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HAROLD BERG

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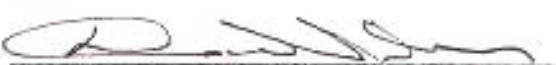
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This is an oral history interview conducted with Mr. Harold Berg of Belpre, Kansas, on October 1, 1991. The interview was conducted in the home of Mr. Berg's daughter, Ms. Ingrid Trinkka, in Great Bend, KS, by Dr. James Leyerzapf of the Eisenhower Library.

DR. LEYERZAPF: So you graduated, then, from Durham High School?

MR. BERG: Durham High School.

Q: In '36?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Then what did you do? That's five years before the war started.

MR. BERG: Well, my parents moved to a little town called Galva, Kansas. You know where that is. That's east of McPherson, about six miles.

Q: I want to say, Canton-Galva school district?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: I could put the two words together. You see that in the sports pages.

MR. BERG: And I worked some in the oil fields there until I went into the service. That was about it. My parents had a little restaurant and filling station in Galva.

Q: I see.

MR. BERG: That was about it. Well, during "campaign seasons" I would go to Brighton, Colorado and work in the sugar factories during the "campaign season."

Q: Now, what's a "campaign season?"

MR. BERG: Well, that's during when the sugar beets are ripe to go into the factory, to have them processed to make sugar.

Q: I hadn't heard that term before--"campaign season." They don't grow sugar beets in Pennsylvania; I guess that's why I hadn't heard about it.

MR. BERG: Yes, they had canning factories, sugar factories, out there in Brighton. And I worked there at least three different seasons.

Q: We're talking about the late 30's? Early 40's?

MR. BERG: Yes. Late 30's--'39, '40 and '41, I'd say.

Q: When were you inducted into the service?

MR. BERG: October the Second of 1942.

Q: Tomorrow it'll be forty-nine years, to the day.

MR. BERG: Right, right.

Q: Okay. Were you drafted or did you enlist?

MR. BERG: I was drafted.

Q: You were drafted. And where did you do boot camp?

MR. BERG: Oregon. Medford, Oregon.

Q: What was the name of the camp up there?

MR. BERG: Camp White.

Q: White?

MR. BERG: Camp White.

Q: Camp White in Medford, Oregon. When did you leave boot camp and take your first assignment?

MR. BERG: We moved from Camp White to Camp Adair in Oregon. And from Camp Adair we moved to Newport News, Virginia and left there on April the First, 1943 for Oran, Africa.

Q: So you go to North Africa in April of '43?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: And what unit did you link up with?

MR. BERG: I was with the 91st Division, Military Police.

Q: Who was the commanding general of the 91st Division--do you remember?

MR. BERG: Gerhardt, I believe.

Q: Oh, Charles Hunter Gerhardt?

MR. BERG: I think so. I think that was his name.

Q: We have Gerhardt's papers.

MR. BERG: Do you, really?

Q: Yes. He's one of the general officers whose papers we have.

MR. BERG: He rode a horse around camp. He was a pretty proud general, I'd say.

Q: He must have looked very distinguished, with him riding around on a horse?

MR. BERG: Yes. The trip from Virginia to North Africa took us three weeks. It was on a liberty ship, five hundred people on each ship.

Q: Do you remember the name of the ship?

MR. BERG: James J. Hall.

Q: James J. Hall. What kinds of assignments did you draw when you arrived in Oran?

MR. BERG: What kind of what?

Q: Assignments that you dealt with?

MR. BERG: We really stopped there for a little training on the way to Italy. Mainly amphibious training. We cosmolined

our jeeps--motors and stuff--and drove them into the ocean to see if they were waterproof.

Q: Were they?

MR. BERG: Well, mine floated out there; they had to have a half-track pull me back out!

Q: I guess they were.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: How long were you in Oran before you went on to Italy?

MR. BERG: I can't remember for sure.

Q: Well, just roughly. Are we talking about a month, six months?

MR. BERG: Oh no. It was probably a couple of months at the most. Something like that. And we went from there to Naples, Italy. There we had all our cars and jeeps and half-tracks with us. We got on the ground there and we followed the boot of Italy all the way up through the war, from there on.

Q: Now, Naples was secure by the time you got there? The allies had it?

MR. BERG: Oh yes. They had just secured Anzio when I got to Naples.

Q: The Anzio beachhead, very famous ....

MR. BERG: We got to tromp around on that for a few days. I guess we were lucky we didn't step on any old mines, but we didn't step on any.

Q: You were lucky.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: You were with the military police, then, in Naples?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: What kind of duty was that? Can you describe the kinds of, your typical day? Were you just rounding up drunk GIs, or did you have ....

MR. BERG: Do you mean out of sight of the war or ....

Q: Out of sight of the war, yes.

MR. BERG: Well, we did a lot of training but as far as .... We had one duty, to keep the GIs out of the red-light district.

Q: Okay. That's the kind of thing I was wondering about.

MR. BERG: Other than that there weren't really a lot of things we'd do. Any uprising any place, we'd go investigate it.

Q: What kind of uprising would this be?

MR. BERG: Fights with American soldiers and stuff like that.

Q: Between the American soldiers and the Italian citizens?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: I see.

MR. BERG: That was during overseas.

Q: Right. I understand that. You always hear about how welcomed the GIs were by the natives in various countries so I had that stereotype in mind. It comes as kind of a surprise to hear that it wasn't always friendly. Apparently it wasn't always friendly?

MR. BERG: No. After we got into the war, why we did the traffic control, and prisoner guarding, and things like that.

Q: A minute ago, you asked if I was asking you about duty apart from action. Are you telling me that you actually saw some action against the Germans, against the Axis?

MR. BERG: The closest I was to the front line was approximately a mile, probably. Behind the lines.

Q: A mile behind the lines?

MR. BERG: Yes.



Q: You mentioned taking care of, or guarding, POWs. Did you do quite a bit of that?

MR. BERG: I did just a little of it, not too much. That was close to the end of the war and we were getting a lot of prisoners. I probably didn't guard over two or three days altogether.

Q: I see.

MR. BERG: We had eighty of us MPs and it was a lot of them to stand duty on that, you know.

Q: Okay. Apart from guarding the Germans, the prisoners, what else did you do besides dealing with local fracasas with the natives?

MR. BERG: Most of it was directing traffic.

Q: Directing traffic? In Naples?

MR. BERG: No, that was during the war. You know, they would send you out to a certain post, and it might be at night, and you'd have batons with little lights on the end of them. And you'd direct traffic out there and show them on to the next traffic stop.

Q: Directing our military traffic, not civilian traffic?

MR. BERG: No.

Q: Okay. I misunderstood. I thought maybe you were directing traffic in downtown Naples.

MR. BERG: There was very little native traffic out there.

Q: So at this point you are in the Naples area with the 91st Division?

MR. BERG: 91st Division, military division.

Q: A lot of your time is involved in directing military traffic. Fairly close to the front lines?

MR. BERG: We got as close as a mile.

Q: As close as a mile.

MR. BERG: I'd say a mile, yes.

Q: Anything else that you did as an MP at that time that we haven't talked about?

MR. BERG: Well, overseas, yes, that was about all we did. But in the states, if you get back to the states, they'd always send two of us out on--if they found a GI that was AWOL, someplace in the United States--they'd send you out on a train and give you meal tickets. They had him in custody at that time, and we'd go pick him up and bring him back.

Q: You'd go fairly far from your base to get on a train?

MR. BERG: From Oregon I went as far as Oklahoma City, Will Rogers Field.

Q: That's a long way, from Oregon to Oklahoma.

MR. BERG: Yes. They'd just put you on a train and give you a ticket and tell you where to go.

Q: How many of you would go at one time?

MR. BERG: Two.

Q: And the local police, or the local authorities--civilian or military--would have the person in custody?

MR. BERG: Sometimes it would be the civilian, and sometime it would be at a base, a military base.

Q: You'd pick them up and take them back?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Back to Oregon?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: To Camp White?

MR. BERG: Camp White.

Q: During the time you were in Italy, as you said, you were with the army all the way up from Naples on north, is that correct?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Any unusual incidents that you think historians might find interesting--that you can recall?

MR. BERG: Well, on the first day out, on our traffic control, I and another soldier were directing traffic on a curve just about a mile behind the front lines. And we saw an old building across the way over there. So we took our M-1 rifles and shot a couple of shots back toward that little building. And it wasn't long, why, here some air bursts came in on us, and some shells from the enemy. We'd been shooting at the enemy and they found out where we were, I guess. So we had to crawl down a culvert and wait until they quit shooting at us because shrapnel was peppering down all around us. It didn't hit us.

Q: So those buildings that you thought were vacant had enemy soldiers in them?

MR. BERG: Evidently they had some.

Q: Did you shoot any of them, do you know?

MR. BERG: No, no, not that I know of.

Q: Just caused enough commotion that they were able to locate you?

MR. BERG: They wanted to get rid of whoever was shooting at them. First day out, that was the first day out on traffic control.

Q: You routinely carried an M-1 with you, you had it with you most of the time?

MR. BERG: All the time.

Q: All the time? Did you have any handguns or other weapons that you used at the time?

MR. BERG: We had a 45.

Q: A service pistol?

MR. BERG: Yes, 45. We carried that too.

Q: How about a baton, a police officer's club baton? Did you carry one of those?

MR. BERG: We had one of those, yes.

Q: Okay. Tear gas or ....

MR. BERG: Pardon?

Q: Did you carry tear gas canisters for riots or anything?

MR. BERG: No, no. We didn't.

Q: You weren't issued those?

MR. BERG: We didn't have any of that.

Q: I'm trying to get some flavor of what it was like to be an MP where you were at the time. Any other incidents that as you go up through Italy, from Naples, that you recall?

MR. BERG: It's been a long time since I've thought about this.

Q: Okay. Did you have any close contact with General Gerhardt?

MR. BERG: No. We didn't.

Q: Because I would have been interested in what impressions you had.

MR. BERG: The only close contact I had was with General Eisenhower and General [Mark] Clark, and I hauled General [Alfred] Gruenther a couple of times.

Q: Now Gruenther was chief of staff to Clark?

MR. BERG: Yes. And he was in the party a few times, yes.

Q: Gruenther, of course, became a very good friend of Eisenhower in time and was with Eisenhower when Eisenhower was in NATO in the late 40's.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Gruenther was with Eisenhower then. And then they became very good friends. We have a lot in the Library about their playing bridge together. Gruenther was Ike's favorite bridge player. If he could get Gruenther for his partner, he would get him.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: We have Gruenther's papers, by the way. It's a big collection, a very large collection of Gruenther's papers at the Library. We just got them in the last ten years. Can you give me the names of some of the major cities or areas of battles in northern Italy that you witnessed or visited?

MR. BERG: I can't tell you the names of them. I sure can't. I went through a lot of them that were bombed out. But I can't remember the names.

Q: At what point, then, did you link up with General Clark, because where things stand right now, we're in northern Italy and where the documentation picks up you're near Salzburg, near Berchtesgaden, and places like that in Austria. Can you fill it in between there?

MR. BERG: That was after the war?

Q: Yes, after the war, with the occupation.

MR. BERG: Yes. After the war was over.

Q: Because you went to Italy in, you said it was April of '43?

MR. BERG: Yes, April of '43.

Q: And in September of '45 until you say you met Eisenhower in Austria, can you help us fill in a little bit? It's almost two and a half years in there.

MR. BERG: The time we got, let's see, half way up through Italy, why, it was about 1944, wasn't it? If I remember right.

Q: You were through Italy by late in the year of '43 or early '44, yes.

MR. BERG: We were up near Florence, Italy, not too far from Florence, when the major, Major Laird was his name, with the military police, 91st military police, he called me over as I was walking by his camp one day. He was a man about 50 years old at that time. And he asked me if I'd like to have a job going back to 5th Army headquarters and driving for General Clark--I'd be a bodyguard and a chauffeur. And I said, "Do you think I'm qualified?" And he said, "Well, we think you



probably are." So they sent me back there and, of course, I was back there probably two or three months before I ever got to drive the general. They check you out pretty close, I guess. We lived in five-man tents on the Arno River in Florence, Italy. And one day, why, the lieutenant for the aide came up--and I don't remember his name--and said the general wants to go to so-and-so and you're to be the driver. I was pretty scared but we didn't go too far; I think we went through town in Florence and that was about it. But I made the trip all right, so after that, when his regular driver left and went home on leave, that's when I took the job over.

Q: I want to be sure I pinpoint this. 5th Army headquarters, which was where?

MR. BERG: It was in Florence, Italy.

Q: In Florence? Right there in Florence?

MR. BERG: And we lived in those tents there on the Arno River, five men to a tent. We probably had forty, fifty of us down there. See, the general always had jeep drivers and motorcycle riders. Whenever you'd go someplace there would be three motorcycles out in front, and a jeep behind, the Cadillac or the jeep or whatever the general was in. And we'd follow them.

Q: Okay. I see.

MR. BERG: Like you see on TV now. You'd have an escort.

Q: What was your job then? Were you in the jeep trailing, on one of the motorcycles, or what did you do?

MR. BERG: Mine was the Cadillac driver.

Q: You were driving the sedan, the car itself.

MR. BERG: And, of course, we had jeeps too. If he wanted to go in a jeep, why, we had bucket-seated jeeps that you could .... Well, here's a picture of them right here. You can't see too much of it but that's me and Clark's four-star jeep down there. I think that's taken in Bologna, Italy.

Q: So this is sometime in '44, then, when you actually began to drive for Clark?

MR. BERG: It would have been late '44.

Q: Late '44 that you actually began to drive for him.

MR. BERG: Yes, but I can't exactly tell you the month.

Q: That's all right, that's close enough. Where do you go, then, from the Florence area?

MR. BERG: Well, the war ended there in Europe in May, I think it was, wasn't it?

Q: May of '45.

MR. BERG: May of '45. And we went to--well, before that, we lived out at Lake Como, I think it was.

Q: Lake Como?

MR. BERG: In Italy. I have a picture here. We lived there with the general in that house for probably a month or two.

Q: There's a picture of a very picturesque Italian villa where Clark stayed near Lake Como. This picture is inside the villa?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: At Lake Como?

MR. BERG: Yes. Now, where were we?

Q: When did you move on into Austria, or, can you kind of go through, progressively, from Lake Como on?

MR. BERG: It wasn't too long after the war was over. It was in June, somewhere in June of '45.

Q: Within a month of the end of the war.

MR. BERG: We went to Vienna, Austria.

Q: This was the first major stop after you got into Austria? First headquarters for Clark?

MR. BERG: Let's see now. Wait a minute. No, we went to Salzburg, Austria first.

Q: Salzburg, Austria.

MR. BERG: And we stayed there two or three months is the way I remember it. And that's where General Eisenhower came to visit General Clark.

Q: I looked it up on the record and what I found was that Eisenhower was at Clark's headquarters, in or near Salzburg, September 2 and September 3, 1945. Does that sound right?

MR. BERG: Yes, you know more about me than I do.

Q: Well, I always have to do a little research before I talk to people because I don't know nearly as much as you do, so I have to have some frame of reference.

MR. BERG: Well that's right. He visited Clark, what month it was, I wasn't sure. I thought it was probably earlier, in July or August, or something like that. But I thought ....

Q: Well, maybe there's more than one visit. The records I found says early September. So you had been with Clark for almost a year to that point--that you had been driving for him?

MR. BERG: Well, it got pretty close to that.

Q: Pretty close to a year. Did you have much contact with Clark besides being the driver? Obviously, you had contact with him; my question is, did you have enough contact with him or were you around him enough that you have some impressions of Clark?

MR. BERG: Have what?

Q: Some first-hand impressions of the man, his personality, anything like that. I have in you an eyewitness to General Mark W. Clark. I was wondering if you had any impressions of him?

MR. BERG: Well, he was always good to me. He treated me real good, with real kindness all the time.

Q: Very considerate.

MR. BERG: But I did hear him needle his aides quite a bit in the back seat: "Why don't you remember this, why don't you remember that?" Something like that.

Q: So he was probably a tough taskmaster?

MR. BERG: Yes. I remember that: "Why didn't you do this," and the aides would sit there and cringe.

Q: So he could be hard-nosed if he had to be?

MR. BERG: Yes. One day we were out driving, I don't know exactly where I took General Clark that day, but I was driving along in the Cadillac about 50 miles an hour. And we were alone, we had the stars covered--or no, we had the stars uncovered--on the front. I forget where we were going; we were going to some town to visit some bombed-out place, I'm sure, where he could talk with the natives because I had an interpreter riding with me most of the time, beside me in the front seat. He could speak about seven languages. So anyhow, this time the interpreter wasn't with us and all of a sudden Clark stamped his foot in the back seat and he says, "Pull over, Berg." I pulled over. He said, "Let me drive this thing." So he got over in the front seat and set me in the back and said, "Now if there's any guys salute you on the way you're going to have to take care of it because I'm going to be busy." He drove that Cadillac and wanted me to salute everybody back there. Well, I did.

Q: Did you? Salute them?

MR. BERG: Oh yes.

Q: So he had a sense of humor--Clark?

MR. BERG: People on the side of the road that you'd meet, the GIs, would stand at attention when they saw those stars. Of course, they'd be saluting, so you'd have to salute. "You take care of it." I did.

Q: Did you enjoy that?

MR. BERG: Oh yes, I got quite a kick out of it.

Q: That would be pretty special. I'd certainly remember something like that. Any other anecdotes or incidents that you remember involving Clark?

MR. BERG: With Clark?

Q: With Clark. Apart from Eisenhower. We'll get to Eisenhower a little later, but I wanted to try to tap your memory for information on Clark.

MR. BERG: Just one, but I don't know that it would do to tell or not but it's all right, I guess. We were somewhere, I was driving Clark. And he must have got the GIs someplace because he had me pull over beside a cornfield--it was when we came back from Switzerland, that's what, we took a trip to Switzerland. On our way back we pulled over at a cornfield. I had swiped a towel from this hotel that we stayed in and he borrowed that to go back in the cornfield. So I lost my souvenir.

Q: I guess you did. Well, it was for a good cause.

MR. BERG: Yes. It's crazy the things you can remember after a person asks questions.

Q: I'm trying to prompt your memory as best I can. I know it's been forty-five years. That's a long time. More than forty-five years. A lot longer than that.

MR. BERG: On this trip that you had down where Eisenhower visited Clark in Salzburg, Austria, was he alone at that time, or what did you find out?

Q: Well, I found out his aide, Tex Lee, was with him and his own secretary and jeep driver, Kay Summersby, was with him on the trip.

MR. BERG: Yes, yes.

Q: Lee and Summersby, that's all I've been able to find out to this point. There probably were others, too. His personal valet, John Moaney, might have been along, and people like that but ....

MR. BERG: Kay Summersby was with him, I remember that.

Q: Did you meet Kay?

MR. BERG: Yes.

MR. BERG: Did you get a chance to talk to her?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Do you have any impressions of her?



MR. BERG: Just "Hello, how are you?" and that's about it.

Q: What was your impression of her, her personality?

MR. BERG: Oh, I think she was probably cut out pretty well for the job she had with Ike. I mean, she was that type of girl that she was compatible with things that he'd ask of her.

Q: She seemed very competent?

MR. BERG: Oh yes, yes. She was competent, I thought. She started out as his driver, you know, and later on, I don't know, was his secretary or something like that. I've got a picture of that but we could get to that after a while, I guess.

Q: Yes, we can look at the pictures a little later--unless you need them to help prompt your memory, we can do that too. If it helps to remember things, we can certainly look at them. How would you describe her personality?

MR. BERG: Who?

Q: Kay Summersby, her personality.

[Interruption]

MR. BERG: I go to Dodge City three times a week, for kidney dialysis.

Q: Yes, you go over on Monday, Wednesday and Friday?

MR. BERG: Right.

Q: I called your office, the place where you worked part time? Do you work someplace? I had two phone numbers, and I called one number yesterday ....

MR. BERG: That's my wife's business, yes.

Q: Okay. I called there and you were gone.

MR. BERG: You called yesterday, didn't you?

Q: Yesterday, I just called in.

MR. BERG: I was going to ask you what you ....

Q: I was only going to make a confirmation that we had the time to get together today.

MR. BERG: I see.

Q: We were talking about Eisenhower's visit to Salzburg, to Mark Clark's headquarters. At that time was it his headquarters?

MR. BERG: I was told that the place where we stayed there--I don't have a picture of it--but I was told that during the war it was one of Hermann Goering's schlosshauses.

Q: Schlosshaus?

MR. BERG: Schlosshaus. A castle, or whatever you want to call it. They called them schlosshauses, I'm pretty sure. It was just a big, big villa, was what it was. It had a number of buildings for the servants and stuff built out around it.

Q: It sounds like it was pretty fancy?

MR. BERG: Oh yes, beautiful. It sure was. Just like this place in Italy here, that was the most beautiful place. It was surrounded by a lake. It had a small peninsula to drive in to get to it. There was a place on the side for an air strip. The general could fly back and forth to his headquarters in Verona at that time. All he'd have to do is, I'd have to drive him from here down to the air strip, which was about a mile, get him in his little cub airplane, they'd take off and I'd have the afternoon off until they got back in the evening. I played out there in the water.

Q: Doesn't sound like it was too demanding--it would be demanding having him around, having to deal with the general--but it seems it had its side benefits to it.

MR. BERG: Yes, it was interesting, it sure was.

Q: You saw a lot of beautiful countryside and a lot of the notable places in Europe.

MR. BERG: Yes. That was, you can see that was a mansion and a half.

Q: Oh yes, that's spectacular. And this was all on a peninsula? On Lake Como?

MR. BERG: You'd come in on a peninsula and curve around through a little town down in there. I think Seremone [?] was the name of it. A Lake Garda was where it was. Lago di Garda. Seremone [?].

Q: Have you ever gone back since then?

MR. BERG: No.

Q: No sentimental journey back to see it?

MR. BERG: I've threatened to and thought about it a lot of times and now I have this problem with the dialysis. It would be a lot more trouble now. Almost impossible now.

Q: Getting back to Eisenhower's visits to the area. As I've mentioned, I recall that Tex Lee, Eisenhower's aide, was there. Did you deal with him at all, Tex Lee? Do you remember him?

MR. BERG: No, I sure don't.

Q: I brought along one photograph from our photographic archives, one photograph with you in it.

MR. BERG: With me in it?

Q: Yes, I don't know if you have a copy of this or not. If you don't I'll get you a copy. Do you have a copy?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: You have that. That's Eisenhower, Summersby, Clark, and that's Tex Lee. Tex Lee is the guy who's in the front seat with you.

MR. BERG: Is that who it is?

Q: That's Tex Lee.

MR. BERG: He rode up to Berchtesgaden with us, I know that. That's on the trip to Berchtesgaden right here.

Q: Okay.

MR. BERG: Hitler's Eagle's Nest, or Crow's Nest.

Q: You were, of course, the driver of the jeep. At least that's how we have you identified in our catalog cards, as the driver of the jeep, Harold Berg.

MR. BERG: Now they have, they didn't have my name in it.

Q: Yes.

MR. BERG: Is that right?

Q: Yes, your name is on it.

MR. BERG: Really?

Q: Yes. Before you ever contacted us, we had a Harold Berg in our audiovisual catalog cards. That's one of the first things I did after we set the interview up, is to see if we had any photographs. I checked the name file, and sure enough I found this particular photograph. You say you do have a copy of this, though?

MR. BERG: Yes, I have ....

Q: Because if you didn't I would certainly get one for you.

MR. BERG: Well, you want to go through that now, that picture and stuff?

Q: Let's do that. Let's take a look at that. I need to turn this off for just a second.

MR. BERG: I couldn't haul them all, so I didn't haul any of them, really. Drove back all by myself. That's taken in Bologna, Italy. That's where they strung Mussolini up, if you remember.

Q: Oh, that's right, yes.

MR. BERG: I saw that wall, blood-splattered wall where they had ....

Q: Where they shot them?

MR. BERG: Yes, where they strung them people up and machine-gunned them, I guess you'd say.

Q: I've seen photographs of his body hanging upside down or whatever.

MR. BERG: Yes, I've got one at home, too, of it.

Q: You have some other photographs there.

MR. BERG: This is taken in Switzerland. I took General Clark to Switzerland.

Q: This is you on the left?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Can you identify the other people?

MR. BERG: This is a bodyguard.

Q: Another bodyguard, okay.

MR. BERG: He was a tough one, too. He's from Brooklyn.

Q: Brooklyn, New York?

MR. BERG: Sexton was his name.

Q: Sexton?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Okay. And we have here?

MR. BERG: This is where we stayed in this hotel in Switzerland when we took Clark to Switzerland for a day trip, day and night.

Q: That looks a lot nicer than a field tent! Those are very nice photographs.

MR. BERG: I wrote a letter to my folks when I was out there and sent that picture to them.

Q: "Why don't you spend some of your thousands and come visit me?" That's nice.

MR. BERG: That's about all of them. I had some carbons made too.

Q: The Omnibook?

MR. BERG: I sent to you one time; it's pretty hard to read. You can read it and see what you find in there.

Q: We were last talking about Ike's trip to the Salzburg area and you recalled a little bit about Kay Summersby. And do you remember any other people in his official party besides Summersby?

MR. BERG: No.

Q: Not off-hand?



MR. BERG: No, I sure can't.

Q: You'd mentioned that you drove him around, Eisenhower? What can you tell us about Eisenhower's visit there, and what was your contact with him?

MR. BERG: Well, there was one day that--I can't remember how many days he stayed there but it wasn't over two, I don't think. But anyhow, on one of the days that Clark wanted to take him out, he knew he was an avid fisherman, you know. And so we headed out to a mountain stream to take Ike fishing. And we got to the place where we were going to do the fishing and, of course, we had an Austrian guide with us, too, that met us there, to show people where to fish. So we got out of the cars and Clark said, "Berg" he says, "you go with Ike, with General Eisenhower," and this other boy that was an interpreter, he went with Clark. And he says, "You go with Ike." That was about all he said. So I followed along behind Ike and the guide. We got down to a big bank where it went down quite a ways to the creek, the stream. And he got down there part way and the guide showed him a fish, a trout under a rock down there. I could see it myself, we were watching it. Ike laid his line back there behind that, and he caught that little trout. It was only about a foot long at the most. And to get back up on the bank, why, I gave him a hand to pull him back up to the bank, which was about six feet back up. I don't know what he said when I did that or anything. He might

have said, "Thank you," and he might have not, I'm not sure. But I didn't actually have any real conversation with him.

Q: You didn't lose your grip and he fell back in the water?

MR. BERG: No, no!

Q: That would have been embarrassing!

MR. BERG: That would have been embarrassing, yes!

Q: Was he fishing with a fly rod? Was it fly tackle, do you recall?

MR. BERG: Well, the guide had the fishing equipment all there, you know, and just handed it to him. It was a long fly rod.

Q: This is one of the earliest incidents I've heard of his trout fishing. He became famous during his presidency for his trout fishing.

MR. BERG: Oh yes, he went to Colorado and had hamburger cookouts and steak and so forth, and fishing.

Q: He enjoyed that. That's interesting that he found time during those very busy times to take in a little trout fishing when he was in Austria.

MR. BERG: But that was after the war was over.

Q: Right, right.

MR. BERG: That was after the war was over. I guess Clark and Eisenhower were buddies in West Point, weren't they? In fact, I don't know if they were in the same class or not.

Q: Clark was a couple years behind him, but they knew each other for a long, long time.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: They both, as I recall, worked for MacArthur at one time; they had that common background before the war. I believe at one time before the war, or even very early in the war, Clark outranked Eisenhower. He was actually at a higher rank at one point. He might have made brigadier general while Eisenhower was still a colonel. But it seems to me there was a point in there where he was actually of a higher rank than Eisenhower. Of course, Eisenhower from '42 on, just shot right up and passed up a lot of people who had been ranked above him.

MR. BERG: I used to go to Eisenhower's old home town on picnics from Durham High School down at Abilene all the time, in the '30s. I didn't know Ike then. He was much older than I was. I think he was fifty years old during World War II, about 1945. I'm not sure.

Q: He was born in 1890.

MR. BERG: 1890?

Q: So he would have been fifty-five when you saw him near Salzburg.

MR. BERG: He and Clark were pretty close to the same age. Clark might have been a little bit younger.

Q: Yes, I think maybe three or four years was about it.

MR. BERG: Gosh, that Clark was a tall man. I think he was six-three or four. I had to look up to him and I'm six-two.

Q: I've noticed that in photographs. He always towers over everybody else.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: It was that large Roman nose of his; he had a very military kind of bearing, I always thought. A real kind of presence. Was Clark on that fishing trip with Eisenhower?

MR. BERG: Yes. I don't think he did any fishing.

Q: But he went along?

MR. BERG: He didn't go down to the stream that I noticed, anyplace. He kind of stayed back, but I don't know where, really. There was a building there. And I'm not sure what he did that day. But he didn't fish. No, not that I know of.

Q: I see. Was there anybody else along that day? Did Kay go along to the trout stream?

MR. BERG: The only people that was in that party was Clark, Eisenhower, and myself, and an Austrian guide and another bodyguard that rode beside me all the time in that car.

Q: Do you recall how many fish Eisenhower caught?

MR. BERG: One, one.

Q: Just that one that was beside the rock?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: That was it. He was good enough to put his lure down, close enough ....

MR. BERG: Well, that guide had showed him the fish.

Q: Well, maybe that's what guides are for, to point out the fish to you.

MR. BERG: Would you like some more of this?

Q: No, thanks, not right now, that's fine. They're very good. You mentioned in your notes that you used General Clark's Cadillac to pick Ike up at the airport. The picture I've seen of you on the trout fishing trip, shows you in a jeep. So you drove him from the airport to Clark's villa in the Cadillac and used the jeep other times?

MR. BERG: That's the way I remember it.

Q: Okay. You had him more than once. It wasn't just in the jeep that we see in the picture, in Look magazine?

MR. BERG: No, and when Ike left there, when his trip was over, his visit was over, why, I took him to the airport at Salzburg, Austria in the Cadillac. And he was all by himself in the backseat. I drove him up there, and a big four-engine B-, what do they have over there, -17s?

Q: Yes.

MR. BERG: Something like that. I think that's what it was. And the pilot and the co-pilot were standing at the door waiting for him. I got out and opened the door for him and saluted him and he said, "Thank you, sergeant." That's the way I remember it. He started walking toward the airplane and I looked in the backseat and I saw a package of Phillip Morris cigarettes back there. That's what he smoked. And I said, "General, your cigarettes are in the car here." He said, "You keep them, sergeant."

Q: Well, that's a nice story. Very generous.

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Any other recollections of Eisenhower during his trip?

MR. BERG: I can't think of another one right now.

Q: Nothing offhand, all right.

MR. BERG: You know a lot of this stuff already, ahead of me.

Q: Well, I know some of the framework, the historical facts surrounding it, some of the people. One thing we try to accomplish with oral histories is to get the personal side that you don't get in documents. Documents can be awfully cold. And they sometimes don't tell you very much about personality. So that's why I was trying to prick your memory about Clark himself, as well as Eisenhower, to get a first-hand observer's view of their personalities.

MR. BERG: We took Ike and Clark to Innsbruck one afternoon. And while we were there we watched the wooden shoe dance in the lodge, about six maidens out there dancing in their costumes and in the wooden shoes and watched that, I remember that. But I can't remember the trip home, when we went home.

Q: Do you remember the reaction of either Ike or Clark to the dance at the lodge?

MR. BERG: Oh, they enjoyed it.

Q: They really enjoyed that?

MR. BERG: Yes. I know one incident, this is going back to Clark again. But he went to Switzerland, we all got our hotels and so forth. And that night the general wanted to go

out to a nightclub--General Clark. So I and the bodyguards got the car around and drove him and the aide to a nightclub. And, of course, we parked the car right outside the door. He went in and we had to stay with the car, of course, because you never know what's going to happen to the car; you know, we had to stay outside. And it wasn't long before the natives brought their little American flags and they had us autograph them. And then they went in, after they had our autographs, they went inside and had the general autograph them. And on the way home the general said, "I see you boys were pretty busy out there tonight with all those signatures."

Q: That's a nice story. I'm glad you remembered that.

MR. BERG: Where they got all those little American flags beats me, but they had them. They even had some Kansas brand cigarettes that said "Kansas" on them, in Switzerland.

Q: That was a brand back in those days?

MR. BERG: Yes, in Switzerland it was. "Kansas" on them.

Q: You couldn't buy them in this country, though, under that name?

MR. BERG: No.

Q: Did you drive Eisenhower back to the military airport to fly out?



MR. BERG: Yes, that's the story I told you a while ago about taking him alone in the Cadillac.

Q: I just want to make sure we cover the whole trip.

MR. BERG: At Salzburg. It was, I don't know, two or three miles into town from the villa where they stayed and up to the airport on top of the hill.

Q: Now did Clark come with you when you picked him up?

MR. BERG: No, no, I was all alone.

Q: All by yourself.

MR. BERG: I don't know why Clark didn't but Clark told me to take General Eisenhower to the airport. I put him in the car and I took off.

Q: He didn't have much to say, though, on the way?

MR. BERG: No, nothing really.

Q: No? Can you tell us, then, about the rest of your time, the rest of your time with Clark and in the service? Did you remain in Austria for a while after that, after Eisenhower's visit?

MR. BERG: Oh yes. From Salzburg we went to Vienna and lived in Vienna from sometime in November until the time I went home, about January.

Q: So you didn't get mustered out until January of '46, is that right?

MR. BERG: January the sixth.

Q: January the sixth, '46.

MR. BERG: And we were in Austria there for two or three months, you might say. Again, he lived in one of those big villas up on the end of town. And I lived downtown in a hotel, me and the bodyguard.

Q: I see.

MR. BERG: I think it was the Imperial Hotel in Vienna.

Q: Was it nice?

MR. BERG: Oh yes.

Q: Very pleasant?

MR. BERG: It was dandy. Every morning we would have to take the car and go up to his villa and he'd get in. And it was about a mile, at least, from where he lived to the headquarters where his office was down in Vienna. We'd get about, maybe, five blocks from the office and he'd say, "Pull over and stop." He and the aide would get out. The aide was smaller than he was, shorter-legged. And they'd walk. I and the bodyguard and the dog would follow. He'd walk all the

rest of the way to the office until he got just right next to the gate and he'd jump back in the car and we'd drive him up in front and he'd get out. That's one of the stories about Vienna.

Q: That's interesting. He liked to walk, he just liked to walk?

MR. BERG: Oh yes. He did. He could walk too, that long-legged guy. He could really stretch out.

Q: To get ready for this interview I read parts of his wife's autobiography--Renee Clark's--she wrote a book about her life and about living with Mark Clark. And I remember that's one of the things that I ran across in the book. She mentioned how not long after they were married--I think they were in the Washington, D.C. area--he used to take her out to Rock Creek Park, and she couldn't keep up with him. So she finally just begged off and said, "I'm not going to go, you can go walk by yourself," because she couldn't keep up with him.

MR. BERG: He was that way. That aide almost had to dog trot to keep up with him, you know.

Q: With those long legs, as tall as he was. When you were mustered out in January of '46, you were still in Austria at that point, and you shipped home--shipped out of where? Did you fly home from Vienna or how did you get home?

MR. BERG: No, they put us on a freight train, box cars, and took us from Austria all the way across Germany to France, Marseilles, I guess it was. And then we got on a ship there and went down the Mediterranean, past Monte Carlo and finally hit down to the Straits of Gibraltar and headed back towards the same base that I left from, Newport News, Virginia. From Virginia I travelled by train to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, and there I was discharged from the service.

Q: About what time?

MR. BERG: January the sixth of 1946.

Q: Oh, the sixth wasn't the day you left Europe, but the day you were actually released from Camp Chaffee? I see. As you returned to civilian life, what did you do when you got back? You came back to Kansas, back to the Galva area?

MR. BERG: Yes. Galva area. Well, I went to work for people who had jukeboxes and pinball machines for a while.

Q: Was it a manufacturer?

MR. BERG: No, no, just like these people out here that have jukeboxes and set them in a place of business.

Q: Okay. In other words, a distributor, sort of.

MR. BERG: Yes. I'd go around and change records on the jukeboxes and repair pinball machines and things like that.

Q: And did you work at that for a long time?

MR. BERG: No, it was only about, yes, it was a couple of years--'46, '47, '48. Off and on I did it for two or three years, I guess, and then in 1950 I went to work for the Derby Oil Company.

Q: In what kind of a job?

MR. BERG: It was just roustabout work in the oilfields, is what it was. Working in the oilfields. And I followed that for, from 1950 to 19- .... I can't remember now for sure what year it was. What year was it we moved to Larned, Ingrid? Okay, '57. In '57 they transferred me to Larned, Kansas to work.

Q: With Derby?

MR. BERG: Well, it was changed to--Colorado Oil and Gas bought out Derby--so it was changed to Colorado Oil and Gas then. So I worked in the Garfield area, that's just west of Larned, for about, from '57 to '60. And at that time they laid all the people off with their company. I'd been with them eleven years, so I had to go out on my own. So I went out and contracted work in the oilfields as a pumper, you might say. I stayed with that until 1983. I got sick; I had a perforated ulcer and peritonitis and laid in the hospital two months, and then I was retired right there. I was sixty-

four years old at the time. And so I retired and went on Social Security.

Q: Been retired since then?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: How many children do you have?

MR. BERG: One daughter.

Q: One daughter, Ingrid?

MR. BERG: Yes.

Q: Is your wife still living?

MR. BERG: Yes, she is. She's about nine years younger than I am.

Q: Before we finish up do you have anything else that you wanted to add to the tape, any recollections or impressions?

MR. BERG: Do you have any more questions, I might think of something?

Q: I might be completely out of questions, I'll check and see. Well, that's about all I've got. When you were in, or near, Salzburg with Clark and Eisenhower--that was Berchtesgaden, the Eagle's Nest was in that area too, wasn't it?

MR. BERG: Yes, very close.

Q: Did you see it?

MR. BERG: Oh yes, I went up. I took, on a jeep trip, this picture that you see here. I took Eisenhower and Clark and Summersby and what was this other man's name?

Q: Thomas Jefferson Davis.

MR. BERG: Thomas Jefferson Davis, yes. I took them in a jeep, behind an escort, of course, up to the top of the hill where Hitler's Eagle's Nest was, or Crow's Nest, whatever you want to call it. And there was people up there that showed the generals and everybody through their bunkers that they had up there. But I didn't go through the bunkers. The bodyguard and I stayed at the level of the top of the hill by the house, you know, where the Eagle's Nest was. So when they left to walk to the bunkers, the general told us not to get in any trouble up there--General Clark did. Because we were eyeballing that house, you know, we were wanting to look at that house. We walked up to the house, up some steps up there. And the only damage that there was up there was at the front, on the veranda, there was a concrete thing where a bomb had hit it evidently because that was the only piece of damage I could see up there.

[Interruption]

Q: Your daughter, Ingrid Trinkka, had mentioned your taking General Clark to see the performance of the Vienna Boys Choir?

MR. BERG: That's the way I remember it, yes. At an opera, at an opera house. But that's all I can really remember about it, is taking him there.

Q: Ike wasn't here at this time?

MR. BERG: No, I can't remember Ike being there, no. Just the general and his party, whoever they were, I'm not sure of that. It was a mixed dance for anyone, generals, sergeants, privates, or whoever it was.

Q: Where was this?

MR. BERG: In Vienna Woods.

Q: Vienna Woods.

MR. BERG: In Vienna, yes.

Q: Yes.

MR. BERG: And that's a beautiful place up there, too. The way I remember it, it's kind of on a hill, you know, a lot of woods and ....

Q: They're only places I've heard of. I've never been to Europe and probably never will get there, just places I've heard about.



MR. BERG: They had a dance there for the Americans. If I remember right, the British, the Russians, everybody was there. See, there were four different powers in Vienna after the war. There was the French and the German--I mean the French and the Russian--and the British and the American, right?

Q: Yes. The Allied Control Council, when Clark was High Commissioner.

MR. BERG: We had a lot of those Russians there. They had the steering wheel on the wrong side, you know, and we had a terrible time getting them out of the way sometimes.

Q: The Russians had the steering wheel on the wrong side?

MR. BERG: The British did too, on the left over here, you know. That's the way I remember it.

Q: Did you encounter any Russians while you were there?

MR. BERG: No. I thought I knew a little German when I went to Germany but they had all those dialects over there, brogues or whatever it was, that they were all so much different that I didn't get much of it. First language I ever learned when I was a young kid, even before grade school, was a low German, not a high German, but a low German.

Q: My parents grew up in homes that spoke German and English. But they had forgotten most of it. They didn't use any around me.

MR. BERG: I've forgotten most of mine, too. I can say some of the naughty words, but that's about it.

Q: Those are the ones that stick in your mind, though.