in the Garden of Eden, went to Uncle Arthur and he said, "There's no reason for you and us to bid against each other in this sale, so why don't you just let me bid for both of us and then I'll sell you – we will half it." Of course, that was under the Sherman Anti-Trust or whatever. That was conspiracy but Uncle Arthur agreed to it and he bought it at a good price. Then when Arthur wanted to buy half, well, Ernest said, "I don't recall any such conversation." Ernest Kurth organized Southland Paper and it was his idea and his genius but when the time came to get the RFC Loan that would trigger the thing he didn't have the resources. He didn't have the – whatever it is – to put up for a loan. He didn't have the security for the loan, so he brought us into it to put in something like 30,000 acres of timber lands which triggered it.

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LT: Now, remember, I wasn't present for this – it is just hearsay but it is a fact and that triggered it, and the understanding was that the pulpwood would go to Southland Paper Mill and that the saw logs off that 30,000 acres would continue to go to Southern Pine Lumber Company. They never went to Southern Pine Lumber Company; they all went to Angelina County Lumber Company. When he constituted the Board of Southland Paper Mills, he took someone from Perkins-Goodwin, I believe it is, who are the big brokers for newsprint. He took Ted Neeley from the Dallas Morning News and other people who were dependent in one way or another, who had a tie. They were people who had some kind of an advantage and he put one person from Southern Pine Lumber Company on the board. If I'm not mistaken, the Temple interest had the largest block of Southland stock, had one member on the board and had absolutely no voice in it at all, in spit of being the majority stockholder, I don't think, but the quorum stockholder, Ernest Kurth stacked the board and we never had a voice in it. I remember one time, I believe toward the end, he did – no, we just had one person on the board and I believe that was Temple Webber, and Ernest Kurth could wrap Temple around his little finger. But I went to a board meeting one time and Arthur went there. I may be mistaken, Arthur can correct me, maybe Arthur was on the board, too, but I don't think we had but one representative. Ernest Kurth, by that time, had had his cancer of the throat and talked to us through this sort of breathing device, but he said "We'll declare the stockholders meeting open; you've all received a

copy of the annual statement. All the information is in that and I declare the meeting adjourned.” We left.

There was another instance and this doesn't reflect too well on us, but Ernest Kurth, for years, had a contract with Phelps Dodge for weed trees. Weed trees are the hardwood trees that are not suitable for anything except in the copper smelting process. They are put in the smelter to burn the, I guess, burn the oxygen out of the ore and he had – the contract was valuable mainly for the railroads. Of course, Angelina County has its own railroad and Southern Pine its own. But Arthur went in one time and, well, Ernest Kurth had the contract for years, and Arthur went in and underbid and got the contract. He went, and the next year he pulled the same trick on Arthur. He said, “Why don't we both bid the same thing and halve it?” I think that is the way it was, so Arthur did and he over bid Arthur and, not only that but he convinced Phelps Dodge that it was Arthur's conspiracy to hold the price down and, I know, one of my jobs was to go to Phelps Dodge in New York and they wouldn't even listen to me. I got there with my hat in my hand and sat there and if I ever got in to see him but I was never treated with any courtesy. He had completely convinced them that we had tried to conspire. Arthur can confirm this. I don't know if he as particularly good to be on record, and most of this information I have from him and I certainly don't want to betray what he has told me in private. But there is one thing, Arthur is the smartest person in the world. He dealt with Ernest Kurth, never let any appearance of hostility come in to any of his dealings with Ernest but Arthur used to send, of course, Arthur was a prodigy. He was head of this huge company in his 30's, I guess, maybe his late 20's but he would say “Mine enemy grows older.” He knew that Ernest Kurth was old and he was going to die and Arthur could outlive him and since then things have become more equitable – I think there is still some – not feud, but some planned rivalry, still. Arthur, I know, was negotiating with the Lufkin Country Club to trade them land for a country club, I think there where Crown Colony is now and he would take that land and develop it for residences and this hostility was there. They weren't fixing to do it, I don't know what the status of the Lufkin Country Club is now but I am sure that Crown Colony far over shadows it.

ML: All right, our interview came to an end after this phone call – Mr. Temple had to be somewhere for dinner.

END OF INTERVIEW