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The Vietnam Archive
Oral History Project
Interview with Angela Moore
Conducted by Laura Calkins, Ph.D.
April 12, 2006
Transcribed by Eunice Lee

NOTE: Any text included in brackets [] is information that was added by the narrator after reviewing the original transcript. Therefore, this information is not included in the audio version of the interview.

1 Laura Calkins: This is Dr. Laura Calkins of the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech
2 University conducting an oral history interview with Mrs. Angela Moore. Today is the
3 twelfth of April 2006. I am in the Special Collections Building on the campus of Texas
4 Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, and Angela is very kindly speaking to me this
5 morning from her home in North Carolina. Good morning, Angela.

6 Angela Moore: Good morning. How are you doing?

7 LC: I'm very well. Thank you. How are you?

8 AM: I'm doing fine.

9 LC: Well, I want to thank you for your time, first of all. It's just so important to
10 us that you've been gracious enough to give us some time this morning to talk about both
11 yourself and your husband, Paul Moore. Angela, first may I ask for your permission on
12 behalf of the Archive to make this recording and the transcript that we'll produce
13 available for researchers?

14 AM: Of course. Of course.

15 LC: Thank you, Angela. We appreciate that very much. First of all, may I ask
16 you where you were born, Angela, and when?

17 AM: I was born in Austria on the eleventh of May 1928.

18 LC: Where in Austria?

19 AM: In Waidhofen an der Ybbs.

1 LC: How do you spell the town's name?

2 AM: Okay. Let me—you know what I have to do. I always have to write it out.

3 LC: That's fine. That's fine. I know the area, but—

4 AM: Yeah. Okay. It's W-A-I-D-H-O-F-E-N. It is about 125 miles from Vienna.

5 It's in the mountain region and it is a very small village. Mainly my father was a tool-

6 and-die maker in the area who trained the boys. It is a very small village.

7 LC: What about your mother? What did she do?

8 AM: My mother was typical good mother and didn't work outside of her home.

9 She was born and raised in the same area.

10 LC: How did she meet your father? Do you know?

11 AM: My grandmother, her husband died real early and they had a tool-and-die

12 place, small. All they were doing is making ax, saws, and blades and things like that.

13 My father was a young man then, of course, and he worked for my grandmother because

14 my grandmother ran that place after her husband died.

15 LC: Did she really?

16 AM: Yes. She was a very stern woman. She had five children and ran the whole

17 place there.

18 LC: That's quite something.

19 AM: Right.

20 LC: Do you remember her, Angela?

21 AM: Do I remember her? Yes. I do sure remember her. She was a very stern

22 woman.

23 LC: Was she a loving woman, too?

24 AM: No. Very separate. I mean, you didn't visit her house unless you were

25 invited.

26 LC: Really?

27 AM: No. My cousin and I, we were in there one time summer break and it was

28 about ten kilometers away from where I was born and raised. We were going in there

29 with the train, that is a train station. She would saw us come up and she met us at the

30 door and she said, "What are you kids doing here?" "We just want to visit with you."

1 She says, “Well, you can turn right around and walk back home.” So she was a very
2 stern woman.

3 LC: Wow, I guess.

4 AM: My father worked there. Then, of course, World War I and he was drafted.
5 He was stationed in Czechoslovakia in Pilsen. That’s when my mother, of course—they
6 met at the house, but anyway they married in Pilsen.

7 LC: During the war?

8 AM: 1917. 1917 they married.

9 LC: How many children did they have—you and who else?

10 AM: Two more sisters.

11 LC: So the three sisters.

12 AM: Right.

13 LC: What are your sisters’ names?

14 AM: Mary is the oldest one. She’s eleven years older than I am, and then there is
15 Gertie. She is four years older than I am.

16 LC: So you are the baby?

17 AM: Yeah.

18 LC: Now, Mary and Gertie are on their way to see you, is that right?

19 AM: Yes. They are coming next weekend.

20 LC: They come every year?

21 AM: Every year for the past twenty years.

22 LC: That’s incredible!

23 AM: Yeah. Of course, then they have their husbands, but both of their husbands
24 passed away and so did my husband.

25 LC: They come to see you and stay how long?

26 AM: Four weeks to six weeks. This year they stay four weeks.

27 LC: How wonderful. I mean, it’s really terrific.

28 AM: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I enjoy them. Yeah.

29 LC: Oh, I’m sure you do. I can only imagine. Well, they must be very precious
30 to you.

31 AM: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Of course, now Mary is ninety-eight.

1 LC: Yes. That's just amazing.

2 AM: The other one is eighty—she was born 1924 so—

3 LC: So she's ninety-two? Something like that?

4 AM: Yeah.

5 LC: You all get along very, very well?

6 AM: Oh, yes! Mary, my oldest sister, she is the boss and we do what she wants

7 to. She is definitely the boss so we let her do. If she comes in she'll rearrange my

8 furniture. She has the run of the house and we won't say nothing.

9 LC: Absolutely not. No. She's earned that, I think.

10 AM: Oh, yeah.

11 LC: Now, did they both—they have obviously remained in Austria?

12 AM: No. They both married Germans.

13 LC: Oh, they married Germans.

14 AM: Yes.

15 LC: During the war?

16 AM: During the war. Mary, my oldest sister, she went to the university in Berlin.

17 LC: Really?

18 AM: Uh-huh. She was a nurse. That's where she met her husband. Gertie met

19 her husband in Vienna and they married in 1947.

20 LC: Were both of those men in the military?

21 AM: Yes.

22 LC: Do you know about their experiences at all during World War II?

23 AM: Yes, some. Okay. Henry, that is Mary's husband, he was a Prussian of

24 birth and he was a lieutenant in the army and was mainly on the Russian Front. Kurt was

25 a Marine and he was stationed in Yugoslavia and Italy. He did never get to the Western

26 Front or the Eastern Front.

27 LC: Were both of those guys drafted in or were they professional soldiers?

28 AM: No. No. No. They were drafted.

29 LC: They were both drafted. Were they—do you know how they felt about

30 having served in the army during World War II?

1 AM: Now, Henry was—like you have your ROTC (Reserve Officer Training
2 Corps) here, something like that, so he had to fulfill a commitment, more or less. Kurt,
3 he was not very happy about the whole thing. No, Henry was more stern about it and,
4 like I said, he affiliated himself more, not that I say he was a true Nazi to say, but he was
5 more committed where Kurt was not.

6 LC: Not so much.

7 AM: No.

8 LC: Nationalism, aside from the Nazi Party and so on, but nationalism plays a
9 role here, too, because, of course, this is the German resurrection.

10 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, definitely. You didn't have to be a Nazi but you
11 felt like, well, you're defending your position or whatever you were brainwashed or
12 whatever you want to call it.

13 LC: Yeah. Well, now they both married Austrians. How did the Germans, not
14 these two men—Henry and Kurt—but in general how did the Germans view the
15 Austrians?

16 AM: Oh, the Austrians and the Germans they had not, like what you see in
17 today's world that, "Oh, you're a foreigner," or you're—no. There wasn't any of that. I
18 did never meet none of Henry's family because right in '45 the Russians came in and
19 they took his family. They all were murdered. I mean, simple as that. But in '47 I did
20 meet, or later on, too, I met Kurt's family and there was never any feeling of, "Oh, you're
21 a foreigner."

22 LC: Where was Kurt's family from?

23 AM: Saarbrücken. That's on the French border and that's Saarland. That region
24 is right there on the French border.

25 LC: Yes. That's the one that's caused so much trouble over the years.

26 AM: Exactly. Well, there was a division in 1940 with the Yalta Conference.
27 They divided up all Germany and Austria into four sections. Saarland was one of those
28 sections that was French-occupied, but the French wanted them to become France
29 through vote like Alsace-Lorraine.

30 LC: They also wanted all the coal and all the industry.

1 AM: Exactly. You see, in World War I Alsace-Lothringen was Germany but in
2 World War I French took that over. Then in '45 they wanted to do the same thing with
3 Saarland. Well, the people then voted, of course, against it. So they still—
4 LC: Poor France. Poor France.
5 AM: Yeah. Uh-huh. Oh, yeah. They always wanted to have the easy way out.
6 I'm sorry. We lived in France, believe me, two years and I know what they're like.
7 LC: You'll find many Americans who would agree with you.
8 AM: Oh, I'm telling you.
9 LC: Yes. They are a different kettle of fish as we say it there.
10 AM: Yeah. France is only Paris and the rest of it is nothing.
11 LC: That's also true.
12 AM: There's nothing.
13 LC: Well, I'll ask you about living in France in a little while, but let me ask you
14 about yourself and growing up. You have your two older sisters.
15 AM: Right.
16 LC: Was there a school in the village or how did you go to school?
17 AM: Oh, yeah, a very small school, very small. We had, like you would say, it
18 was one building from the kindergarten to junior high, until junior high. That's all that
19 was there.
20 LC: One teacher or more?
21 AM: We had a principal and then we had a homeroom teacher—one, two,
22 three—four other teachers. That's it.
23 LC: Okay. So that's just very small. How many people lived in the village?
24 What was the population, or the area?
25 AM: Estimate of my village—I will send you some brochures of my village since
26 I think about it.
27 LC: Wonderful. That would be wonderful.
28 AM: I will send you some brochures. Maybe if I say eight thousand. That's very
29 small because the factory, that was the only big thing in town. I mean not even town.
30 We have a town farther on up now, which is a very historic town, Waidhofen an der

1 Ybbs, which I spelled out to you. I should actually spelled out to you Bohlerwerk, which
2 is my hometown. I did the wrong thing there.

3 LC: Go ahead and write it down.

4 AM: Yeah. I write it down. Just a minute.

5 LC: No worries.

6 AM: B-O-H-L-E-R-W-E-R-K.

7 LC: Very good. Are these valley towns near the river? Near the river Ybbs?

8 AM: Yeah. The Ybbs. Y-B-B-S.

9 LC: You said there was a factory there, one big factory?

10 AM: Yeah. The name is the same as the town.

11 LC: What did they make there?

12 AM: Well, it was tool-and-die. Like I said my father was a tool-and-die maker.
13 The factory they made scythes, hammers, all kinds of tools you can imagine. Then, but
14 they converted it in '44, or '43, they converted it to pistons. They were making pistons in
15 there then for war material.

16 LC: Sure, for engines of different kinds. Well, do you remember as a young girl
17 the beginnings of knowing that a war was coming?

18 AM: Yeah. You had a very unstable kind of—before Hitler came into town you
19 had three parties fighting with each other and that was—Dollfuss was one of the
20 presidents. They assassinated him. There were quite a bit of problems. You had fighting
21 and shooting and all that. That was then, let's say, in '37, '36.

22 LC: Yes. Before the *Anschluss*.

23 AM: Yeah, right, right. There was a lot of unrest. You had four different parties
24 participating in the fight.

25 LC: Making coalitions and that sort.

26 AM: Yeah. Yeah, very, very unrestful because I remember that one time they
27 were shooting outside of our house. We were hiding in the house because of the unrest.

28 LC: That's frightening.

29 AM: Yeah. So it was very, very—and that was when they assassinated the
30 president.

31 LC: President Dollfuss.

1 AM: Dollfuss. Right. I think one of the other presidents then came to the States,
2 if I remember and I can't remember his name.

3 LC: I don't remember either.

4 AM: Yeah. Well, it doesn't really matter then.

5 LC: People can look that up. But you remember this hiding and being upset.

6 AM: Right. Right. So then '38 you had—that's when in August or September
7 that's when Hitler came to Austria.

8 LC: Did you know about that?

9 AM: Oh, yeah, definitely because the town didn't have any people in there. You
10 said you were in Vienna?

11 LC: In Linz, actually, and also in Vienna. I did go to Vienna very briefly yes.

12 AM: Okay. The bigger town from my hometown now is Amstetten.

13 LC: Did he come through there?

14 AM: Yeah.

15 LC: I thought. Yes. Because it's on the way.

16 AM: Right. Amstetten, and that's where most of the people—I mean I can truly
17 say that that us kids we were by ourselves because all the other people went out to
18 Amstetten. They wanted to see what's going on.

19 LC: The adults all went?

20 AM: Right. Well, most of them anyway.

21 LC: Do you remember anything about their reports as they came back? Not
22 necessarily whether they saw Hitler himself but—

23 AM: Oh, some of them did. Yeah.

24 LC: Did they really?

25 AM: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah.

26 LC: What was the mood? I mean, were they excited or were they—?

27 AM: Excited. Excited. Very much so. You know what's bizarre about the
28 whole thing, after the war everybody said, "I had nothing to do with it." But then as I
29 remember it as a child they were all happy about it.

30 LC: They were supportive on the front end.

31 AM: Yeah. At the front end I can only say that they were supportive.

1 LC: There weren't that many people in Austria who were saying, "No. We
2 shouldn't be part of Germany."

3 AM: No. No. Nope.

4 LC: That's interesting because one would have thought that Austrians wanted to
5 stay independent and—

6 AM: No, no. No. As far as I can remember most of the—no. No. In fact, in
7 1933 a lot of the underground was working there already. You know the—what they
8 call—illegals. They were working already in—I remember one time a friend of ours, she
9 had three boys. Her boys, they were working already underground and they were raising
10 the flag on the tower in town before Hitler came.

11 LC: The Nazi flag?

12 AM: Yes.

13 LC: No kidding.

14 AM: Yeah. They arrested them, of course, because they were illegally working
15 already to—that was 1933. Hitler didn't come to Austria until '38.

16 LC: That's right. So there was this long period beforehand.

17 AM: Exactly. Exactly. They were working already underground. So as far as I
18 am concerned, no, as far as my village is concerned, they approved of it.

19 LC: Now, you would remember probably within your family how the adults, not
20 only your parents but maybe aunts and uncles, how they might have felt about it.

21 AM: Now I had two uncles, my mother's side, and they disapproved whole-
22 heartedly.

23 LC: How did they make that clear? How do you know that?

24 AM: Because when my uncle was drafted, the younger brother, when he was
25 drafted he shot himself in the arm.

26 LC: He shot himself in the arm to get out of service?

27 AM: That's right. He sure did.

28 LC: That's pretty drastic.

29 AM: He sure did. The other one, now during the war, he would listen to BBC
30 (British Broadcasting Corporation) and, of course, they found out. Some neighbor
31 reported him that he is listening to BBC. So they came and got the radio and gave him a

1 stern warning. If he listens to BBC again then he'll be arrested. Well, he of course got
2 himself another radio somewhere and he did get arrested. He got five years in the
3 concentration camp.

4 LC: Do you know where they sent him?

5 AM: To Mauthausen.

6 LC: Really?

7 AM: Mauthausen. He was there three years before the war was over.

8 LC: He was liberated then by—

9 AM: By Americans.

10 LC: Did he ever discuss his experience with you? What was his name?

11 AM: His name was Spendlhofer. I have to spend—

12 LC: That's okay. Go ahead. There's no hurry. What was his first name?

13 AM: Aldorf. Aldorf. S-P-E-N-D-L-H-O-F-E-R. Spendlhofer.

14 LC: Spendlhofer. He spent three of his five sentence—

15 AM: Three years of his five sentence. Now, Mauthausen was by Amstetten. So
16 it was not that far away from us. It's about twenty-five kilometers. I say about seventy-
17 five kilometers from my hometown.

18 LC: Did people generally know what was going on?

19 AM: No, because my mother would go down there at least every two weeks.

20 LC: Really?

21 AM: Mm-hmm. No, she didn't get to talk to him, but she would go there by the
22 window. He was about third floor up. I never did go with them. My mother always
23 went alone. She wouldn't have anybody go with her.

24 LC: But she wanted to be able to see him?

25 AM: Yes. That's all.

26 LC: Could she communicate?

27 AM: No. No. No. They couldn't communicate because he was so far in the
28 fence. She just wanted to go there to let him know that she is there to, you know, that he
29 can see her.

30 LC: Moral support.

31 AM: Yeah, right. That was only moral support.

1 LC: Do you know how he felt about her coming to see him? Did he ever talk
2 about it afterwards?

3 AM: No. I have no recollection of a conversation. All I know is when he came
4 back it was very emotional because he was gray-headed. He was under nourished. The
5 Americans kept him for eight months before they released him to, you know, because
6 then my hometown was Russian.

7 LC: You were under Russian occupation?

8 AM: Exactly. Exactly. It was Russian. So the Americans kept him for eight
9 months before they released him to home.

10 LC: Where did they keep him? Do you know?

11 AM: In Linz. In Hörsching.

12 LC: In what they called a DP (displaced persons) camp?

13 AM: Yeah. DP camp. Yeah. You had the Polish, the Jewish, and then you had
14 people that got rescued from the concentration camps.

15 LC: Was your mom able to write to him? Did she know where he was during
16 that time?

17 AM: No.

18 LC: She had no idea?

19 AM: No. Only Mom knew about it.

20 LC: Dear, that must have been very difficult. But when he came back he was
21 very thin?

22 AM: And very sick. He was very, very sick when he got back. In fact, he only
23 lived four years after he got back.

24 LC: How terrible. I mean, it must have just been awful. That's really quite
25 baffles the imagination. His crime was that he listened to the BBC?

26 AM: BBC. That was it.

27 LC: Had he been drafted?

28 AM: No. No.

29 LC: So he was younger or older?

1 AM: He was older. He was older. So why he never was drafted or anything I
2 don't know, but maybe because he was also working in a factory that made war
3 materials. So maybe that's why he was exempt, but I wouldn't know that.

4 LC: Yeah. It was important to have—they had to have workers at home. Were
5 women brought in to work in some of the factories? Do you know?

6 AM: No. No. No. Not like here what you read about it here where the women
7 would go to the factories. No, not in our area. Maybe in bigger factories. That I don't
8 know.

9 LC: Let me ask a little bit about your mother's other uncle, the one who shot
10 himself in the arm.

11 AM: Oh, he was a spoiled person.

12 LC: Was he?

13 AM: Yeah. Yeah. He stayed with his mother. I mean, he never married. He
14 married later on after the mother passed away, but during the war he was not married. He
15 was a spoiled brat.

16 LC: He was a brat?

17 AM: Yeah.

18 LC: Did he really hurt himself quite badly?

19 AM: Well, not too bad. Just long enough to stay in the hospital and get out of
20 draft.

21 LC: Unbelievable. Wow. Well, he doesn't sound like such a nice guy anyway.

22 AM: Well, and then I mean he was very much, not socialistic—he leaned a little
23 bit on the communist side.

24 LC: Okay. Little far to the left?

25 AM: Mm-hmm. More on the left. The guy didn't know what he wants.

26 LC: Yeah. There were a lot of people who were—I mean this was a very
27 difficult and confusing time. Did your mother ever talk to you about the war or your
28 father? Did they tell you what was happening? How did you know what was going on?

29 AM: Oh, my mother and father were very much so in tune as far as the radio and
30 newspaper. You didn't have much of an option. You listened to the news, whatever they

1 gave you, and that's why my uncle was so avid about BBC. They would then talk about
2 it, you know. He brought the difference and say, "You see, that's the difference."

3 LC: Do you know how your—I mean, is it fair to say that your parents were—?

4 AM: No. My father was not leaning at all. He was against the regime, period.

5 LC: Was he really?

6 AM: Yeah. Because they took then—that didn't happen until about '43. They
7 took his position away from him because he wouldn't sign up for a party affiliation.

8 LC: They were pushing him to do that?

9 AM: Yeah. They were pushing him and in '43 they take his position away from
10 him.

11 LC: Now, did they take his job?

12 AM: No, not his job. Just that he was, like I said, in charge of the school to train
13 the boys and they took that away from him.

14 LC: How did he feel about that? He must have known that was a risk.

15 AM: Very bitter. Very bitter about it because that was his whole life. I don't
16 think he ever, because even after '45 they never did give him back the position.

17 LC: So he lived with that all his life?

18 AM: Yes. He was very bitter about it.

19 LC: How long did your father live?

20 AM: He was eighty-three.

21 LC: No kidding. What about your mother?

22 AM: Mother, she died when she was sixty-three.

23 LC: Do you know had she been ill or was there an accident?

24 AM: No, no. She had a heart condition.

25 LC: Oh, okay.

26 AM: Yeah. She died of her heart illness.

27 LC: Where were you living when your mother died?

28 AM: We were stationed in France.

29 LC: This is when you had already, of course, married Paul, and this is when you
30 were living in lovely France.

31 AM: Mm-hm. Oh, yeah. Right.

1 LC: Did you go home?
2 AM: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.
3 LC: And your sisters also?
4 AM: Yeah. Oh, yeah. After in '54 when the Austrians took over the government
5 then, yeah, then it was easy to travel back and forth, of course. They knew we could go
6 but all the other times it was just you had to have permission to go in and out.
7 LC: It was very controlled.
8 AM: Very controlled, especially in the Russian zone, see. You could travel to
9 like you did in Berlin. You could go from the American zone into the American zone,
10 but then when it got to the British and the French zone then you run into a problem.
11 LC: You had to have the right papers?
12 AM: Yes. You had to have the permission. The Russians they didn't give you
13 the permission to go in and out.
14 LC: Your part in Austria was occupied by Russia until when?
15 AM: At 1954, wasn't it, when the Austrian government, I mean was turned over
16 to the Austrian government. I think that was in '54 or '56.
17 LC: Were there Russian troops?
18 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. You had the border right on the Enns River. You
19 know where the Enns River is?
20 LC: Yes. Uh-huh.
21 AM: That was the border.
22 LC: The Russians were right there.
23 AM: Yeah. You had Enns. That was the American zone. Then on the other side
24 of the river was the Russian zone. Like Linz, you know, Linz was American zone.
25 LC: Yes. And Vienna?
26 AM: Vienna was divided.
27 LC: Just like Berlin.
28 AM: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But there was not that much restriction in Vienna,
29 either. You could go from one area to the other, not like they did, you know, divided it
30 off like they did Berlin.
31 LC: Yeah. Berlin was actually seriously—

1 AM: Yeah. Really divided up. The Russians divided it off.

2 LC: Yes. That's right. Well, when you were growing up, let's see, you were in
3 your teens when the war was going on.

4 AM: Yeah.

5 LC: What did you think of it?

6 AM: What did I think of it? Now, Gertie, my sister, she was a secretary in the
7 factory down there. I went to school that took care of the kindergarten, but I wasn't a
8 kindergarten teacher at that time.

9 LC: You were a helper?

10 AM: Yes. Un-huh. That's about it.

11 LC: Were you afraid?

12 AM: No.

13 LC: Not at all?

14 AM: Not at all because we had air raids, let's say. We knew exactly what to do
15 in the air raids. We go into the shelters. We had air raid shelter in the mountain. We had
16 a few bombings but nothing big because the valley was not that important I don't think.
17 They would drop some bombs when they come back from Italy. They would fly over, go
18 to Munich, or go into Germany, and on the way back if they had bombs left then they
19 dropped them. That's the way we felt.

20 LC: Tell me about the shelter in the mountains. When you say that do you mean
21 there was a dugout or some kind of—?

22 AM: Oh, yeah. That was a regular mountain shelter dug right in. You had, not
23 air condition, but you had air flow through there and you had it sectioned off for the
24 school kids on that area and keep the kids together and the school kids. Keep the kids
25 together.

26 LC: That would have been part of your responsibility?

27 AM: Yeah, to keep them in there and yeah. The kids were very—nothing big.

28 LC: It was just day to day for you.

29 AM: Yeah. That was a daily affair.

30 LC: Yeah. They don't know any different.

1 AM: No, they didn't know. They didn't cry or anything. We played games.
2 Sometime when the air showed not enough air then we would say you have to be quiet. I
3 never had any confusion with them.

4 LC: Now, when the war ended where were you and how did you learn about it?

5 AM: I was in my hometown. Now that was a very, very hard time because the
6 German army would retreat. We knew they were coming closer into my hometown, the
7 German army, because they were retreating from Hungaria and knowing that. Then they
8 were coming from the west, too. But anyway, yeah that was a real trying time. They
9 were trying to—the bridges were—they had explosives under the bridges.

10 LC: Blowing them up.

11 AM: Yeah, blowing them up. Yeah. The only thing I can remember real well is
12 that then it was nothing but confusion. The German army was hiding in the mountains
13 and firing and fighting up in the mountains, more or less, not in the town as much.

14 LC: Very upsetting.

15 AM: Very much so. Day by day. Anyway we were wondering, "Who is
16 coming? Is the Americans coming or is the Russians coming?" We knew they were the
17 two fronts but didn't know for a long time who is coming in town. Well, then finally the
18 tanks were moving in and some of the bridges were blown up but before they knew they
19 had the bridge already over the river again, you know, the Americans were building those
20 bridges.

21 LC: The floating ones.

22 AM: Yeah. Uh-huh. Then the tanks—my house, our home, was right on the
23 road. It was my house, a road, and the factory. We were opposite from the factory. The
24 tanks would stop right in front of the house. The whole road was full with army.

25 LC: Was it American tanks?

26 AM: Americans. Then everybody was just so happy that Americans are coming
27 and everybody was so happy, but they didn't get out of the tanks. They sat in their tanks
28 for about overnight. Then they start moving out. All the rest of the Germans that were in
29 town, the military, they went with the Americans. Then the rumors got, "The Russians
30 are coming." The Americans pulling out and the Russians are coming. Everybody kept

1 saying, "You better go with the Americans because it's not going to be no good." Of
2 course, a lot of people in my hometown left with the Americans.

3 LC: Not just the military people but civilians?

4 AM: Even civilians.

5 LC: What about your family?

6 AM: No. Nope. My dad, "No. We're not gonna—we're just going to not give
7 up our home." So we stayed. Now Mary was in Berlin at that time. Now Gertie was still
8 with us, but after the Russians came in town all hell broke loose. I mean, when I say all
9 hell break loose, that's exactly what happened. They pillaged the town. I mean, there
10 was nothing left in the town. My dad they forced labor and forced labor for us.

11 LC: For him, did they draft your dad in?

12 AM: For forced labor, yeah, because see all those machines in the factories
13 there—okay. So we had my house, a road, a factory, then you had the river and on the
14 other side you had the railroad track, a railroad. The Russians would load up all those
15 whatever they got from the village or the from the factory, load it up and bring it to
16 Russia.

17 LC: Yeah. They were just taking everything?

18 AM: Everything. I mean everything.

19 LC: So they made your dad help them with that?

20 AM: Oh, yes. They would pick us now. My mother and Gertie and I, we would
21 have to—they pick us up in the morning, machinegun loaded. We had to dig a trench, the
22 whole village, everybody, not us alone. The village had to dig a trench. That was just to
23 keep us together that they could pillage the town.

24 LC: So they just had you out digging while—

25 AM: Yeah.

26 LC: And that made all the houses empty.

27 AM: Empty. That's right.

28 LC: I see. You tried to, I'm sure, try to stay together with your sister and mom.

29 AM: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. We stayed pretty well together.

30 LC: I mean, Angela, this is very frightening to hear about. You're under gun.

31 AM: Yeah.

1 LC: You're being guarded?

2 AM: Oh, yes.

3 LC: You were, what, sixteen or seventeen years old?

4 AM: Seventeen.

5 LC: That would just be horrendously frightening for a young woman.

6 AM: Go back to it and you say—how should I put it? Yeah, frightening, because

7 you hide. When they called us back home you did hide because they were raping girls.

8 My mother would hide us. It was—then people would even go that far and say, “Oh,

9 leave my daughter alone. Go over there. There's two daughters over there.” You know,

10 the people turn against each other then, too. That town, you couldn't trust anybody

11 anymore because the people would turn against each other. They wanted to say, “I had

12 nothing to do with all this.” It was a shocking time to where you weren't scared

13 anymore. You just live.

14 LC: Where did your mom hide you if she had to?

15 AM: We had a wash kitchen. It's a building away from the house and was of

16 quite size, big size building. It had a hole in the ceiling where the air could escape and

17 that's where we would hide.

18 LC: Would she come in with you, your mom?

19 AM: No. No. It was just Gertie and I.

20 LC: She was very brave, your mother.

21 AM: Yeah. Braver was my grandmother because they put a headquarter in there

22 in her building, I mean in her home. The Russian headquarter in there. She was totally

23 in control of those Russians. I mean, she was totally in control. They would bring in

24 stuff from neighbors, which they had stolen. She couldn't talk Russian but she made

25 them take it back.

26 LC: She was tough.

27 AM: She was a tough woman, yeah. They never took anything from her. In fact,

28 we had some stuff in there in her house because we brought it in there because of the

29 bombs. We wanted to save it. That town where my grandmother lived is smaller yet

30 than my town. I mean, there was just the church and a couple of little shops and things.

31 Nothing big.

1 LC: So just a small village?

2 AM: Yeah. Just a small village. We brought it in there and nothing—whatever
3 we brought in there was still there. Nothing was stolen and everybody in my hometown
4 lost everything.

5 LC: She was something else.

6 AM: They called her *mayora*. *Mayora*. They called her *mayora*. Things they
7 made her cook for them, but they always made her eat first because I guess they were
8 afraid that she'd poison them.

9 LC: She had them right where she wanted them then.

10 AM: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They stayed about six months, about six months.

11 LC: Really?

12 AM: Mm-hmm.

13 LC: So for six months or this long period were you and your sister and your
14 mother constantly being taken out of the house everyday?

15 AM: Everyday for about—oh, I don't want to lie about it. Oh, at least six to
16 eight months. At least six to eight months.

17 LC: Mostly they had you digging?

18 AM: Mm-hmm.

19 LC: With what?

20 AM: Sixteen feet deep—wait, no. Wait a minute. You think I can remember.
21 Anyway there was a measurement. They would measure it three feet deep and so wide.
22 Of course, the rumor got they going to shoot us. When we finish digging then they're
23 going to shoot us. That was the rumor.

24 LC: You said that what you did was try in your own mind just to survive?

25 AM: Yeah. Yeah. There was no food. I mean, everything was gone. The stores
26 and everything—there was more food during the war than there was afterwards. The real
27 horror begin afterwards because during the war everything was rationed. You knew how
28 much you had and how much you could use, but after the war was over there was
29 nothing. There was nothing.

1 LC: Angela, before the Russians came and occupied and all of these horrendous
2 things that you're describing went on, had you known and was there a feeling around that
3 the Russians were far more to be feared than either the Germans—?

4 AM: Yes. That was definitely known all the way around.

5 LC: What was that based on? Was it history or—?

6 AM: More of what—

7 LC: Rumors?

8 AM: Rumors. Yeah. Yeah. Already from some of the soldiers that came back
9 from—that goes I think in my opinion it goes back to World War I already because if I
10 remember my dad talking about the Cossacks and the horrible—that really started right
11 there and then from some of the soldiers that came back from touring the war already.

12 LC: From the Eastern Front.

13 AM: Yeah, because we got—let's say the wounded. We got the wounded from
14 the Eastern Front.

15 LC: They would come through?

16 AM: Well, we had a small hospital in Waidhofen, but the wounded soldiers
17 would be in Amstetten. They would come through our home area and they would
18 transport them to Amstetten then.

19 LC: So stories would emerge from them?

20 AM: From that. That's where I think a lot of the story came from.

21 LC: So you would hear from the Germans, wounded soldiers, that the Russians—

22 AM: Yeah. That how horrible it all was and how the Russians—so, no, the
23 Americans, if I remember right there, everybody was jubilant that, "Oh, the Americans
24 are here." Then when they left that was a definite—that a lot of people left with the
25 Americans to retreat back to Enns.

26 LC: They were going west.

27 AM: Yes. Yes. Yeah. Because we're on the Eastern Front.

28 LC: Did your father—were you all able to get back together at night after the
29 Russians had—?

1 AM: Yeah. Yeah. Then, you know, my mom would say, “Come here. You can
2 come down here now. Everything is clear,” you know. Then I guess you could hear the
3 Russians, where they were, up in the hills they were drinking and singing. Yeah.

4 LC: Frightening.

5 AM: Frightening. Very much so.

6 LC: As you said they had machineguns?

7 AM: Oh, yeah. One incident I want to tell you about. They would pick us up in
8 the morning and bring us down to I call it, it’s not a square. It’s just where there was a
9 grocery store and butcher shop, a bakery, the center of the town, and the school was
10 there. They would bring us there. That one morning, they were on horseback. A lot of
11 those soldiers were on horseback. We were—whatever was going on between the
12 Russians I don’t know, but nobody ever knew. One guy on a horse came up and he shot
13 the guy that picked me, Gertie, Mom, and Dad up.

14 LC: Did you see this?

15 AM: Yeah. He blank him up to the—I remember he’s got two silver front teeth.
16 That’s all I remember what he looked like. To me I remember them two front teeth,
17 silver front teeth. That guy would ever, whoever he was, we don’t even know drank or
18 anything. But he came right up and shot him blank. I mean, many incidents like that
19 happened. Let’s say the Russians would say to somebody, “You take your wagon and
20 you pick up all the ammunition you can find.” Then the guy would go up with his little
21 wagon up and down the road and demand, “If you have any guns give them to me
22 because I’m ordered to pick them up.” Then they shot him.

23 LC: They shot him?

24 AM: Yeah. So there were so many incidents that I can—it just pops in my head
25 now those two incidents. There were many more. There were many more.

26 LC: This was a period, Angela, it sounds like you were just living terrified.

27 AM: Yeah, but when I think was I really scared you didn’t care. You just made it
28 a day and that’s it.

29 LC: How was your father holding up during this time?

30 AM: Very much in defiance. He would say, “That’s a machine I designed and
31 they’ll never be able to use it.” My mother would say, “They’re going to find out that

1 you messed the machine up and they're going to kill you." He says, "Oh, I don't care,
2 but they're not going to get no use out of that machine." So he would diligently try to
3 figure out a way how to get the machine off the premises, but also make sure that the
4 machine doesn't work.

5 LC: So he was sabotaging them.

6 AM: Mm-hmm. That was his only goal is how for them not to be able to use the
7 machine.

8 LC: Do you think that was—I mean, him figuring that out was kind of how he—

9 AM: He could get even.

10 LC: Yes.

11 AM: Yeah. That was his satisfaction that he knew that that machine didn't work.

12 LC: Did he express fear or—?

13 AM: No.

14 LC: For you?

15 AM: Yeah, very much so—my mother mainly. I mean, she—

16 LC: Oh, I'm sure.

17 AM: Yeah, mainly.

18 LC: Oh, I'm sure. Were you and Gertie able to stay safe?

19 AM: Yeah. We were not, which I can't say for others, but we were safe in the
20 fact that we always had a good hiding place. They never found our hiding place.

21 LC: But as you say—

22 AM: They knew that we were there they'd be looking for us because they picked
23 us up in the morning. So they knew we were there. They tried to coerce my mother,
24 "Where's the girls? Where's the girls?" My mother said, "I don't know. They ran
25 away," or whatever. You know, she was always able to divert them.

26 LC: That's quite amazing. Good for her. You must have loved her so much.

27 AM: Oh, yes. I was ever so grateful that I could do what I could do for her then
28 later on.

29 LC: Later on. Let's take a break there, Angela.

1 AM: It was just dreamland all the way around. There were no socialistic
2 avenues. There was just good, free America. I see it slowly progressing into socialistic
3 area. It's progressing real fast now.

4 LC: What kinds of things do you see that make you think that?

5 AM: What makes me think that is if I, with my own simple looking at it, when
6 Johnson said the Great Society. Then it began to, "What can the government do for me?"
7 That's where America began to really, really loose its sight of what America is all about.

8 LC: Becoming too dependent on the government?

9 AM: On the government. Too "You owe me that." Everybody has that attitude
10 now. When I came here first—

11 LC: Which was when?

12 AM: In 1953, it was—of course, I'm coming from an area that was devastated.
13 My life was devastated. So when I came over it was a dreamland. You could go to the
14 store and you'd find all this life and all this good stuff.

15 LC: Food everywhere, all kinds of—

16 AM: Which everywhere—yeah, which we didn't have. So, therefore, naturally it
17 all looked better than it was, but neighbors helping neighbors, close to, "What can I do
18 for you?" That's what I got then. But now it seems like, "What can somebody else do
19 for me?" That's where—that's the socialistic kind of thing where the government tells
20 you what you can do and I can do that for you if you do that for me. That's what I see
21 now.

22 LC: That's worrying, isn't it?

23 AM: Very much so. It's disturbing in the fact—oh, you see that now with the
24 demonstration from the Mexicans. That's a good example.

25 LC: What do you make of that? I mean, you immigrated here—

26 AM: Very much disturbed. Why is the government not able to control that?
27 They've lost sight ten years ago, fifteen years ago, when they say the immigration
28 amnesty. What happened? They lost it. They lost it.

29 LC: They lost control of—

30 AM: They lost control. So now we're standing there and saying, "Why they have
31 the same right?" Then you've got all these other people saying, "Well, they do the

1 menial labor.” Sure. There is a workers program. They have it in Europe. They have it
2 everywhere, but a controlled kind of system and they lost it when they made the amnesty.

3 LC: Also not having controlled our borders—

4 AM: No. But you can’t shut your border off. If they would have followed
5 through with the amnesty and kind of say “From now on you can come over that they put
6 a work program in place.” Right there and then they say, “Well, you have got here now
7 amnesty, but from now on you going to be sent back.” I mean, but what did we do? We
8 let them come across and then they sat in San Diego and all this border states instead of
9 the sheriff saying, “Hey, wait a minute.” He knows his people, the sheriff, that that is an
10 alien. So the sheriff should have been able to arrest them and send them back.

11 LC: Right. That just has not happened.

12 AM: That’s what not happened because the government said you can’t do that.
13 The police can’t go out and arrest them. That’s where the problem started.

14 LC: Yeah. It really kind of makes a very difficult proposition for the United
15 States, then, to try to control terrorism.

16 AM: Yeah. When they say, “Well, your grandfather or your great grandfather
17 came over from Europe.” Yeah, but they went to Ellis Island, didn’t they? And they had
18 to—

19 LC: Mine did.

20 AM: Yeah, that’s right. How many times do I recall of people telling me—well,
21 I have a cousin. She had four kids and she went to Canada. Well, that one kid couldn’t
22 go because he had tuberculosis. So he was left behind because she took her other kids
23 and went to Canada but that one kid was left behind. So he was drafted in the German
24 Army because he got well and everything good. He didn’t see his mother until 1947.

25 LC: People just don’t accept that kind of thing anymore.

26 AM: No. No. They have to wait to get in line for one reason or the other.

27 LC: That’s right. For anything.

28 AM: For anything.

29 LC: Yeah. It’s kind of worrying.

30 AM: Mm-hmm.

1 LC: Angela, let me ask about when you were able to get away from the Russians.
2 How did this happen? Did they leave or did you get out of town?

3 AM: No. They did not leave. I did get out of town. My mother's sister was
4 living in the American zone. So I would go back and forth over the mountains then after
5 they stopped harassing us to the point where we had to be picked up with machineguns
6 and all this. They settled in into their own little life and I would go back and forth over
7 the mountains to my aunt's place, which is in Wels.

8 LC: Spelled?

9 AM: Wels, W-E-L-S. That's a little bit up from Linz.

10 LC: Your mother's sister lived there?

11 AM: Yeah. She lived there.

12 LC: When you say you went over the mountains, did you hike?

13 AM: Oh, yeah. Hiked up because that one mountain was divided. On one side of
14 the mountain was the Russian and on the other side of the mountain was the American
15 zone.

16 LC: You would go back and forth?

17 AM: Back and forth. I had my little trail where I never did get caught.

18 LC: Did you already know that trail? I mean, was it a way that you found?

19 AM: Well, I knew the mountain real well. I knew that it was divided—the other
20 side of the mountain, that that was American zone.

21 LC: So you kind of knew a path to go that would keep you—?

22 AM: Yeah. I knew the mountain real well because we used to hike all the time
23 up there.

24 LC: So you would keep away from where the Russians were?

25 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. I could be standing up on the mountain and look
26 down. On one part you still see the roadway and there would be the Russian gate. If I
27 stayed to the right then I'll be in the American zone. So I had a real good trail going
28 there.

29 LC: Now, were other people doing the same thing you were doing?

30 AM: Yeah. There were three or four of us which had relatives in the American
31 zone. We would be going back and forth there.

1 LC: Now, when you went over to the American zone how different was it? Can
2 you describe—?

3 AM: Oh, yeah. That's why we made our roadway out there because the
4 Americans they would already hand out food to the people there. It was calm. So I
5 would go pick up some food and bring it back and forth for my aunt.

6 LC: What kinds of food?

7 AM: Cheese, crackers, canned food like gravy and, oh, gosh, like stew. Like
8 stew there, and what else? Big blocks of cheese. Not only just little bit of cheese. They
9 would hand them out by the block and crackers and—what else? I can't think of
10 anything else but the cheese, that was the main and, of course, the stew.

11 LC: Carrying that back and forth was quite something.

12 AM: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I would stay a couple of days and get all the food I could
13 carry. That became a lifestyle then for me and my mother because my mother would do
14 the same thing later on.

15 LC: Is that right?

16 AM: Mm-hmm.

17 LC: How did you carry it back and forth? Did you have a backpack?

18 AM: A rucksack. Yeah. Backpack and sometimes suitcase. If I had carried
19 enough then it was a suitcase, too.

20 LC: Just the thought of having to carry that over that distance.

21 AM: That was not just one day's hike. You would sleep on top of the mountain
22 to go on the next day. It was a long way.

23 LC: Wow. That's really incredible.

24 AM: That really it became so matter-of-fact then that the American zone, the
25 food became very, very plenty. In Germany the food became nothing. Until 1949 you
26 had nothing in Germany. So my sisters was in Heidelberg, Germany.

27 LC: Now, is this Mary?

28 AM: Mary and Gertie. See, we got quieter. Gertie left to Germany to my sister's
29 place and then tried to find Kurt. So she went out to Germany in 1946.

30 LC: Looking for him?

1 AM: Looking for him. Right. Henry, he made it in to my aunt's house in early
2 part of '46.

3 LC: Your aunt's house that was in the—?

4 AM: In Austria.

5 LC: In the US zone?

6 AM: Yeah. Yeah. He made it in and from there he went to meet Mary in
7 Heidelberg.

8 LC: Now you said Mary had been in Berlin. Had she been moved out of Berlin?

9 AM: Yeah. She'd been moved out of Berlin. She came home to have the baby
10 that was before the war was over and from then then she went out to Heidelberg.

11 LC: Now why did she go to Heidelberg?

12 AM: Because Henry had his—he started in Heidelberg. Yeah. He went to the
13 University of Heidelberg. So Mary was familiar with that area and didn't go back to
14 Berlin.

15 LC: Yeah. That was probably a very good decision.

16 AM: Yeah, for her it was.

17 LC: I'll bet. I want to ask you a little bit about Mary as we go on, but she was
18 able to actually come all the way down to Austria when she was pregnant?

19 AM: Yeah, because the air raid was getting so bad out there anyway in Berlin
20 that she left, not alone because she was pregnant, but she wanted to have the baby in
21 Austria. She had a little girl.

22 LC: Is her daughter still alive?

23 AM: Yes.

24 LC: Living where?

25 AM: In Stuttgart, Germany. They both—Mary lives in Stuttgart now.

26 LC: Oh, wow. Do you know how Henry found out that his family was gone?

27 AM: Through the aunt.

28 LC: Is that right?

29 AM: Yeah. He found out that Mary is in Heidelberg through my aunt because
30 my aunt had a daughter in Hamburg. She was married to a German, but we did not know

1 how they are doing. At that point neither one of us knew how Mary was doing or how
2 her daughter is doing.

3 LC: So this was just a kind of empty space.

4 AM: We just know that they were there, but we had no communication
5 whatsoever from the day the war ended. We had no communication with none of the
6 girls.

7 LC: Until?

8 AM: '47.

9 LC: I mean, that's quite frightening really.

10 AM: Yeah. From '47—then when I started going over the border like I did I
11 ventured out to go to find my sister in Heidelberg.

12 LC: You did on your own?

13 AM: On my own. Again I had to go from the American zone into the American
14 zone in Germany. Heidelberg was in the American zone. Now, Gertie was in the French
15 zone and Gretel, my cousin, was in the British zone. So therefore I had to go through all
16 those borders. Well—

17 LC: And you did this on your own?

18 AM: On my own.

19 LC: Did you go by train? How did you—?

20 AM: No. No. No. Walked half of the way and then you had what you called
21 after the war the Caritas. The Caritas. That was a Catholic organization. They were very
22 immediate to help people from one area to the other. I had a Red Cross pass, which was
23 just a Red Cross ID (identification) card.

24 LC: Where did you get that?

25 AM: That I got during the war because I'd made that six weeks course what we
26 had to do for the health department for the kindergarten. It had a big, old, red cross and
27 your picture on it. Anyway, with that ID one time I got stopped. I showed them that ID
28 card and they let me go. So whatever I was lucky or whatever.

29 LC: Where were you stopped? Do you remember?

30 AM: In Mannheim. That was on the train station.

31 LC: By whom?

1 AM: By American police. He let me go. I mean, I showed them the ID card and
2 he let me go.

3 LC: You probably looked pretty harmless.

4 AM: Yeah. I guess so.

5 LC: Because you were only, what, eighteen?

6 AM: Eighteen. Yeah. Eighteen going on nineteen there.

7 LC: So you're trying to find your—

8 AM: I tried to find my sister and I found her because I had an address. I stayed
9 with her, but I couldn't stay long because there was nothing to eat. So therefore every
10 mouth you had to feed you better move on. While I was on the road all the time I would
11 always try to see if I can get to the train station somewhere because the Caritas had their
12 soup kitchens set up there. Then I would go from Heidelberg to Saarbrücken to find
13 Gertie. I stayed there about two or three days and then I went up to Essen. That's where
14 my cousin was. Well, that was the worst place.

15 LC: This was in the French zone or—?

16 AM: That was in the British zone. That was in the British zone and that was
17 truly the worst time because everything was bombed there. Not a thing was standing.
18 Not a thing. I wandered through that area for days, for days.

19 LC: Through the wreckage and everything?

20 AM: The wreckage and asking people where is Gebruden Straße. That was that
21 street. They would direct me one way and the other would direct me the other way. For
22 days, I cannot tell you how many days I was wandering that area.

23 LC: Where did you sleep?

24 AM: On the street wherever.

25 LC: Were there other people doing the same thing?

26 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. It was simple chaos. It was simple—

27 LC: Were you afraid?

28 AM: No. No. No. I was not afraid. In Germany it was devastated. The only
29 area—I mean, Munich was torn down to nothing and Heidelberg was safe. I mean,
30 Heidelberg they had bombs but nothing shattering. Then in Saarbrücken that wasn't bad
31 either. You had a lot of bombs yeah, but it wasn't devastated like what I saw up in Essen.

1 LC: Essen was just flattened.

2 AM: It was flattened. There was not a building wherever I walked. I finally
3 found my cousin.

4 LC: How did you find her?

5 AM: Through people, asking until I finally got into that location and then there
6 was somebody I asked again. “Oh, yeah. She’s right down there.” She had two children
7 and was pregnant again. The building was totally down, but then there was a corner left
8 from the building. That’s where she was staying at.

9 LC: So she was kind of huddled up with the—

10 AM: Yes. I mean they made it look like it’s a little comfortable for whatever, but
11 they just lived on the rubble.

12 LC: What was she feeding the children? Do you know? How was she getting
13 food?

14 AM: Well, the British—also you could go to the British and they were giving
15 food, but you didn’t stay long and I never even stayed. I don’t think I stayed two days
16 because you know you couldn’t eat their food. So you went down and I went back, you
17 know, just to report back that I found them all.

18 LC: Did you—

19 AM: I was days on the road.

20 LC: Yeah, and you’re walking right?

21 AM: Oh, walking, riding, whatever. Whatever you could get on.

22 LC: Did anyone give you a hard time during all this?

23 AM: No. No. Because everybody was consumed with their own misery.
24 Everybody was consumed. There was no—you didn’t have to worry about somebody
25 hurting you or anything. No. Everybody was helpful. If you ask any questions they
26 would stop and think and direct you. No. There was no—everybody was in sheer chaos
27 so I think people were helpful.

28 LC: That’s interesting that people kind of were trying to help each other.

29 AM: Very much so. If you ask where is the nearest place I can get something to
30 eat. “Oh, go there and there.” They would tell you where you could pick up some food.

31 LC: What about clothes?

1 AM: No. You just, what you had on the back. You just didn't take a shower.
2 You didn't take a—that was all secondary.

3 LC: You were just whatever you left with was what you had.

4 AM: Exactly. Exactly.

5 LC: Were you warm enough? Were you cold? What time of year was this?

6 AM: It was—I started out in May. I started out in May. I knew already Paul at
7 that time.

8 LC: You had already met him?

9 AM: Yeah. I've already met him on the border between the border and Wels.
10 That's where my aunt lived. I was helping. At that time I had left already my hometown.
11 I stayed with my aunt and I helped out in a kindergarten.

12 LC: Over in Wels.

13 AM: Yeah. Paul was stationed in Enns.

14 LC: He—when did you first meet him?

15 AM: In early '46, in March '46.

16 LC: How did you meet him?

17 AM: He was putting a boxing team with another sergeant. They were putting a
18 boxing team together for the young boys in the area in order to keep them busy.

19 LC: And not in trouble.

20 AM: Keep them out of trouble—all the young boys. Through the kindergarten
21 that's how we met. He was putting in that—they soldiers used their own money to send
22 for boxing equipment. They didn't get it from the government. Paul and Masterson, that
23 was the other sergeant, and Harmon was another one. Those three guys would take their
24 paycheck and have stuff shipped back for them for the boxing, to form the boxing club.

25 LC: With their own money?

26 AM: With their own money. They did not get no government support on that.

27 LC: This would come from the US?

28 AM: It come from the U.S. They would get all the boxing gloves and all the
29 shorts and what have you. They had a real good team going.

30 LC: That's amazing.

1 AM: Mm-hmm. They got all the boys from the street. In fact, one of them,
2 Herbert Laner, we remained friends until the day we last were over there, Paul and I, in
3 '93. We visit them just like we did our own family. He made it through the
4 middleweight boxing in Austria.

5 LC: That's incredible. You must have, I'm going to guess, liked Paul right away.

6 AM: We had very much in common because actually we started on a feud. I
7 said, "You tell your soldiers I don't want them to give them chewing gum and candy. I
8 want to have them give them food."

9 LC: You're talking about the kids.

10 AM: Yeah. Paul said, "What are you talking about? The kids like candy." I
11 said, "No. My kids they like candy, but they need food. So if you can't give them food
12 don't give them candy." So we started out on what he can do and what he can't do.

13 LC: What was he able to do? Was he able to help?

14 AM: Yeah. He was—through the mess hall he was able to get us some food from
15 the mess hall, which he wasn't supposed to do, but he always got some food for the kids.

16 LC: That's incredible. That tells you a lot about him.

17 AM: Yeah. He was a terrific person.

18 LC: I can only imagine. Now, when you went on your trip up to Germany to try
19 to find your cousin and your sisters and make sure they were all okay, did he worry?

20 AM: Paul knew about it. Paul knew about it.

21 LC: I was going to ask, did he worry for you?

22 AM: Yeah.

23 LC: Was he worried about you?

24 AM: Well, our relationship was more business and friendship and not a love
25 affair.

26 LC: He knew that you were going to go and then come back?

27 AM: Oh, yeah. I'm looking for my sisters. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

28 LC: Did you expect to see him again?

29 AM: Really I was hoping, yeah, hoping that he doesn't leave and that he be gone
30 because to me then that was a support system for the kids again, you know, when I come

1 back. He was there. He didn't go anywhere. Then that's how our relationship started. It
2 became—

3 LC: When you came back.

4 AM: Yeah. It became then a real love affair.

5 LC: Well, can you tell me after you came back and you were seeing Paul, were
6 you feeling like things had improved and were going to be okay?

7 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. That was my life then, if I can see him. Of course, the
8 soldiers would go to the clubs. Now I did not go to the clubs. I went with him one time
9 to the club and then there a fight broke out. Paul was the one who started to fight.

10 LC: What was it over?

11 AM: Oh, it was over one unit over the other. They had a company party and the
12 other company came in. They had a fight. I said to Paul I said, "Don't even ask me
13 anymore to go anywhere with you."

14 LC: How did you communicate? How was your English?

15 AM: I did speak very little English. Very little.

16 LC: How were you learning it? Just by listening?

17 AM: Yes. Yes. Because you communicated things. That was your—you had to
18 learn it. If you wanted to stay in touch or if you wanted to have something done then you
19 better learn the language. It came easy. It came easy on me.

20 LC: At this point you were living pretty much full time, then, in the US zone.

21 AM: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I would still go back and forth, of course, because like I
22 said then it started to begin real good in Austria because we were not occupied by the
23 Allies. They called it we were liberated. See, now, Germany was occupied. Then they
24 said Austria is liberated and that meant all the governments were putting all their effort
25 into it that Austria has it better than Germany. Food became available. That was in '46,
26 '47. Austria was really having an economy again.

27 LC: Things were really bubbling.

28 AM: Improving so much that then all of a sudden it switched to where my mother
29 and I would take suitcases of food into Germany. It was this sort of whole thing just
30 switched around. In Germany they still had starvation until 1949. Here we are in '47
31 Austria had food. So we knew that Gertie and Mary didn't have any food. So Mom and

1 I would pack up and would bring food over again the borders without permission. We
2 would travel for days.

3 LC: Again carrying this—

4 AM: Carrying this food.

5 LC: By hand.

6 AM: By hand. My mother, one time she got caught on the French border. They
7 put her in jail and then they released her again. It was for two years. I say close to two
8 years. It was again horrible because here you are dragging food back and forth.

9 LC: Were both sisters now in Heidelberg?

10 AM: No. Gertie was in Saarbrücken and Mary was in Heidelberg.

11 LC: So you had to go to both places.

12 AM: To both places. Here it wasn't so bad going from the Austrian border into
13 Germany because you know the territory. We knew the territory, but then going in from
14 the American zone into the French zone that was another question. That's when it really
15 was hard to avoid being arrested. Then you had already some train going. So you hop
16 trains and transportation was a little bit better then, but food was not there.

17 LC: So you would—how often would you make a trip like this?

18 AM: Oh, at least every three, four months. Yeah.

19 LC: How much could you carry?

20 AM: Sometimes we would have lugging at least two suitcases, two.

21 LC: I can't imagine it.

22 AM: Two suitcases. Then it got a little bit better in the French zone because the
23 French were feeding those people because they were trying to feed them in order for
24 them to vote to become French. You see what I'm saying?

25 LC: Yes. It was sort of a—

26 AM: Yeah. The food was the connection thing.

27 LC: Like a bribe.

28 AM: Yeah. A bribe, right. So we didn't have to go carry any food anymore to
29 Gertie at one point. We really had to—and what we did then once a year, yeah. Oh, that
30 went on until almost '50. We would take the Dachma, the daughter, Mary's daughter, we
31 would take the child with us to Austria so we didn't have to carry the food.

1 LC: It was easier to carry her back to Austria?

2 AM: Yes. Yeah. Then mother would keep her for maybe six months and then
3 we make the trip back.

4 LC: That must have been very hard for Mary to not have her little daughter with
5 her.

6 AM: Well, she didn't have to worry about feeding her, see.

7 LC: She knew she was safe.

8 AM: Right. She knew that she was safe although it wasn't the Russians only had
9 all calmed down then. The Russians only became another occupied area.

10 LC: Just an administrative zone.

11 AM: Yeah. Right.

12 LC: Okay. But food still inside the Russian zone of Austria—not so plentiful or
13 increasingly plentiful?

14 AM: Then it was better already. Yeah. It'd gotten better with the food, too.

15 LC: Were your parents able to grow some of their own food?

16 AM: Oh, yeah. Mom would make chili and make things, preserve things, that we
17 could carry it. She would—let's say we had a cousin who had a farm and they had pigs
18 and sheep and that. Mother would get the meat and put it in jars and put lard over it to
19 preserve it. That we would carry out. Yeah.

20 LC: Did Mary or Gertie ever think of coming down to Austria again or were they
21 trying to hold out with their husbands?

22 AM: No. They were definitely not coming back home. They both—Kurt finally
23 made it back and Henry made it back. No, there was no doubt in their minds that they
24 were going to stay where they were.

25 LC: Were the men able to get jobs?

26 AM: Oh, yeah. Henry started teaching at one point at a university. Kurt is a
27 railroad man. He became union president for ten years. Yeah. They build a very
28 comfortable life.

29 LC: Now, in between your visits up there at some point here you and Paul must
30 have decided to get married.

1 AM: Yeah. In 1948 we decided we're going to get married. You had to put in
2 paperwork and that, forget it. I'm telling you when I tell you all that it's unbelievable.
3 He had to have permission from the company commander. Then the company
4 commander said, "Yeah, you can get married." Then the company commander
5 forwarded the paperwork to a colonel and that colonel—oh, gosh, I can't remember his
6 name. He was a nice guy and he approved it. I think he was drunk half of the time. I'm
7 not kidding you.

8 LC: You think he was?

9 AM: Yeah. But anyway he said to Paul, "Let me tell you. If you're going to get
10 married you better agree with her. If she says she wants a Chevrolet you better buy her a
11 Chevrolet." That's all he had to say. That was the introduction to a marriage.

12 LC: Get her a car.

13 AM: Get her a car. Yeah. Right.

14 LC: So American.

15 AM: Yeah. That's right. That's what he said. But anyway, I became pregnant.
16 I had my daughter Betty in '49.

17 LC: Where?

18 AM: In Linz.

19 LC: Were you at a hospital?

20 AM: Midwife. My sister, Mary, she came in from Heidelberg to be with me
21 when I had Betty. Our marriage papers were disapproved at one time and because—how
22 did that disapproval? What was the disapproval? It got disapproved. Right off hand I
23 can't even tell you, for a stupid reason. All I know it was a stupid reason.

24 LC: This is the US military disapproving it?

25 AM: Yeah. Then Paul fought it. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) had
26 something to do it. Paul proved them wrong for whatever reason. Oh! I had to be a Nazi
27 otherwise I wouldn't—that's it! I was a Nazi because I was in the school system or with
28 the kindergarten. The CIA disapproved it because I supposed to been a Nazi because I
29 was in the school system. They called it a school system. Well, I wasn't a teacher I was
30 a helper. I was only seventeen years old.

31 LC: So they made an assumption.

1 AM: Yeah, right.

2 LC: Did anyone from the CIA or whatever agency come and talk to you? Did
3 they ever ask you?

4 AM: Nope. Nobody ever came. Nobody ever came. That's how Paul fought it
5 then. So we had to resubmit. Each piece of paper had to be duplicated six times.

6 LC: What a nightmare.

7 AM: A nightmare. I still got all these paperwork, which turned yellow, and no
8 good anymore anyway. But anyway he came up—well, yeah. They disapproved it.
9 Paul's time ran out in Austria.

10 LC: He was going to be relocated.

11 AM: He had to go back to the States. That's the way it was. He had to go back
12 to the States and he left in—wait a minute now. Okay. He left to go—it was springtime.
13 Betty was born in September and he came back in September. He was only gone a
14 couple of months. He went to the Pentagon and got reassigned over there.

15 LC: Okay. So he got himself a reassignment back to Austria.

16 AM: A reassignment over to Austria.

17 LC: For how long?

18 AM: Well, then we resubmitted our marriage paper. See, after he got back we
19 resubmitted our marriage paper. It got approved in 1953.

20 LC: Oh, dear.

21 AM: Mm-hmm. In 1953.

22 LC: So all that time were you able to live with him?

23 AM: Yeah and no. I mean, I had my apartment then. I got a small apartment in
24 Linz. I had another aunt that lived in Linz and she got me that apartment. Yeah, Paul
25 would be in and out. I mean, not on a monthly basis because Paul was too much of a
26 soldier. His military was everything.

27 LC: Did he love the US Army?

28 AM: Oh, he was a military man from—Paul came from West Virginia. He went
29 to the CCs, the Conservation Corps.

30 LC: Ah, CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). Yes.

31 AM: Yeah. When he was fourteen.

1 LC: Really? Wow.

2 AM: So in 1941 they formed the Airborne and he volunteered for the Airborne.

3 LC: For the parachute training and everything?

4 AM: Yeah. Well, that was the first airborne units the American Army ever had.

5 LC: He volunteered for it.

6 AM: He volunteered for it. That was in 1940 because in 1941 I think he went

7 already over to Ireland. Yeah. Nineteen forty-one I think he went over to Ireland

8 already.

9 LC: For training?

10 AM: Yeah, to prepare for the invasion, the Normandy invasion. He was one of

11 the first ones.

12 LC: One of the early people then who would have gone over to—

13 AM: Yeah. Yeah. They were not located here in Ft. Bragg. They were located

14 in Georgia in Benning, Ft. Benning. They were located in Ft. Benning then.

15 LC: Well, when you were just newly married and let's just assume that your

16 marriage was—I'm going to say you're married in 1948 even though the military had a

17 problem with that, but did he talk to you about his experience up until the time you met

18 him?

19 AM: About his wartime?

20 LC: Yeah.

21 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Some, not in detail.

22 LC: Would he tell you more about America and his home and things like that?

23 AM: Yes. Yes. His family, that—we would be talking about the family, not

24 about the wartime as much. No. He didn't talk about that. We would just get to know

25 the families.

26 LC: He would talk to you about West Virginia and—?

27 AM: Yeah. His mother would write to me and his sister would write to me. It

28 was already acknowledged from the family that Paul is going to be bring a war bride.

29 That was already understood amongst his family.

30 LC: Did you think of yourself as a war bride?

31 AM: No. No. No. No. That was a foreign kind of thing.

1 LC: It was American thing.

2 AM: No. My mother, she was very, very disappointed. I mean hurt. She
3 couldn't imagine me leaving. No. My mother couldn't get over it. I think that caused
4 her heart problem.

5 LC: Was she worried?

6 AM: Yeah. She was really hurt that we left.

7 LC: Was she worried for you because she wouldn't see you?

8 AM: Yeah. Right. Right.

9 LC: Was there something else that she—did she feel unhappy because you were
10 marrying a foreigner?

11 AM: No. She was unhappy that I would live that far. She wasn't concerned
12 about Paul. She liked Paul right away. I mean, she thought although they couldn't
13 communicate real well, but Paul was such an outgoing person that he made you love you.
14 It came easy on him to sell himself to people. You had to love the guy. Even my
15 grandmother, even my grandmother, she has never gone away other than just in the small
16 area where she—then, of course, she had two daughters. My mother took her one time
17 and brought her to Linz. Of course, the one daughter from Wels came to Linz and we all
18 got together in my apartment. Grandma stayed with us for about three days, but that's
19 all. She said, "I need to go back." She even thought Paul was the best thing that ever
20 happened.

21 LC: Really?

22 AM: Yes. As hardcore as she was, she thought that was the nicest guy. Like I
23 say, Paul could sell himself.

24 LC: Now he must have had a great—I mean how did he do it? Did he have a
25 great smile? Was it his eyes? What was it?

26 AM: Very helpful in any way, shape, or form. He was—yeah, smile and he just
27 could sell himself. Don't even have to talk about it. He just had ability—the whole
28 family—in fact, one of my cousins, he was fighting on the Western Front. Of course,
29 Paul comes in from the Normandy. In fact, he got wounded on the battlefield in
30 Normandy. So Paul and Sepp would talk about it because he spoke a little bit English,
31 Sepp. Paul, they would talk about it that they were opposite of each other.

1 LC: How did they get along when they were talking?

2 AM: Great. Two great soldiers.

3 LC: Unbelievable.

4 AM: Two great soldiers. They became the best of friends. In fact, Sepp is still

5 alive. He thought the world of Paul and Paul thought the world of—like Sepp, he could

6 do anything. I don't care. He could build a house. He could do anything. So he made

7 himself a pair of shoes out of rubber tires, you know, flip-flops like they call them now.

8 He made himself shoes and Paul saw them and he said, "Sepp, I really like them. Let me

9 see if they fit." Sepp said, "You can have them." You know, they became the best of

10 friends.

11 LC: They had been facing each other.

12 AM: They swore up and down they had faced each other in France somewhere

13 along the line. I can't tell you exactly, but when they were talking with each other he

14 would say, "Yeah. I've been there, there." You know, they could relate to each other.

15 LC: They were naming villages?

16 AM: Villages. Right.

17 LC: That's just amazing. They were just best friends?

18 AM: They were the best of friends. Sepp was a tank commander. He was a

19 soldier of a soldier. So was Paul.

20 LC: How do you spell Sepp's name?

21 AM: Sepp. S-E-P-P. Dober. D-O-B-E-R.

22 LC: Sepp Dober.

23 AM: Mm-hmm. He's still alive.

24 LC: Is he really? Where does he live now?

25 AM: He lives near Amstetten in Ulm, U-L-M.

26 LC: Which is not a very big place?

27 AM: No. It is a very small place.

28 LC: Sepp was a tank commander?

29 AM: Yeah.

30 LC: With a *Panzer* division?

31 AM: With a *Panzer* division, right. He was badly wounded there.

1 LC: What happened to him? How was he wounded? Do you know?

2 AM: A vertebrae and one leg got real scattered. Well, he was one of those guys.

3 You couldn't call him a Nazi ,but he was one of those guys. He was on the Russian Front

4 one time got wounded and he volunteered to go back. Then they send him to the West

5 Front.

6 LC: Now, you said he wasn't really a Nazi believer.

7 AM: No. He was a soldier.

8 LC: But he was a soldier fighting for his country.

9 AM: That's it. Yeah. He was a soldier.

10 LC: That probably must have been part of why the two of them got along.

11 AM: Exactly. Exactly. That's why they really got along. You take like Henry he

12 was a typical, what do you call, like a ROTC lieutenant, nothing. You know, he wasn't a

13 soldier. He was just there because he had to fulfill a duty.

14 LC: The obligations.

15 AM: Yeah. Obligations. Kurt got drafted. "Oh, well. I make my duty and that's

16 it." They weren't real soldier soldiers. They wouldn't sit down and talk about wartime.

17 Henry and Kurt and Paul would never discuss wartime, but when he got to Sepp it got to

18 war. Then the war was fought over again.

19 LC: Then the two of them would sit and talk.

20 AM: Yes. They had so much in common.

21 LC: That's so interesting that even—

22 AM: Because Henry was fluent in English. I mean, they could sit for hours and

23 talk and where Sepp was not fluent in English, but boy, they understood each other.

24 LC: Now, when did Paul have a chance to meet Sepp first? Where were you

25 living?

26 AM: Oh, I was in Linz.

27 LC: So early on.

28 AM: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. They made, my goodness, the first time when Sepp

29 got out of the hospital it must have been around '48.

30 LC: Was he able to walk?

31 AM: Yeah. He had many surgeries and he is doing okay. He's hanging in there.

1 LC: Good for him. He's tough. He sounds like a really interesting guy. He
2 didn't hate the Americans?

3 AM: Oh, no. Oh, no. Oh, no. Not at all.

4 LC: Did he feel some of the same things about the Russians since he had been
5 out on the Eastern Front?

6 AM: Oh, now that's a different story. See now Sepp wasn't born in Austria. He
7 was born in Czechoslovakia. That was part of Germany then. You know, the borders
8 changed. So in World War I it was Austria.

9 LC: Yeah, They created it.

10 AM: But then Czechoslovakia became—it wasn't called Czechoslovakia, it was
11 called Silesia. Silesia. See, they took that in from World War I.

12 LC: So he was actually, although born in what we now think of—well, even it
13 isn't Czechoslovakia anymore now, the Czech Republic and—

14 AM: No, they say that—yeah. See Pilsen. Pilsen. Pilsen. That is now Silesia.
15 My mother and dad got married in Pilsen because it was Austria, but then after the war,
16 World War I, it became Czechoslovakia. So Sepp was actually Austrian, but not at the
17 time. Oh, gosh.

18 LC: I know it's amazing. This is part of the problem probably, I don't know if
19 you agree, Angela, but part of the problem of this part of Europe for the 20th Century is
20 the carving and the re-carving.

21 AM: Oh, yeah. Now you take like South Tyrol. It belongs to Italy.

22 LC: Tyrol.

23 AM: Yeah. Tyrol, South Tyrol. They sliced that up. That was Austria. I mean,
24 I can go there and talk to them. Even now when we were there the last time in '93 it's
25 Italy, but those people especially in the mountain region, even the children speak my
26 language.

27 LC: They're all blonde and have—I mean are they like tall, blonde people?

28 AM: Right. Right. Like I say they speak my dialect. You take my dialect is
29 German, but if I talk to a person in Berlin they don't understand me and I don't
30 understand them.

31 LC: Do you have to work hard to get your message across in Berlin?

1 AM: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. If I talk to anybody in Berlin they won't understand
2 what I am saying hardly, then I might as well speak English to them.

3 LC: So you can get along more easily in English in Berlin.

4 AM: Yeah. Yeah.

5 LC: But not in Tyrol, not South Tyrol.

6 AM: Yeah. I can speak my language and they understand, even the younger
7 people. So that's how the whole thing got sliced up to where you don't know who is
8 who, and now less so.

9 LC: Exactly. Well, let me ask a little bit more about Paul. It sounds like his
10 mother and sister writing to you were very welcoming.

11 AM: Oh, yeah.

12 LC: So you had a good feeling about them?

13 AM: Oh, yeah. I had a good feeling about meeting them. I had no apprehension
14 or scared about or scared that oh, my—no. I felt like I was welcome.

15 LC: You know, I'm looking at the record that you sent of Paul's honorable
16 discharge from 1945. Now I know he stayed in the service later on and when did he
17 actually retire from the service?

18 AM: In 1969.

19 LC: Let me ask a little bit about what you might know about his—first of all his
20 service during World War II. I think it's very important to fill out the record a little bit if
21 we can, Angela. He was parachute-qualified. That probably happened at, that training
22 happened at Georgia at Ft. Benning, as you said.

23 AM: Yeah. Ft. Benning, Georgia.

24 LC: He was, if I'm reading the record correctly, he was one of the parachute
25 force dropped into Normandy on the morning of D-Day.

26 AM: D-Day.

27 LC: Yes. Did he ever talk to you about that day?

28 AM: Very little in the later years, yeah. In the later years, he did, but not at first.
29 He jumped at four o'clock in the morning and fell into Sainte-Mère-Église.

30 LC: Yes. Mm-hmm. Sainte-Mère-Église.

1 AM: Yeah. Then they pulled him out and brought him back to England. Then he
2 jumped again on the Vassel.

3 LC: When was that? Do you know?

4 AM: That I—

5 LC: Like a couple of weeks later?

6 AM: Couple of weeks or months later. I think he had four jumps in all. They
7 would jump, fight, and then pull them out and jump them again.

8 LC: Because these are the forward troops.

9 AM: They would—yeah. They would stay there in the field until they got
10 relieved. Then they pulled them out and pulled them back to London. If I remember
11 right it was three or four times. I remember the two times, the Normandy and Vassel,
12 because we visit the sites.

13 LC: Really? You went there with him?

14 AM: To Vassel.

15 LC: When was that?

16 AM: In—okay. We came back in '53 and in '56, '56. Yeah.

17 LC: How did he react when you went there? Do you remember? Was it hard?

18 AM: No. He just say, “See that was the place”—no. He didn’t point out a
19 certain place. He just used the river more or less because we stood on the riverbank. He
20 said, “I think that’s about the area where I jumped.”

21 LC: Now are we talking about at the Rhine?

22 AM: Yeah.

23 LC: He said this is essentially where we were?

24 AM: Yeah. The bridge, he pointed out the bridge. He would say, “Well, that
25 was down.” The bridge was down because, of course, they had built up just another
26 temporary bridge then. He said, “Well, the bridge was down. It’s about here.” Nothing
27 big.

28 LC: Nothing big, huh?

29 AM: No. Just a sightseeing tour.

30 LC: Unbelievable. What kind of man was he in terms of whether he was calm or
31 was he—he sounds like quite a—you said he was outgoing.

1 AM: Very outgoing, but very focused always. Always the military man,
2 everything. I was the typical perfect for Paul's military wife because the military came
3 first and then the family. Definitely. I didn't mind it.

4 LC: Did you know that up front?

5 AM: I guess it molded into more than what upfront was. It just molded itself into
6 that.

7 LC: Was he back on active duty relatively soon after the end of the war? I mean,
8 when he was in Austria in the US zone was he on active duty or was he in the reserves or
9 do you know?

10 AM: No. No. That was all active duty. He was always active duty.

11 LC: He had been an enlisted man.

12 AM: Yeah.

13 LC: Did he continue as an enlisted man or did he jump to officer training?

14 AM: Well, there was a nice coincidence. Okay. He got stationed in Saalfelden,
15 that's by Salzburg. After he came back, if you remember we're talking about that he
16 came back with our marriage paper in there.

17 LC: Yes. You already have your daughter.

18 AM: Okay. That's right. We had my daughter. I moved to Saalfelden. He
19 moved there because he got transferred there. He was supposed to go into the officer's
20 rank and anyway they had formation. That, of course, was a big joke already then. Yeah,
21 it was a big joke there.

22 LC: Why?

23 AM: Because the captain is saying to him, "Well, you're going to be"—was
24 going to give him the citation as a lieutenant. Paul said, "I don't want to be a lieutenant.
25 If I am anything I'm going to be a captain." They had a big feud and, you know, it got a
26 joke. He refused the lieutenant. He said, "I'm going to stay an enlisted man if that's all
27 you can give me," or something like that.

28 LC: I could understand that. I mean after everything that he had already done.

29 AM: Yeah. He refused lieutenant. He said, "I am not taking it," but that was a
30 big joke in the area then.

1 LC: Because he had already at the time of his initial discharge in 1945 he was
2 already a staff sergeant.

3 AM: Oh, yes! See at that time they had the RA (Regular Army), the permanent
4 rank.

5 LC: Yes. Regular Army.

6 AM: So yeah. He already had permanent rank. So therefore he felt like unh-uh,
7 forget it. I don't want to be a lieutenant. So whatever.

8 LC: So he actually refused that opportunity.

9 AM: He sure did. He sure did.

10 LC: Was that a matter of pride with him?

11 AM: A matter of pride because he said, "A lieutenant can teach me nothing."

12 LC: I'm sure he was right.

13 AM: "A lieutenant can teach me nothing," and then it came down to the warrant
14 officer. Later on, that was way down the road.

15 LC: Much later.

16 AM: Much later. There was something where they tried to get him to take
17 warrant officer. He laughed at them. He said, "Forget it. I'm staying where I'm at."
18 When they came out with the E-9 rank they formed—and I'm sure you're familiar with
19 that—they formed the sergeant major that is in the Pentagon. What do you call that guy?

20 LC: Command master sergeant?

21 AM: Yeah. That picture I sent you was where Paul—what was—Woodruff
22 (Editor's note: William O. Wooldridge) was the first command sergeant major. Paul and
23 him put it in together and that guy won over Paul.

24 LC: But they both became E-9s?

25 AM: Yeah. Well, what is that rank called with sergeant major in the Pentagon?
26 There is a rank—see that goes back so far that you may be not familiar with it.

27 LC: You know what, I don't know what it is.

28 AM: Woodruff. I think his name was. If you can look it up who the first
29 sergeant major was at the Pentagon.

30 LC: That would be Woodruff?

1 AM: They had to submit all their records and they had taken pictures, like that
2 picture I send you. I think I send you that one. Yeah.

3 LC: Yes, you did. Yes. He's receiving his commendation, yes. This is his
4 promotion ceremony, I think.

5 AM: No. Did I not send you a little one?

6 LC: No. I have the large one where, I mean he's got a chest full of medals.

7 AM: Medals. All right. That was the ceremony, yeah.

8 LC: He's got six stripes.

9 AM: Yeah. No. I didn't send you a little picture where he's standing like a
10 candle? That to me it look like.

11 LC: No.

12 AM: I have to send you that.

13 LC: All right. We'll look forward to that.

14 AM: Yeah. I'll send you that because that was the picture that was submitted
15 with his when they formed that new ranking system where they formed the E-9.

16 LC: Unbelievable.

17 AM: Woodruff, I'm sure it was Woodruff, he won out over Paul.

18 LC: I will look that up.

19 AM: Yeah. Look that up. Woodruff and Paul and them two came to the
20 competition more or less, if I want to call it that, and Woodruff won out over it.

21 LC: Oh, well.

22 AM: Then later on I can say the command sergeant major came out. See first the
23 E-9 came out and then a couple of years later they came out with the command sergeant
24 major. That was another type of promotion.

25 LC: Another rank.

26 AM: Another rank, which they didn't have in '48 or '49.

27 LC: That's right. It was created. Yes.

28 AM: So you had master sergeant and that's it.

29 LC: When he retired in 1969 what rank did he hold?

30 AM: Command sergeant major.

31 LC: Okay. I mean, there really were not that many.

1 AM: No. In those days where Paul became one of the first command sergeant
2 major because he ranked out, you know, out of all. So he was one of the first command
3 sergeant majors. In fact, there again is Paul's stubbornness. We were stationed in France
4 and I was working at Clubs and Mess. That was for all the NCO (noncommissioned
5 officers) clubs and officer's clubs supply. I had a good job. So they were going to
6 promote Paul right there and then as command sergeant major. That means he would
7 have to leave France and that would mean I lose my job. So Paul says, "Heck, I'm not
8 taking that. We're making more money while you're working." Then I said, "Now you
9 shouldn't do that. That's crazy." He was just one of those guys that didn't ever want to
10 have a promotion I think, but they forced him then. They forced it on him.

11 LC: Right. Because it's up or out sort of.

12 AM: Yeah. They forced him. So we got transferred from Verdun, France, to
13 Heidelberg.

14 LC: How long did you spend there?

15 AM: In Heidelberg?

16 LC: Yes. Yes.

17 AM: A year-and-a-half until they shipped us back.

18 LC: Until you came to the US?

19 AM: Again, yeah.

20 LC: How did it feel for you to go back to Heidelberg?

21 AM: No, it was better and it was a pleasure to see that everything is running nice.
22 Yeah. It was a pleasure.

23 LC: Where were your sisters living by this time?

24 AM: She was still in Heidelberg.

25 LC: So Mary was there?

26 AM: Yeah. Mary was still in Heidelberg.

27 LC: I know she's not resident there now, but did she live there for most of her
28 life?

29 AM: In Heidelberg?

30 LC: Yes.

31 AM: They moved to Stuttgart in, I say in '58. Yeah. In '58.

1 LC: Because he got a job or—did Henry get a job?
2 AM: Henry, he quit because he had not enough certification for teaching.
3 LC: So the university system tightened up.
4 AM: Yeah. Right. They organized. They reorganized. There you go. That's it.
5 So therefore he lost his job and then he went into insurance, which was a great place to
6 get into for the simple reason that there were no insurances over there. So he started
7 insurance on the ground floor. He made a good living.
8 LC: He did pretty well?
9 AM: Yeah.
10 LC: That's good. That's good. Was he selling life insurance or commercial or—
11 AM: Mm-hmm.
12 LC: Life insurance. Wow.
13 AM: Life insurance. He did that until he passed away.
14 LC: When you were living in Heidelberg and it's a big city, how close were you
15 to Mary? Could you see her often?
16 AM: Yeah. We saw each other holidays, weekends—yeah. Then we would
17 bring my parents out. Anytime I was stationed over there we would bring my parents.
18 They would lock up house and they stay with me because I had the bigger apartment.
19 LC: You mentioned that your mother was quite heartbroken that you were going
20 to be moving away.
21 AM: Yeah. Yeah.
22 LC: Did it help that you were stationed in Germany for a while?
23 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. In fact, anytime we got over there my parents would
24 stay with me. Yeah. Like in France, my dad and mom stayed with me in France for
25 maybe three months, four months. Then they would say, "Well, I got to go home and see
26 the garden. I got to open the windows," and they made excuses to go home. But then
27 they'll be back through the holidays and things we would spend together.
28 LC: But that's wonderful because it gave you kind of the best of both worlds.
29 AM: Oh, it sure did. I was able to get my parents, give my parents, back so much
30 of my time because I would, believe me, I would take my children sometimes and drive

1 sixteen hours just to spend three hours home and turn around and go back to France
2 because I had to go to work on Monday.

3 LC: I do believe you. I completely believe you.

4 AM: I have packed up my children. So, of course, I only had two girls then.
5 Friday night or Friday morning if I could make it off my job I would call Gertie. I was,
6 “Gertie, you want to pack up the kids and go home?” “Okay.” Gertie would pack up her
7 two girls. I stop in Saarbrücken and picked up Gertie. We drive all night long to go
8 home and then spend some time home, maybe just one day, and then drive back home.
9 We did that many times.

10 LC: That also let your parents see your girls?

11 AM: Oh, yeah. See. Gertie was—Kurt sometime didn’t like it. He sometime—
12 he was spoiled. He sometime—Paul didn’t mind it. If I say, “Paul, tomorrow I’m
13 going.” “Okay.” That’s fine with Paul, but it wasn’t fine with Kurt.

14 LC: He would give Gertie a hard time?

15 AM: Yeah. He did. He made her cry sometime.

16 LC: Oh, I’m sorry.

17 AM: Because she’s a softy anyway. Mary, she could have cared less. I mean,
18 Mary, she had her little clubs and, you know, they were busy in their own little world.

19 LC: So she would not go home as often.

20 AM: No.

21 LC: Is Mary—and now you said, she’s the oldest one. She’s older than you by—

22 AM: She’s the boss.

23 LC: Yeah. She’s the boss. Does she take after your grandmother some?

24 AM: Yes.

25 LC: Does she look like her?

26 AM: Not really. No. Not really.

27 LC: But by temperament?

28 AM: But by temperament she is a lot like my grandmother and my mother’s
29 older sister. They both—I could never warm up to that older aunt. You heard me talk
30 about the one that lived in Wels. She was just like my mother. But my other one,
31 Theresa, Aunt Theresa, oh. She was as tough as my grandmother.

1 LC: Was she oldest? Was Theresa the oldest?

2 AM: Theresa was the oldest.

3 LC: I thought maybe.

4 AM: She was just like my grandmother.

5 LC: Now where did Theresa live?

6 AM: In Linz. She had a butcher shop and her husband died early, too. She took
7 over the butcher shop, and I'm telling you. Then she sold the butcher shop and moved
8 towards the Blue Danube. She opened up a small butcher shop there. She had five
9 children, but, oh, was she a mean one.

10 LC: Tough.

11 AM: She was tougher than my grandmother.

12 LC: Wow.

13 AM: I remember we were up there one time with my grandmother and from my
14 hometown to go by riverboat. We left in Epps. That is, when you go to Vienna, in
15 between Vienna and Amstetten you could get on a boat and go up the river to Aschbach.
16 That's where my Aunt Theresa lived then. That was during the war. I was just a kid. I
17 mean maybe twelve, thirteen years old. She had—see them riverboat come up from
18 Hungaria and they brought up—everything was rationed then. My aunt she was hording
19 things. I mean hording things. She would have flour sacks by the dozens sitting there in
20 the warehouse. Sugar, you name it, cloth. You name it she had it.

21 LC: Really?

22 AM: Yes. So we were visiting her. My grandmother loved coffee dearly. As we
23 were ready to leave my grandmother said to Theresa, "You know, I need some cloth to
24 make me some apron." My aunt didn't give her a choice of what to take. She just said,
25 "Well, here," and measured out some cloth. I remember that she measured out some
26 cloth. Then my grandmother said, "You can give me some of that coffee, too, before we
27 leave." My aunt would be sitting at the table mind you. Had at least a twenty-pound bag,
28 burlap bag, of coffee. She grab a handful and counted out the beans. "That'll make one
29 batch, that'll make two batch," and that's how she gave her coffee. From that day
30 forward I never liked my aunt. I never liked my aunt.

31 LC: I can understand that.

1 AM: I never had any use for the woman.

2 LC: She sounds not only tough, but not generous.

3 AM: No. Not at all. I remember, too, my grandmother said after we got her back
4 on the boat, she held up the cloth and she said, “If she thinks I’m going to make some
5 apron out of that, that is for an old woman and not for me.” (Laughs) That’s true.

6 LC: I believe you. Like the *War of the Worlds*.

7 AM: That’s right. If she thinks I’m going to make an apron out of that that is for
8 old woman and not me. I remember that.

9 LC: Wow. There’s some tough gals there, which probably helps to explain why
10 Mary is ninety-eight years old and coming to visit you.

11 AM: Oh, she comes by herself. Last year she came by herself. The past three
12 years she’s been coming by herself.

13 LC: You know you told me that Mary was in Berlin at the end of the war and that
14 she got out of there, but did you ever ask her how things were? Did she go through the
15 bombings and all that?

16 AM: Oh, yeah. She was right, because I say Berlin. She was living right outside
17 of the skirt of Dresden. When they bombed Dresden, she still was there.

18 LC: At Dresden?

19 AM: Mm-hmm. She still was there in Dresden, but after they bombed Dresden
20 she left.

21 LC: I mean, Dresden was an absolute nightmare.

22 AM: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

23 LC: Fire and—

24 AM: Nothing left. Nothing left, because she left right after they bombed
25 Dresden.

26 LC: I don’t know how she would have survived it. So many people did not.

27 AM: Mm-hmm. What was it—a hundred and twenty five thousand people.

28 LC: It’s just some horrific, really horrific number.

29 AM: She lived outside of Dresden. That was her savior.

1 LC: Wow. Well, that's amazing. Let me ask you a little bit more about Paul.
2 Now, you moved back to the States, you moved to the States permanently in 1953, but
3 then you were transferred back to Germany?
4 AM: Oh, yeah. We went back to Germany in '56. Yeah. In '56.
5 LC: That's Heidelberg?
6 AM: Uh, no. That was Kaiserslautern. Kaiserslautern.
7 LC: What was his duty there?
8 AM: He no longer was with the Airborne. He was in the infantry then. That was
9 an infantry outfit.
10 LC: Did you have a job? Were you able to work there?
11 AM: No, I didn't work in Kaiserslautern. No. I still only had Betty.
12 LC: You had two—oh, okay.
13 AM: Yeah. I only had Betty and then I got pregnant in that year.
14 LC: Your second daughter?
15 AM: Yeah. Had my second girl.
16 LC: What's her name?
17 AM: Barbara.
18 LC: Where was she born?
19 AM: She was born in Heidelberg.
20 LC: Was Mary there with you again?
21 AM: No. I had her in the Army hospital in Heidelberg.
22 LC: This must have been a very happy time.
23 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. But Paul was on maneuver. He was not home. He
24 was not home to any of his kids.
25 LC: You had to take care of all that by yourself.
26 AM: Yes. He was on maneuver and the Army comes first. Then Randy was
27 born, the boy, and then he was in Korea. They shipped him out when I was four months
28 pregnant.
29 LC: What year was that?
30 AM: In '65.
31 LC: You were living where?

1 AM: In Petersburg, Virginia, in Ft. Lee.
2 LC: Oh, beautiful. Yeah, it's very nice there. Randy is his name?
3 AM: Randy. Yeah.
4 LC: Is he your youngest?
5 AM: Yeah. He's the last and only.
6 LC: I'm sorry, you said the year that he was born.
7 AM: '65.
8 LC: So there was—he is quite the baby, then, by a little ways. How did you get
9 along? When did Paul first see him?
10 AM: When he was eighteen months old.
11 LC: Goodness. So you had him all to yourself. You had Randy all to yourself
12 for eighteen months.
13 AM: Yes. Yes.
14 LC: Was it difficult?
15 AM: Looking back it was. Looking back I say, "Why was I"—because at that
16 time Betty was sixteen. She was a teenager. Right before I delivered Randy she got real
17 sick. She had a gall stone operation. They said, "Well, we go call Paul back," and I said,
18 "No. Don't you interfere with Paul's duty. Unh-uh. I'll take care of it."
19 LC: Bad idea.
20 AM: Bad idea. Yeah. Looking in twenty-twenty hindsight, yeah. When I think
21 about it today them Army wives can't go to the doctor unless the husband is there and
22 me, I was just, "No, don't you interfere with his duty."
23 LC: So he was stationed in Korea for a couple of years, then, it sounds like. Two
24 years?
25 AM: Two years. It was a two year tour.
26 LC: So '65 to '67 or so?
27 AM: Mm-hmm.
28 LC: So this is getting closer to his retirement. Had he spent any time in
29 Southeast Asia?
30 AM: No.
31 LC: He did not have to go.

1 AM: No. No. He didn't go there.

2 LC: Do you know what he thought about the war in Vietnam during the 1960s?

3 AM: I think he disapproved.

4 LC: Why?

5 AM: He said, "That is a political war." I said, "Well, isn't World War II a
6 political war?" He said, "No, that was a different war." He was stern to where he said
7 that is a different war, but never explained really how different. He just called it political.

8 LC: What did you think, Angela, in your own mind?

9 AM: I'll tell you something that are mine, Paul and mine, were going together.
10 Where I worked in France for Clubs and Mess, Captain Hunt was my superior and Major
11 Eastman and Lieutenant Turk. Those were the three major players and that was in '60—
12 okay '63. He came back in '62. So it had to be '61. All of those guys came in with a
13 form letter saying that they could volunteer to go to Vietnam as advisors. They're sitting
14 around and talking about what they are going to do. Mary Ellis was one of my co-
15 worker. We had the same area, the desks there, and we were kidding with them saying,
16 "Yeah, ship out to Korea," and you know just kind of talking about—not Korea.
17 Vietnam. Captain Hunt said, "Oh, I'll volunteer. I will go there because I'm going to get
18 six hundred dollars extra." I said, "Why would you want to go out for six hundred
19 dollars? You crazy." He said, "I got four kids and I need to send them to college so I am
20 going," and he did out of the three guys. He volunteered. He got a thirty-day leave
21 because his family wasn't with him in France.

22 LC: They were in the States?

23 AM: They were in the States because he had four kids and he didn't want to take
24 them out of school. So he got a thirty-day leave and went to Vietnam. I disapproved
25 that. For some, I can't even tell you why I disapproved. It's just that Paul and I said that
26 is a war that is uncalled for.

27 LC: You just didn't see the justification for it?

28 AM: No. None whatsoever. I couldn't tell you why and how come, but I just
29 firmly believed that was the wrong thing.

1 LC: Earlier you and I were talking about President Johnson and I wonder—it
2 would be very interesting to have your views on some of the American presidents who
3 were involved in this. President Kennedy. What did you think of him?

4 AM: I think—I loved his wife.

5 LC: Mrs. Kennedy. Jackie Kennedy.

6 AM: Yes. She did so much, in my view. The woman did so much for
7 Washington, D.C. When I first saw Washington, D.C., in '53, it was a bleak, gray, dirty
8 city.

9 LC: Really?

10 AM: Yes, ma'am. After Kennedy, his wife moved in there. You began to see in
11 the Smithsonian flower boxes sitting in front. You saw the streets cleaned up. You
12 became—coffee shops, little shops. The improvement was horrendous in Washington,
13 D.C. That's my view.

14 LC: That's very interesting.

15 AM: That's my view. What Washington is today the woman can get the credit. I
16 don't understand why people didn't see it my way. You never read anything about it
17 or—?

18 LC: No.

19 AM: You heard about Johnson, beautification and all that, but you heard nothing
20 about Mrs. Kennedy, what all she did culturally, culturally. She brought culture to this
21 land and the best to this land, but as far as President Kennedy he was too short, not long
22 enough president, that you can really form what is and is, but—

23 LC: Do you remember where you were or how you find out that he had been
24 killed?

25 AM: Yeah. We were in Aberdeen.

26 LC: In Aberdeen?

27 AM: Yeah. We had just gotten back from France. We were stationed in
28 Aberdeen.

29 LC: At Aberdeen Proving Ground.

30 AM: Aberdeen Proving Ground. We just got back. We got back in September or
31 something, August or September.

1 LC: 1963.

2 AM: Yeah. It was very, very devastating because—again, I have to bring Paul
3 into it—because word had first came out that he was shot, the Aberdeen Proving Ground
4 was shut down and Paul had a heart attack.

5 LC: Literally?

6 AM: Yes, he did. He was at the meeting and pass out in the meeting. He got
7 so—whatever was on in the meeting because then he was top secret clearance and all this
8 mess with—somehow Paul was connected with top secret somehow. Of course, I don't
9 know anything about that.

10 LC: Research or something.

11 AM: Yeah. So something happened there. He had another real heart attack.
12 They had to take him to the hospital. So that was a day of nothing but confusion for me.

13 LC: Did Paul recover well enough?

14 AM: Yeah. He stayed in the hospital for two days, but whatever went down in
15 the meeting they shut everything down. We were living right on post. You couldn't even
16 get off post.

17 LC: Wow. He was kept in the hospital—I mean something very serious was
18 happening.

19 AM: Yeah. Something. I never—Paul never talked about it. It was just an
20 episode. To him that was just an episode.

21 LC: Goodness. Well, what about President Johnson, who then took over? What
22 view—

23 AM: I have never had any use for his politics because I think from then on I
24 began to follow American politics. Before I didn't. But after Kennedy got shot, I think
25 that's when I really followed politics more closely.

26 LC: President Johnson, of course, was expanding American commitment in
27 Vietnam. Did you ever have a thought that Paul would be sent there?

28 AM: No. In the position Paul had at that point, like I said, whatever that APG
29 proving round position was they shipped him then—we went—wait a minute. Wait a
30 minute because Paul kept saying, "Don't worry. I don't have to go."

31 LC: He did because he was very senior at this point.

1 AM: Yeah. Somehow he was more or less exempt.

2 LC: Probably because he was involved with something that had nothing—

3 AM: Yeah. Somehow, I never really worried about him going because he said,

4 “You don’t have to worry about me going.”

5 LC: You’ve explained that the two of you together kind of disapproved of the

6 conflict or American involvement. Did you think back—and I don’t know whether you

7 were aware of this—did you think back to the French period there and think well, they

8 had had a difficult time in Vietnam and it’ll probably be—did you think like that?

9 AM: Yeah. We talked about that. We talked about the fact that it’s crazy that the

10 Americans think they can take on those people. The French couldn’t do anything so why

11 do you think—the British, the French, nobody could ever do anything. Why do America

12 think that they can take them on. Yeah. We did. Yeah. We elaborated on that some.

13 LC: I’m sure. President Johnson, of course, was trying to change the situation in

14 the United States by—

15 AM: Very much. What is happening today politically, I blame on him.

16 LC: Angela, by that you mean what kinds of things? You and I discussed this off

17 record but—

18 AM: Socialistic.

19 LC: Yeah. More dependence.

20 AM: Depending on the government. Nobody—how did it work all those years?

21 People didn’t have any health insurance then in ’53. Now everybody is health insurance.

22 We are going with the Europeans got. What has French got today because they got all

23 these freebies? Look at where I worked in France I needed the wallpaper done. The guy,

24 a young man, had five kids, he said, “I don’t have to work. The government pays me.” I

25 mean, all these socialistic free stuff. In Germany, the same thing. Everybody gets six

26 weeks vacation. Then, like in Germany they get, well, in June if you make three hundred

27 dollars let’s say a month, in June you get an extra three hundred dollars. In December

28 you get another extra three hundred dollars.

29 LC: So every six months?

30 AM: Six months you get three hundred dollar extra. Now they’re beginning to

31 cut back on that. Now they’re screaming because they can’t afford it anymore. I

1 remember in the past twenty-five years or so when my sisters and them come over here I
2 said, “You can come over here because you get your vacation paid. But if I go over to
3 Europe I have to pay out of my monthly paycheck and you get six months paid.” So
4 therefore your whole aid—they had a big time over here.

5 LC: So that’s why they’re able to come over and hang out.

6 AM: That’s why the Germans could come over here without—oh, they go to the
7 Bahamas like my sister Mary. So they fly into Miami and go to Bahamas and then they
8 fly back. It’s nothing for them to go. My nieces, they go to New York shopping!

9 LC: Just to go shopping.

10 AM: Yes. My nieces they go shopping to New York sometime just for one or
11 two days they got special fare where they can go from Frankfurt to Kennedy airport.

12 LC: It’s nothing.

13 AM: It’s nothing, but now they’re beginning to cut back, see. They’re not getting
14 six months anymore. I think if—Gertie and I were talking about it. I think they reduced
15 it to only two months. See? So they take a month away and now they taking some away
16 from the retirement pay, too. They’re cutting back on the social retirements. Well, they
17 have to because they’ve got their unemployment today is ten percent.

18 LC: Right. Yes. Germany is having a very difficult time.

19 AM: A very difficult time, and French is worse.

20 LC: What do you make of Angela Merkel? Do you like her?

21 AM: I think—

22 LC: Because she’s trying to undo some of these things.

23 AM: Some of those things so she’s not going to be able to do what she wants to
24 do.

25 LC: I think you’re probably right.

26 AM: Yeah. She’s not going to—and Schroeder, he is involved in a bunch of
27 schemes now, which they discovered. So he has really done the Germans wrong.

28 LC: Some corruption?

29 AM: Corruption. He’s under heavy investigation now.

30 LC: So it sounds very much like America.

31 AM: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Right.

1 LC: Like politics everywhere.

2 AM: Yeah. Politics. That's right.

3 LC: Well, Angela, let me ask you a little more about Paul. After he retired, did
4 the two of you decide to move to Fayetteville or were you already there?

5 AM: We had friends here in Fayetteville. Paul never was stationed here. We
6 retired from Germany. I mean, we were stationed in Germany.

7 LC: For '67 to '69, something like that?

8 AM: Mm-hmm. Paul retired in Aberdeen. We came from Germany to
9 Aberdeen. So here we were. We did not want to, of course, go to West Virginia. Paul
10 always wanted to go to Florida. He had applied for a job at the Capitol Police
11 Department and in Atlanta on the police force and in Florida in Orlando. All of them he
12 could interview. So we got to Aberdeen to retire and the more we talked about it—of
13 course, that was the height of the Vietnam War. The more we talked about it the more I
14 say, "Paul, do you really think that's a good idea?" Because you had all them
15 demonstration in D.C. I said, "You go from one uniform in the other and you get killed
16 in D.C."

17 LC: Were you really worried about that?

18 AM: I was. I said, "You don't even need to go for the interview because that is
19 crazy."

20 LC: There were a lot of big demonstrations going on.

21 AM: In that time there were a lot of big demonstration and the more you saw the
22 more I said, "You don't need to go for that interview." I said, "Let's go down to
23 Fayetteville and you can interview in Atlanta. Then if you don't like that we can go
24 down to Orlando." That was, of course, then I had Barbara. Betty was already married
25 then. She was stationed in Germany. We left her behind.

26 LC: So she had married a military man.

27 AM: Yes. We left her behind. I mean, at that time she was married already. So
28 the first time we had to leave Betty behind.

29 LC: That's a little tough, too.

30 AM: Oh, that was so tough, the empty seat. Anyway, Barbara was thirteen and
31 the school was supposed to begin. I said, "Well, I need to sign up Barbara to get back to

1 school and we'll just take her out after Paul gets back from Atlanta." Well, Paul went to
2 Atlanta himself. We had friends down there. He stayed with them and he kind of stayed
3 a week or so to scout around and to see. He didn't like it.

4 LC: Really?

5 AM: No.

6 LC: What did he not like? Do you remember?

7 AM: Too many black people.

8 LC: Too many black people?

9 AM: Yeah. Now he said it's just not the place I would want to raise a family.
10 Then Paul came back and, of course, I had Barbara in school then so—wait a minute.
11 Yeah. Barbara and Randy. Then he went down to Atlanta, I mean to Orlando. He didn't
12 like it. He didn't like the job. That's what he came back with and he didn't like the job.
13 So as that went on that was three or four months into the school year. So I said, "Paul,
14 why we sitting right here in the military place we got everything we need right here. One
15 town is good as the other. We have to build a house wherever. Why don't we just retire
16 here?" That's how we came here.

17 LC: Was he happy living there?

18 AM: No. No.

19 LC: Really?

20 AM: We made a nice home. We have a nice home and we were happy to a
21 certain extent, but I remember the time when Paul would say, "I just hate Fayetteville."
22 But never said "I want to move," because if Paul would have said, "Well, let's move." I
23 would have been the first one to say, "Yeah, we will move." But I think he got tired of
24 moving. I think Paul got burned out of moving.

25 LC: I can see that.

26 AM: Because he never did like Fayetteville, but he got tired of moving.

27 LC: Moving, I mean it's hard and it's hard work.

28 AM: Because in our time I can give you twenty-five different addresses where
29 we moved to. Twenty-five.

30 LC: But that was not as hard for you, is that right?

1 AM: No. No. I could unpack my house in twenty-four hours and you could have
2 a cup of coffee tomorrow or I make you a dinner.

3 LC: Wonderful.

4 AM: Yeah. I was in my element, I think. Stupid.

5 LC: Well, but did you find Fayetteville all right? I mean, you still are living
6 there and—

7 AM: I think, yeah. Yeah. I'm content. Sometime in the earlier years, because
8 now I have lived here over thirty years, so I'm not talking now but there was a time when
9 Paul and I said, "We were stupid. Why didn't we retire in Aberdeen?" Because
10 Aberdeen was always a place dear to our heart because that was the first place we came
11 to. Aberdeen was actually the first place we came to.

12 LC: Came to when you came to the US?

13 AM: Yeah, in '53. So Aberdeen, if I want to say it maybe we made a mistake not
14 retiring in Aberdeen. It all had to do with that. Aberdeen had no place to work with.
15 Aberdeen was nothing. Washington D.C., was out, so I guess it was just meant to be that
16 way.

17 LC: Yeah. Well, can you just tell me very briefly when you lost Paul?

18 AM: Three years ago in June.

19 LC: Okay. That would be 2003?

20 AM: Mm-hmm.

21 LC: As you think back now, you said he was a real soldiers' soldier.

22 AM: Yes.

23 LC: Did he, even through retirement, did he think back and talk about his career?

24 AM: Let me say to get the thing I never understood from Paul. We bought this
25 house here. All his uniforms and all his belongings we put up in the attic. I started to
26 work and one day I came home and our garbage can was full for some reason.
27 Something hung out and I wanted to put that in there. Here was all his uniforms, or not
28 all of them, some of them. I want you to know, cut up in the garbage can. I walked in. I
29 said, "Paul, why did you cut up the uniform? Are you crazy?" He said, "I want nothing
30 to do with it anymore." He did not belong to any group of soldiers. He cut the ties. That
31 was his way of saying I'm finished with it. Now, he had formed a bunch of close friends

1 he had which he served with and they happened to retire here, about four guys. One, two,
2 three, four, five guys. I would make breakfast for them every Thursday. They meet at
3 my house and I would make breakfast. Them guys would be sitting out on the patio, it
4 was nice, and drink coffee and chew over old times, never really going in to talk about
5 the war or anything. Just talking primary about Army. Out of the guys only two are left
6 now, and if you believe it or not that those two guys are still coming every Thursday.

7 LC: They come over to your house?

8 AM: To eat breakfast. I only got two left now.

9 LC: I do believe it.

10 AM: In fact one of them is that Vietnam guy which I wanted to dearly have you
11 interview him, but he will not do it. He is just one of those guys like Paul.

12 LC: He did his duty and he would prefer not to talk about it and as I said I
13 understand that.

14 AM: I asked Hoff, I said, "Come on." The other one, he is a little simple. He
15 don't talk much. He was in Vietnam, but I wouldn't even suggest him to you because
16 he—no.

17 LC: You don't think he has so much to—

18 AM: No. No. He never was married. He's just a single guy and, no, he's
19 simple. But Hoff was married. He lost his wife and real, real top-notch guy but a
20 soldiers' soldier. The other one isn't a soldier. He's just a hang-on.

21 LC: Hanger on?

22 AM: Mm-hmm.

23 LC: I think I know what you're saying. As I said earlier sometimes we do run
24 across that where they would prefer to keep it—

25 AM: Well, Paul wouldn't interview, either. Oh, no way. No way.

26 LC: I'm glad that you decided to, Angela, and I can see that. From the things
27 you said he lived by the code, in a way.

28 AM: I'll tell you what, he could recite everything in the Army manual.
29 Everything. Oh, yeah. He was a hard-core soldier.

30 LC: And he served the country very bravely.

1 AM: I'm proud. He was such a proud soldier that—and yet such a good husband
2 and such a good man that he could be so soft and he could be so hard away from his
3 family. There were times—now let me show you another example of what kind of a guy
4 he was. We were stationed in Verdun. Go back to that. Like I told you, I worked in one
5 section. He was command sergeant major in the other. It is a very small compound, very
6 small. We would go for lunch at the NCO club or the BX (base exchange) and the
7 cafeteria. Now, Paul would be going with his group and I would be going with our
8 group. Never talk with each other. That it was almost six months or seven months into it
9 that they knew I was Paul's wife.

10 LC: No kidding.

11 AM: Because I did not participate in these women's club. I did not when Paul
12 would before him say already my wife doesn't give tea and sherry because that was the
13 tradition. If a new command sergeant major come in you have to open up your house.
14 You had your sherry. You played bridge and you did all that. Well, not me. Because I
15 just never was. So therefore it goes to show you how I was and how Paul was. We could
16 separate ourselves so diligently that people at times did not know I was his wife or they
17 didn't know he was my husband.

18 LC: Even on a small base.

19 AM: Even on a very small base because if that would be Heidelberg or
20 Kaiserslautern or Mannheim—they were big Army posts. So there you could see that it
21 would be possible, but not in a small compound like Verdun was.

22 LC: That's quite telling.

23 AM: Yet we formed such a well-formed family that family meant everything and
24 the Army meant everything. So we could carry that on without any hardships. We felt
25 no hardship.

26 LC: Do you think that the Army and the US government took care of retired
27 veterans, like your husband and their families like you, appropriately in the time that you
28 were retired?

29 AM: Yes. Yes. I mean, there was always somebody there that would help you if
30 you reached out. Even though I was by myself with all the, let's say when Paul was in
31 Korea. I could have asked for it, I would have gotten it, but it was just not in me that I

1 would say “I need my husband because I can’t take care of it.” That would have been a
2 flaw in me.

3 LC: Yes. But you could have gotten help.

4 AM: I could have gotten help. That’s for sure.

5 LC: What about, for example, the Veterans Administration and healthcare and
6 those kinds of benefits?

7 AM: Well, let me say again. Paul never applied for—he was wounded during
8 World War II. Not serious, but he was wounded.

9 LC: I see that he had a Purple Heart and Bronze—

10 AM: But Paul never—now that’s another thing Paul was not— he never got the
11 disability. He never got disability because he said, “I am well. There’s nothing wrong
12 with me. I don’t need that money.” So other veterans, they go out and get all the
13 disability they can get. Some of them don’t even earn it or didn’t earn it, but they get
14 disability. Paul never reached out and got disability. But when Paul passed away I put
15 my head on and I said, “No.” This time you’re not going to get away. I will get Paul’s
16 disability because I would have wound up with only Social Security.

17 LC: Right, which you didn’t even—

18 AM: Yeah. I would have only gotten Social Security. This time I put in my own
19 self and they approved it.

20 LC: Did they approve a certain percentage or how did they—?

21 AM: They approved. I get nine hundred and sixty dollars.

22 LC: A month?

23 AM: A month.

24 LC: That’s for his service disability?

25 AM: Yeah.

26 LC: Does that include his retirement benefits to you, too?

27 AM: No. There is no—when Paul passed away all I got or would have gotten is
28 Social Security.

29 LC: That you earned yourself and his—

30 AM: No. No. They take my Social—I worked all my life.

31 LC: Yes, I know. I’m getting that.

1 AM: I worked all my life and I would have gotten—what they do is take my
2 Social Security, his Social Security, take a percentage, and then the higher Social
3 Security is what you get money on.

4 LC: Only one of the two, right?

5 AM: One of the two, not two. So I would have gotten only Social Security,
6 which would be eight hundred and eighty dollars.

7 LC: Yikes. So that's where you would have been with—

8 AM: That's what I would have gotten if I had not applied for the disability.

9 LC: How long did it take for you to get it approved?

10 AM: Very short order.

11 LC: Is that right?

12 AM: Very short order.

13 LC: So they were efficient in processing it?

14 AM: Very much so.

15 LC: That's impressive because, of course, we don't always hear that.

16 AM: Very much so. They were very much—and another thing. I went out there
17 with the survivor officer. You know you get an officer assigned to you when the spouse
18 passed away. We went to that VA (Veteran's Affairs) office there and there's a Medal of
19 Honor winner sit there.

20 LC: Really?

21 AM: Yeah. He runs that whole show. He said to that lieutenant I had, he said,
22 "No, she doesn't qualify for any of the VA—her husband didn't apply for it so she
23 doesn't qualify." That lieutenant asked him and said, "What do you mean she don't
24 qualify? She should." They kind of back and forth about it and then he said, "No, she
25 don't," and that officer was very apologetic to me. I said, "Oh, well that's just the way it
26 goes," and no more. Then it wasn't a week later I'm laying in bed and I'm saying this is
27 not right. I'm going back up there, because in the meantime the lieutenant had already
28 turned in all the paperwork and what have you. So I went up there and I thought, no I'm
29 not going to talk to that guy again. I talked to a secretary. I said, "Give me an
30 application form for the VA. I need to apply for the VA." She said, "Here," and she

1 gave me that form. My daughter, Betty, she works in Ft. Bragg and she filled out all the
2 paperwork for me and very shortly after that they approved it.

3 LC: Now what does she do there?

4 AM: She's transportation.

5 LC: But she knows the system sort of.

6 AM: Oh, yeah. Betty worked in the Pentagon for about two years.

7 LC: Really?

8 AM: Mm-hmm.

9 LC: Wow.

10 AM: After she got back from Germany, her husband got transferred to the
11 Pentagon and she worked there for three years.

12 LC: Excellent.

13 AM: Sadly they divorced and then she moved here, of course, because we were
14 here. She got a job up there, transportation. She's been retired now, actually, already
15 from the civil service, but she's still working now because a contractor took over the
16 whole system.

17 LC: Right. So she's no longer directly in federal—

18 AM: She's retired from civil service, but she's still working at the same position.

19 LC: She continues to work.

20 AM: Yeah.

21 LC: Wow. Well, she's a smart cookie then, too.

22 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

23 LC: I'm not surprised.

24 AM: She filled out the paperwork right.

25 LC: I'm not surprised. Now, will she be there when your sisters come around?

26 AM: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

27 LC: Does she sit with you and do you all kind of hang out?

28 AM: Oh, yeah. She speaks German. Betty speaks German. Yeah. Oh, yeah. I
29 slapped her around when she came back to the States. I said, "You will answer me in
30 German. You will learn German." Yeah. She speaks it good where the other daughter,
31 she understands everything. Doesn't speak it that well, but she understands everything.

1 LC: She can hear it.

2 AM: Yeah. I didn't slap her around enough. The son, oh, well, forget it.

3 (Editor's note: Text deleted)

4 LC: (Editor's note: Text deleted) Where does he live?

5 AM: He lives right in town here.

6 LC: Oh, does he really? So you have two of the three right there with you?

7 AM: Right. Well, Barbara is not too far away, either, because Campbell College

8 is just forty-five minutes from here.

9 LC: Sure, and that's where Chip is.

10 AM: That's where Chip is. Right. She teaches at Wake Forrest.

11 LC: What does she teach?

12 AM: Health and dentistry.

13 LC: Well, they all sound like they've made their way pretty well.

14 AM: Oh, yeah.

15 LC: So you and Paul must have both been very proud of them.

16 AM: Oh, yeah. We raised a good family. Randy is typical of my father. He

17 works as a maintenance engineer at Purolator.

18 LC: At Purolator.

19 AM: Here in town.

20 LC: Yeah. So he does sound like your dad.

21 AM: Yeah. Oh, yeah. He's dirty. He gets dirty like my dad did.

22 LC: (Editor's note: Text deleted)

23 AM: (Editor's note: Text deleted)

24 LC: That's great. That's great. Well, Angela, I want to thank you for

25 participating in the Oral History Project and for taking the time this morning to talk about

26 your memories and your husband and his service, and all of that is very important to us as

27 you know. I just give you my sincere thanks for participating.

28 AM: Yeah. I enjoyed talking to you. You brought out more in me than I thought

29 you could.

30 LC: Thank you, Angela.

31 AM: I will send you those pictures.