

Interview with Robert Stach

December 29, 2009

Conducted at 2316 Third Ave, Dodge City, KS 67801

Interviewers: Joan Weaver and Rosetta Graff

Also present: Lois Behnke

Interviewer: It's December 29, 2009. We're in the home of Robert Stach. Interviewers are Rosetta Graff and Joan Weaver, and we're going to start out with "What is your full name?"

Stach: Robert Keith Stach

Interviewer: And where do you currently reside?

Stach: 2316 Third Avenue in Dodge City, Kansas

Interviewer: And when and where were you born?

Stach: Born in Edwards County in December 17, 1925

Interviewer: And you were born out in, can you describe the area?

Stach: It was a rural farm community

Interviewer: In the north part of the county

Stach: It was mostly north of Peter and Paul church out there; it was where the family homestead had been

Interviewer: What were the names of your parents?

Stach: Otto Herman Stach and Kathryn (nee) (her maiden name was) Daubert Stach

Interviewer: And what were the names of your grandparents?

Stach: I had just a Grandmother Stach.

Interviewer: Reinhold Stach was his grandfather. Reinhold Stach was the grandfather, and Maria Muenchow Stach. Is that the only grandparents you knew?

Stach: Yes. Well, I did have my mother's folks then.

Interviewer: What were their names?

Stach: John Conrad Daubert. He went by the middle name, and I had two grandmas

Interviewer: John Conrad Daubert. And they called her Lena. She was Lena Scheuerman Daubert. Lena Scheuerman Daubert.

Stach: But then the last time we had her was about a year and she died.

Interviewer: What brought your grandparents over? Were they the ones that originally homesteaded? Your grandparents?

Stach: Yes, they were part of a, I guess you could call them a conglomerate now. The Muenchows and what other names? Muenchows, and Dauberts, and with the Wagners, also.

Interviewer: They came from

Stach: They came from Germany through Russia

Interviewer: And about what, do you know what year they came?

Stach: Not exactly, the late 1890's

Interviewer: The late 1890's. Did they come right to Edwards County?

Stach: No, the Stachs did. That's right. The Stach side did. The Daubert side, my mother's side, they kind of spread it out. I think the Stachs probably had a little bit more money and capability of moving because they came into Edwards County and they came in with thrashing machines and steam engines and stuff. They were active in the 1900's and the Dauberts didn't have that. They kind of strung their way from New York down to Kansas. Mother was born in Michigan which was kind of in route from New York to Kansas.

Interviewer: And they came to farm?

Stach: They came to farm.

Interviewer: Can you describe what your family was like, brothers and sisters?

Stach: There were two boys and two girls. Dad wanted a balanced family, and they just about didn't have for a long time. They finally did get a last little girl which was the very spoiled one of the family, too.

Interviewer: Who happens to be in the room?

Stach: That's right. I was born and then seventeen months

Interviewer: You were the oldest?

Stach: I was the oldest, and then my brother was seventeen months younger than I

Interviewer: And what's his name?

Stach: Vernon Leroy. Now he just passed away now. Do you have a year of passing on him? 1988 he passed away in Amarillo; and then I have a sister Lorene who was born in 1929, and she is at Hutchinson now.

Interviewer: And then your little sister?

Stach: My little sister is the one that creates all the disturbances in the family now

Interviewer: Her name is Lois?

Stach: She has been a schoolteacher and I suppose that makes it legal to do anything

Interviewer: Can you tell us a little bit about what it was like to grow up in your house? What kind of family it was? And how they were?

Stach: I always thought they were a pretty close family. There are some incidents, like everybody else. I had to walk a mile and a half to school when I was in first grade, you know, but that was done then

Interviewer: Was that a parochial school or a public school?

Stach: No, it was a public school, District 38, Kinsley, that is no longer there. And it wasn't bad. We were only about a mile or something from the school and we lived right on the side of the road. All I had to do was take off and get up the road a ways but one of the little incidences that scared the tar out of me as a kid was as a first grader. In order to save steps, for little guys that's a lot of steps; instead of going out to the road and then walking up, I took out across the yard and across the pasture, to the corral and into the corner of the pasture, and it probably saved me an eighth of a mile, and that's a lot of steps for a kid, and then I went charging back to the house one day because I saw a coiled rattlesnake out there, and this was pasture land. I was scared to death, and so Dad came up there to take me out and he was going to kill that snake, and so when we got back out and went out to the corral and out into the pasture that snake was still sitting there coiled. But it was something that a cow had left! And so I was late to school.

Interviewer: Now, how many grades? Were the grades separated? Or was this like a one-room school?

Stach: No, they were all, it was a regular rural school; had eight grades there

Interviewer: Were the first grade separated from the rest, or was it like first and second?

Stach: No, in one room you had to listen when all the rest of them were getting educated, too. We were in the area where the John Fox family was out there, and two of the Fox families lived close out there and went to the same school district 38

Interviewer: What's it like to be in a one-room school house? I mean, is that a good way to get an education?

Stach: Well, it was then, because that's the first year I knew of. I had three years of rural education; I had one year out there until Dad lost the farm like everybody else did and he went back to live on his mother's, on the home place that my granddad had set up right after he started. The Stach brothers had businesses with thrashing machines and those old big steam tractors and stuff, and so he had a very nice house out there then and it was big enough that we went back to Grandma's house to live through the depression because the folks lost their place at home, and then we moved into the neighborhood that was where George Krupp and Henry Manke, all these were cousins. Some Arensmans lived within a mile of there and whatever; that was District 9

Interviewer: Now, how long had your dad had the farm before he lost it?

Stach: Well, I think they just got it at the time that they married in '24 and then by about, I don't know how long we were at the home place up there, we moved into town. I think about 1933. I had three years of rural school because when we moved into Kinsley I was a fourth grader the first year.

Interviewer: Let's see. You had one year at the first school, District 38, and then where were you the next two years?

Stach: District 9, out there by this other cemetery we were talking about awhile ago

Interviewer: Bethel?

Stach: Along side the Lippoldts and what was it?

Interviewer: Salem

Stach: That's where a big bunch of my cousins are, cousins and aunts and uncles and granddads, too

Interviewer: Can you tell us a little bit about what it was like growing up in the Depression and the Dust Bowl? And having to lose your farm? And move?

Stach: Well, I was too little to know very much about what all went on; I know I remember Franklin Roosevelt becoming President and supposedly be kind of the savior of the nation; and Dad had been a farmer; we'd lived the farm life; we were butchering animals out there and the big old steam pot where they made soap with their lye and all of that stuff up there and did all the cutting up of the beef and boiling the meat and stuff, and then things just got so rough that there wasn't any money anywhere, so Dad went to work for the WPA and they were building roads and stuff. I remember some out in the bigger area up there where probably maybe now there might be a bridge or two. But it used to be, I've seen them working out there when they had horses and Fresnos, you know, the scoops and stuff that they built up there, instead of bridges, the bridges were too high, too expensive to make then, and maybe concrete wasn't all that prevalent, then, too. I do remember having the rabbit drives, when the rabbits got to be so terribly horrible. I never could stand to even think about going on one of those, but they used to shoot rabbit; we ate a lot of rabbit because it was a handy thing, and I do remember the dusty days and stuff before we moved to town, and then after we were in town because I remember what they called the Dirty Sunday in 1936 when mother had my brother and my older sister then, and we had walked across town to the Ford Station corner there in Kinsley and we lived over on the north side park, and that Sunday up there, Dad had helped Oscar Stinson who was a truck driver, had a trucking company, and Oscar delivered a combine out somewhere here in western Kansas. Dad rode out with him; Mother went over there to visit some friends of the family that were in the south end of Kinsley up there. I remember pushing a bicycle back because there was too much wind and stuff for her. We couldn't stand up. Mother was carrying my older sister who was a very small little lady. I remember the bus from being on the farm out there when you could see the clouds coming. I remember the static electricity; people really hesitated to get close to the fences when they went up to repair fences, you always had to do something to take the shock off of it first because it would always shock you when you reached up there.

Interviewer: That's a story that we haven't heard before

Stach: Well, there's a little more to that but it isn't fit for ..

Interviewer: Yeah, I can imagine!

Stach: But I suppose there were a lot of little puppies that were running around there, too

Interviewer: Did you have problems with grasshoppers?

Stach: Yes, the grasshoppers were, there was the dust and the grasshoppers in the houses; you couldn't leave the windows open at all. I remember mother used to have, we didn't have towels and stuff, I mean like for chinaware and stuff, the kitchen towels and stuff; those are the lighter weight towels up there, and those are what we wet and hung over the windows to keep the dust settled, to keep it from blowing in the house too much at times

Interviewer: And your farm, while you were on the farm, it was a little one, it did both crops and livestock?

Stach: No, just enough livestock that they had to get milk and butcher a hog or two

Interviewer: They mainly raised wheat?

Stach: Yeah, wheat, and then there was not much of that in those years

Interviewer: Did you have any chores as a little one? On the farm?

Stach: No, see, when we moved to town I was just, I think it was third grade in the country, and we had some chores, yeah, but I don't remember. We didn't have any pets because you couldn't afford to feed another mouth.

Interviewer: And they didn't have you driving the tractor yet?

Stach: No, but somewhere Lois has some family pictures over there, that there is a picture of Dad with an old Ford tractor, an old Fordson tractor, before they had the full fenders on them, and he was sitting up there, standing alongside the tractor, holding me, which I was a pretty small kid then, probably three or four years old, or something like that

Interviewer: What was Christmas like on the farm? We just finished Christmas

Stach: Well, it really wasn't too much to Christmas then. We used to get a little bit of bright colored paper and stuff around, and the rest of it was, probably half of it was edible. You had to kind of make do with what you had

Interviewer: It wasn't a good time for Christmas, in the Depression. So you moved to Kinsley when you were in third grade and where did you live then in Kinsley?

Stach: We lived on Massachusetts, right next to the north side park, but then we moved kind of frequently because nobody ever paid the rent for us

Interviewer: This was when your dad was working on the WPA?

Stach: Well, he had been at WPA then, and when we went to town, after we moved into town, he worked for Joe Craft who had a garage there in town. It was a Hudson/Terraplane dealer. Dad worked 15 hour days; he worked the night shift, and he worked up there with that until he could get a little more stable daytime work, but he had a lot of years at night.

Interviewer: That must have been pretty hard on you, you know, having to move and not having money and, were other people the same?

Stach: Yeah, everybody was in the same boat basically. The one family that I remember up there were the Brodbecks because they had the carnivals, and they didn't have a lot, but they had as much as what we had and they would have a prosperous season when, they had quite a few kids, and all of them did something or other during carnival season, and so that would set them up in pretty good shape

Interviewer: Do you remember the carnival?

Stach: Yes, over in South Park, all the times. I remember when they first started bringing diesel trains through Kinsley, up there, too. That was pretty impressive because everybody was downtown Saturday nights, and the railroad cuts off Main Street or it did at the west end, you know, and so it was kind of impressive. The year I got to be a freshman they had the trains, the diesels were coming in and were new then, and, I think I was an eighth grader yet, and what was it, one of the Riisoe's families, the mother had driven across the tracks and got hit right west of Kinsley. She had her boy in the car with her, and I remember on the Saturday night that there was just a chill on Main Street; everybody heard about it because that train had gone by Main Street in Kinsley and within two miles had killed a mother and son, but Main Street down there was pretty impressive then. Mother was pretty strict up there; she didn't want us hanging around the pool halls too much; those were evil places

Interviewer: So as a kid, what do you do on Main Street Saturday night?

Stach: Walk up and down the street if you had a candy bar or something. You could go to old man Weinnelt's store, dime store down there, and get some of the little chocolate kisses down there or something or other, and you could get a few of those for a nickel or a dime and give out two or three to each kid in the family, but they were, once in a while if you got enough money you could go to the theater which is still there and still, it was pretty impressive to me, to see the theater

Interviewer: Did your Mom and Dad go down, too, on Saturday nights?

Stach: Oh, yeah. It was always family, yeah. The folks, our folks were pretty strict. I don't mean they were, not mean strict, because Dad was nothing but an old Dutchman with nothing but a big heart, and so they let us kids go. My brother had asthma, and I developed asthma in my sophomore year, I think. Sophomore year of school I worked, or freshman and sophomore, I worked for the Arensmans who lived out north of town. Ben Arensman worked for the Coop in Kinsley, and I had a couple of uncles who had been working in there, so Ben hired me. I was just a kid but I had a kind of bootleg variety thing, then, you know a little bit. It was kind of an assistant, and Ben's father-in-law owned the Edwards County Mill, and Ben still had farm land out there with Leo Arensman and the Arnesman brothers out there, Ben Arensman. And he had a little Chevrolet coupe that he pulled a four-wheel trailer with; he didn't have a truck. He had this car and a trailer, and he hired me to get the grain from the combine to the building there, so I was think, probably a freshman, and so just old enough to barely get a license and that was kind of a doubling thing, then, too. But that harvest after there I showed up with asthma, too, then.

Interviewer: Did the asthma, do you think it was caused from harvest?

Stach: Caused from the wheat dust

Interviewer: From the wheat dust

Stach: Weeds do it, and stuff

Interviewer: So then you were going to the Kinsley schools; let's see, you had been going through North Side School, right? To begin with?

Stach: Well, they didn't have a fourth grade in North Side School the year we moved into town, so I walked from North Park to South Side School for my fourth grade of school, and then the fifth and sixth grade I did go to North Side, but then we moved around several times, too, and we were close up to it. At one time we lived in a house which is right where our church is in Kinsley now

Interviewer: Which church?

Stach: The Lutheran church; it was about, the church is on the north end of the block and I think we were in about, we were 211, I think, which is, must be two or three houses on the side of the block; we used to down up there, that was when Dad was working at the garage and Mother and the three kids would go downtown; we could get Mr. Goodbar candy bars, 3 for a dime, and we'd get those and go down and see Dad at the garage and spend some time with him on Saturday night so it wouldn't be a long night for him, and then we would walk home and we could listen to the Grand Old Opry, because we had a radio, too, and we'd listen to the Grand Old Opry and divide up the candy

Interviewer: Was the radio in a car?

Stach: No, no, no, just a little one in the house

Interviewer: Oh, in the house

Stach: In the house, yeah

Interviewer: And then, I'm trying to think what year we are up to, let's see, here. You went to high school and?

Stach: Yeah, freshman year in high school they burnt the high school down

Interviewer: Your freshman year?

Stach: Yeah

Interviewer: What was school like while the

Stach: Well, I've still got evidence of that. Lois has a table in my folk's house over there, a little end table that I had worked my tail off to try to get the boards of the top of that joined close enough that they were a decent width, and I finally got those rascals together with some balls in them and that I stuffed together up there, and glued, and the industrial arts was in the basement of the school building, and when they have a fire, you know, where the water goes, Well this little, it was a blonde furniture little stool there, it was only about this wide

Interviewer: Three foot?

Stach: About three foot wide by a foot and a half out from the wall, and had the water marks right up the bottom and the seam that I had worked so hard, the seams on the top of it, I had worked so hard to

get them all where they would look good and didn't look like there was bad workmanship, and I had to bust it apart and do it all over again

Interviewer: All warped, huh?

Stach: Got all water soaked and warped, yeah

Interviewer: What caused the fire at the school?

Stach: I don't remember now; I was trying to think about that awhile back and I don't remember what it was, but I do know this, since we heard this was December this year, and we're here, and I hear people talking about Franklin Roosevelt, I remember the morning of Pearl Harbor. An uncle visited our house and he said, "Boy, we're in for it now. The Japs just bombed Pearl Harbor." And so then the next day at school we had an assembly; we had already had the fire and there was no school building, so we were going to school in the churches, and I was sitting in the old Methodist church, back in the assembly room, back behind the congregational seats set back; it's kind of like a rear choir room or something, but I remember sitting up there with my class up there, and when I heard President Roosevelt say, "This is a day that will go down in infamy."

Interviewer: So they had that turned on?

Stach: Yeah, that was on the radio

Interviewer: And you would have been in what grade?

Stach: Let's see, that was '41. I graduated in '43, so I was just a freshman, just into freshman year. Was it a freshman or a sophomore?

Interviewer: Probably a sophomore

Stach: Sophomore, probably

Interviewer: Graduated in '43; your senior year would have started in '42. What time of year did the school burn?

Stach: My freshman year

Interviewer: You probably were a sophomore

Stach: Yeah.

Interviewer: So, you went to high school?

Stach: In the churches

Interviewer: How many years was that?

Stach: My whole high school

Interviewer: Your whole high school? Three years or whatever to get the new school built?

Stach: Well, there was no money and no parts. Even when I got back

Interviewer: That's right, that was war time

Stach: Yeah, war time, and when I got back from service was when they had the first full graduating class in that period that I can recall. They had some building up, by the time that I got back, but they didn't have the lockers and stuff for the hallway. They had even debated making wood lockers or something, but then again there wasn't the wood and stuff

Interviewer: So did you have a Junior-Senior Prom? Or what was your graduation like without a school?

Stach: Well, they still had those things, but you had to have it other places, as a rule. The gymnasium was still there. The gymnasium and the library were still there because they did, I don't know how they saved that library from burning; it was that close, I suppose they must have had lot of water damage.

Interviewer: Well, somebody told us once that they carried the books out while the fire was burning

Stach: It is very, very likely

Interviewer: That they had some men to carry them out. So where did you graduate? Did they hold the graduation in the gym, or

Stach: Yeah, the gym was all right. They saved the gym. There probably had been some small damage but then it was still useable for

Interviewer: This was in 1943?

Stach: '43. Yeah

Interviewer: And were you 18 yet?

Stach: No. I graduated at 17 and then I wasn't 18 until the following December

Interviewer: And you were telling us that you were going to try to get in the Air Force?

Stach: Well, in the early part, in May of the year I came up here to Dodge to get into the Air Force here, and they do these exercises to excite your heart and stuff, and mine would not come down on a regular beat. It's supposed to go up at a gradual speed and down at a gradual speed, and mine wouldn't do it, so they flunked me out.

Interviewer: This is May before you graduated?

Stach: No, this is right after I graduated

Interviewer: Right when you graduated, okay.

Stach: But Ted Rinne, he was a World War 1 veteran; he was a post master in Kinsley, and he had been our neighbor at one time, and he said, "Bob, they'll get you in December anyway." And they did when I was 18 years old in December then, after I graduated, and I registered, they took me. I went to

Leavenworth. I don't remember the butcher's name now, the independent butcher that they had in town, had a couple of kids in school about my age

Interviewer: Weidenheimer?

Stach: No, Weidenheimers were the old faithful Kinsley people, but this other one came into town . I can't remember because the butcher himself, he went to Fort Leavenworth with us because we had the 48, the 38-year-olds and the 18-year-olds; we had the old and the young. This was getting, see in '43 and '44.

Interviewer: Did you go to Leavenworth on the train?

Stach: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did your family have any kind of a send-off for you?

Stach: No, not really, just kind of. I'd had an uncle, Alex Daubert, that had gone to service ahead of me up there, but the rest, a lot of them were on the farm

Interviewer: And then this was quite a group of you going on the train?

Stach: No, the group up there was not too much. There was about 6 or 8 of us and they did insult us at Kansas City when we got back. You know Kansas had been dry all these years with 3/2 beer and that's as much as we could drink for a long time, and when we, there was a boy from Belpre that came in, and I can't remember his name now, and he was my age with the group up there, and there were about, with that butcher, there were about 8 of us up there, 7 or 8 of us, but we were in Kansas City, Missouri, at that Union Station, waiting to come back, after we'd been to Leavenworth, and this was something. You know, we're from dry Kansas. 3/2 beer is the size of it, and here we were, up there on the Missouri side because that Union Station was on the Missouri side of the line, and gosh damn it, if that waitress didn't come over and say, "I'll serve this table, but those two young fellows over here are going to leave. They are too young," That slam back there, that dad gum it anyhow

Interviewer: They wouldn't look at any proof of age?

Stach: No, but they took me to service then, and that never did show up in my basic training in Tyler, Texas, and they could not send you overseas as an individual replacement. I do remember Lester Frick was a year or two older than I, and he was in service about the same time. He'd been, and Andy Kindsvater, he was the older size of the age group. I remember I was in specialized training; we were on the side of the hill there in Tyler, and I went down there after I had read the Mercury the folks had sent me, and read that Andy Kindsvater was up there, too. Andy was kind of a character, you know, so I went down to see him, and he was flat on the floor with his rifle all in pieces. They issued you the new rifles or those that had been used, and they all had Cosmoline on them so they could ship them and not rust on the ocean when they went across and shipped them overseas, but you had to get that Cosmoline off of them here, and I remember that Andy Kindsvater, he was kind of a character, and nice wonderful guy, and I had worked with him at the mill. I'd even helped carry, deliver feed and stuff from the mill and put on his truck route, but here I saw him sitting in the middle of the floor of that army barracks with his rifle, trying to figure out how to get Cosmoline off of the parts of it. Andy, he was kind of a rough character, and when you see him up there, so bewildered, he was just as bewildered as we were, and Andy could handle himself anywhere, you know, he was Oscar Stinson's son-in-law

Interviewer: Now, maybe I can go back to something you said. Now, the butcher, he had children, right? He was older and had children, but that he was still being drafted.

Stach: Oh, yeah. He was being drafted, but when we got to Leavenworth up there, and they asked us, I told them what had happened with the Air Force up there, they didn't listen; hip hop and away and they listened to your heart and they don't hear the things they heard here at Dodge City, and here's this, I wish could remember that butcher's name, holds up his hand...you know butchers?

Interviewer: Yeah, they don't have all their fingers

Stach: They don't have all their fingers and so there he was without his fingers and so they let him go

Interviewer: He came back?

Stach: I had somebody, later on when they really got to where they really needed people, then they probably took him in, see, and they didn't catch my thing. I went on to North Carolina and became a part of the 100th Division, and then we went over to New York up there so we could ship over, and when we got up there I had, there was just a, well you know an army that there is a head of the department that is a very learned person, and then you've got a whole bunch of fellows all training; one of these young kids that was training up there got a hold of me and said, "Soldier, I don't know what to do about this, but sometimes your heart doesn't come back on a gradual rate," and I was just, I was 18 years, I was grinning because I knew I was coming back home! And that guy was a mathematician, this young fellow, and he was about my own age, except he had been in service a few months and he says, "Well, I don't know, soldier, but when I took your high and your low pulse beat, and I average them out, that's a good average." So I climb on the boat and head out for about 18 months overseas

Interviewer: Now what time of year was then, when you shipped over?

Stach: This was in the fall. We went on line, we went into Marseille, France, and this was, we had to go to Belfort Gap which was in the, what is it, Ardennes or something or other, Mountains up there. Belfort Gap was 500 miles from Marseille, France, and we went up there by convoy, the whole division did, and then we went into action, and it was about the first of November then, of '43

Interviewer: Do you remember the name of the ship that you went over on?

Stach: George Washington

Interviewer: George Washington, and you landed, were you able to land at a dock or did they put you in those landing things?

Stach: No, some of them had to crawl over the side of the boat, but it was because the Germans had, we were supposed to go to LeHarve, France, but the Germans knew that we were using that as a loading and unloading station, and they, of course they had a lot of air power, and they bombed a bunch of stuff up there and they had that harbor up there all littered, ships and stuff. We still had, they unloaded a lot of stuff over the side of the ship instead of out of the proper channels and stuff, in order to get in and get out in a hurry.

Interviewer: What was the trip over like? What did you do?

Stach: Nothing. There was about, I can't remember, three decks or four decks, George Washington was a big, big ship. I think there were fourteen ships that were a convoy, and the only thing that made me feel good, I was on one of the biggest ones that was out there because it was a troop ship, and I kept thinking about my cousin, Clarence Stach, who was from Kinsley, and he was on a destroyer escort and those little things, a drop of water will make them jump, so small, 90 foot, I think Clarence said, because when he came back on leave in Kinsley, he would run. He was kind of athletic, but he would run anywhere. He said he was so tired of that 90 foot long ship; it was 90 foot from one front to the other; you don't even get 90 foot

Interviewer: That's not a basketball court.

Stach: No, so, this was kind of something since there were no trucks hauling us, we disembarked right off the boat, and it was about 12 miles out of Marseille that we had a what they called a regrouping area that was supposed to get off up there and then that's where we took the Cosmoline off of our weapons and stuff again up there. Big train on a grade going out of there. Everything in Europe is, there's a difference made. Methods are pretty flashy in most places. They had these big old trains that took out of there and they were, at that time, there were a big lot of refugees. There were a lot of African, Afro-nation people up there with the big smocks on, or whatever you call them and stuff, because they told us, they said you've got to watch because those people up there either got a gun or a knife underneath those big sleeves up here

Interviewer: Had they been displaced because of the war in northern Africa or what?

Stach: Yeah, part of it was that, and Europe was in a turmoil. Everybody was all stirred up

Interviewer: But you went by train, then, to get

Stach: No, we went by vehicle. We had our own vehicles. We had to wait there for about ten days or around two weeks, until we got our equipment. They unloaded trucks and stuff like this, and then we rode 500 miles to Belfort Gap, and along the way there, this is where you see all of the fighting. In Marseille this was all right, because the kids and the populace up there, they liked that; they were being saved, and we were kind of heroes. We were just greener than a gourd, you know, walking up there, and marching through the streets, single file, not marching, walking through the streets, but then as you got further out of Marseille and got through where some of the fighting had been, I had told Lois about this, I had seen this so many times, and I saw it on TV the other night again, where they were talking about the brothers film, that's been going on TV. We were in the mountains, in the Vosges mountains, and that's the only thing I remember, really. I got into Heidelberg later on, and Stuttgart, at the end of the war, I got back to where it looked like country again, but otherwise, it was the forest, and I'd never been in forests, you know, but you could tell when everybody that was going, people had carts they were pushing, carts with wood wheels and stuff on them that they were shoving them out, all of the possessions of their house, and so I saw these, a team of horses, a lot of times there wasn't a team, there was only one horse to a wagon, but I had seen cases where there was always carts that had been strafed by our airplanes and their airplanes, too, alongside the roads and stopped, and you'd see a bunch of litter out here from air raids and some of this, and I've seen those horses that were a team of horses that were harnessed together, and one of them was shot and he had hit the ground, what does the other one do that's in the harness with him? I've seen those marks on the ground where this one that was still alive set there and tried to get up and couldn't get up because this other one and the wagon tongue were hung onto it yet. It just kind of opens your eyes up in a big hurry

Interviewer: Was your convoy attacked at all?

Stach: No, no. They were running out of gas and then we were a part of the Third Army and Patton came shortly after his little thing that he had in Italy where he slapped the soldier and all of that stuff up there. He came to us and we were waiting, for Patton you know, was armored. Well, it was nice to have the armor, particularly alongside of you, so, but then I hadn't been trained around that and you wouldn't know what to do. I know one thing, they are noisy. You can hear one of those crazy things 50 miles away! It sounds like, and if you heard tanks, you knew there was going to be aircraft, too, so you just hoped you didn't hear any of that. Patton took over the Seventh Army then, and since I was infantry they always said it was, well, Patton's got the rights, and when we figured it was the 100th Division's blood, you know, the little things like that. But I saw some good times. We were in the town of Bitche, France, which we have a shoulder patch that says "The Bloody Bastards of Bitche", you know, because Bitche in French looks like something else in English. But we did have that on a shoulder patch then. I know on my 19th birthday was when they had the, this one, it was a meat mixture with beans and roast beef or something, that boy, that would give you the G.I.'s. You would run, run, run, run, run, and out there in the woods, that's not civilization. You know, you go behind a tree and that's it. Boy, I really didn't know, and somebody found out on the 17th of December there, in the forest, somebody said, "Stach, I'll tell you what we'll do. This box over here has got Orin canned goods, which most of it is the beans and roast beef or whatever, and over here is K-rations." Well, K-rations were the dry rations. "Since it's your birthday, Stach, you get your choice." And I took a K-ration; that's all there was to that. But it was close to Bitche, France. But I always will remember my 19th birthday

Interviewer: Well, how did you like camping in the cold? Were you out in the open?

Stach: Well, a lot of times we were in the open, after we were on line a week or a couple of weeks. See, they sent us over, they sent me over; I was trained as a lineman because I had done a little bit of work climbing poles with the railroad for a few months before I went to service, so they used me as a communication guy, and I was at company headquarters, and we had to string a wire line for our company headquarters to the rifle company headquarters, and then sometimes they would talk us into running a line down to the observation post which is sticking your neck out quite a ways up there. I liked the idea because you kind of felt, I felt like it would be little more worthwhile because you had some responsible duties. Otherwise everybody's got a rifle and they wait for somebody that comes up there. I see in this war it's quite a lot with aircraft and with long range artillery and stuff. I saw a couple of the big, very, very big German railroad guns that are built like upon a train, you know, at that, and they just, I would hate to be anywhere within 6 miles of that thing when it went off because it would probably bust your eardrums, but of course, the guys on that kind of stuff...

Interviewer: Did you have tents, or just sleeping bags?

Stach: No, well, you had a place, a lot of times we would go to a little village unless there were Germans that had stayed in the area, but they wouldn't want to be there. It was wintertime. They didn't want to be there, either, see, so a lot of times if we would stay in village. I slept in a haymow. I thought I was going to come home one time up there because we had been in a haymow for almost a week, and it had my asthma stirred up, and I finally, after three days or four days, I thought I've got to go on sick call this morning. There's just no other way out of it, and we left town, so it worked out all right.

Interviewer: And how did the people treat you while you were there, the local people?

Stach: Very good, very, very good. Since I was just 18 and I was a slim kid, I was skinny kid up there, a lot of times, though, it made me feel a little bad because I saw some people who were about my age up there, that weren't in service or doing anything, and this was in Alsace-Lorraine; this was French should be protected now. They do everything else so very good, so into the woods out there, and this is

like you go into the woods, go into the woods in America and you've got fallen limbs and stuff and all this. Over there where we got into Alsace-Lorraine, there were wood piles. They do what you call policing; when you police up a place you just clean it up and straighten it up, and they had all of the fallen limbs and stuff that come down, all of those limbs were cut to size, and put out here in a stock woodpile, and these foresters, they always had foresters assigned to an area up there, because one of the boys, while this was in France, and I thought that everybody in France, I thought they were out of people, that's why we were over there, and I ran into a kid that was, by the year my own age, and he wasn't in service, and that did bother me. I never did have much hair anyway, but then that would have got gray if I had had because I was concerned about that, and why wasn't he doing something when we go a long ways to go over there.

Interviewer: And you were in the Battle of the Bulge?

Stach: Yeah.

Interviewer: You want to describe that at all, or not

Stach: Well, it's just that, you see I wasn't in a rifle company. I was in a headquarters company, but then we were responsible for stringing wire lines down. We chased the, always running short on material, and we didn't have wire enough for wire lines, so we'd have to go back in territory where we had line and crawl and go along here and we had reels where we had to go along and wind this back up again from where we had been, so we could use it next time. Like one time we went, strung a wire line in the mountain again, and we'd met some clerks who were coming down from company headquarters from in the mountains, from the headquarters up there, and I was a jeep driver then in the , and I had to haul the guys back and forth for supplies back and forth or whatever, and so we met the tanks; they were coming down over mountain roads; there's not much room; you have to fit the facing and as I was told that they could take the outside one; they were heavy; they were heavy, and second thing, you don't argue with a tank there, so we went straight right along the outside edge up there so people wouldn't drive over it, and I don't know what it was, like a two-mile stretch of wire that we'd had going up this mountain side, and when we get up there, that close, and get everything taken care of, then we would pick up the line, pick up the telephone, and run to get the company equipment that's up there on the hillside, and it was a dead short, so we started out checking the wire lines again. A lot of times it was wet all the time, too, snowing the stuff out, so we send a guy out and then just grab that, what we called just like the two wires here, except they were a lot thicker. A guy would walk along with that in his hand over that, and then myself and, because I did this a lot, I was the jeep driver and I hauled the guys out there to where they were supposed to be, and I had a crank on it, a general crank on it, and you'd sit there and you'd crank away on that, and this guy goes along until he gets a shock because it was so wet up there, you know, and the Germans knew that, too, and so they would scrape on them and they would shoot the guy when he came up there to fix it. But there was one incident that's still going to be over my head. We strung a wire line; we had a wire line going from the town headquarters down to the company headquarters which is a heavy weapons company, and Captain Einsman was a good looking guy; he was a born soldier; but behind he had a soldier with him who was his attendant, supposedly, and he was, I don't know, an ex-sergeant or something with quite a bit of rank, but both of those guys were so doggone big physically, they carried a machine gun, you know, one that was off of a tripod mat? They used that with a shoulder sling. That's what they carried for a rifle! I even traded my M1 rifle for a carbine so I wouldn't have to carry so dang much rifle; that other rifle I think was 9 pounds or something, and when you carried that thing to bed with you and to chow line with you, you'd get tired after while. But these guys with this captain and his guy had been startled by some Germans, and they told us to, there's a helmet liner that's inside the helmet itself, and they said don't ever strap that under your chin up there; I thought that was to keep it on, see? But they said don't ever do that because

somebody could break your neck with that then because it hung back, and they did also taught us how to, when you get the “Hände in der Luft” you're supposed to have your hands in the air. They did that to this captain Einsman and his big old sergeant, probably some little old Dutchman that probably was like myself and thought he was somebody, and those guys put their hands in the air and then they did just like what they told us, you arrange a set of signals between you and your buddy, then you just come up with your helmet and hit them in the face. You know, anything to get out of there. They did that and then they walked off because the guys dropped their guns to hold their faces, the Germans did. This Captain Einsman was pretty tough guy, and one other time I had strung this wire line down to his place, and then on down to this observer out, and we were supposed to be finding a case of trouble, and I was concerned, I wasn't on that mission, but I was back here ringing the telephone so that my guy could get a shock when he found the spot, and Captain Einsman answered on the phone and he said, “Soldier, I've got a company of men out here and I'm worried about how long they are going to live.” and I said “I've got one on the line back there, just like you have.” And the captain, he was a burly guy, and he said, “Soldier, what's your name?” and I was probably a, I wasn't a 98-pound weakling, but I was probably a 130-pound weakling, and I said, “I don't really recollect.” and he said, “Soldier, if I ever find out what your name is, I'm going to *=*=*==” and so I was just telling Lois that when I get to the Pearly Gates that's what's going to be up there.

Interviewer:Einsman How would you spell that?

Stach: Einsman

Interviewer: And I suppose I should have asked this, did you speak German? And understand German?

Stach: I could understand, I could speak a little bit, but understand a little. Christmas is tough on me when we sang that there, because O Christmas Tree is what I learned in school up here, but when I hear O Tannenbaum that takes me back to that Lutheran church out there where my wife is buried and my folks are buried out there north of Kinsley

Interviewer: Silent Night, too

Stach: Oh yes, Stille Nacht, yes

Interviewer: I grew up in a German community

Stach: Yes

Interviewer: Well, any other memories that you would like get recorded during this time period? Before you start home? The sneeze?

Stach: Sneeze? Oh, oh yes, that does, this is service-related. You see I was trained in Texas to be a, since I had worked about three or four months or six months on the railroad before I was drafted, I had learned linework, and in communication, which is like telephone work because I was with the signal department, and I had followed in with that, and then when I got into Texas, I was lucky. I was sitting down there in the springtime when the snows melted, everybody else was out on problems; they were working out in the woods and stuff, in Tyler, Texas, and we were sitting up there, I had a time in Boy Scouts trying to pass my second-class deal at Kinsley because I never could get that radio beats right, you know, two dots and dash, and a this and the other, and gosh dang it, that's what they had me doing in Texas, too, although they were worse than that ; there was a crowd of us up there. By the way, that's why I never did get my second-class Scout spot, too, because I didn't make it

Interviewer: You couldn't do the SOS, huh?

Stach: Well, when we got to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, they wanted to send a good many people over to get fit. Well, they could not, I was only 18. They could not send me overseas as an individual replacement, you know, like they'd ship a half-dozen guys. This Lester Frick, from Kinsley, was a year older than I, and Lester was old enough that they shipped him over because I talked to him later on, and Lester was sitting in the mountains in Italy up there where the war was probably over with, but they sent him over as an individual replacement, and I was out running up and down the trees, among the trees and stuff up there in France, but they.....sneeze? Oh yeah, the sneeze itself. When I was at Fort Bragg we already had a complement for a platoon, so they took me anyway, but they put me antitank, on antitank, I don't know whether the gun is around Kinsley anymore or not. Down by the Kinsley Graphic there used to be a little gun sitting out there for a view. It was in World War 1 technically. When I worked there we had one tire size, millimeter, and so we put the end of that kind of a squad. Well, we got a whole lot of guys that don't do anything until you set a gun up and then you got a whole bunch of guys just doing nothing again until there's some action. After we had got up to Belfort Gap and got lined up, I was still in the antitank platoon and, in the mountains up there we picked up a nice intersection where the road came around the mountain and the (unintelligible) that come around there, and we'd set up 105 millimeter gun up there, set it all up, and dug holes down here because everybody was living in a hole, and in the woods you covered the holes if you could with some kind of timber, and cover the top of them, and group the stuff to keep gun bursts from coming down, tree bursts, and bouncing down on you...I was on guard one night up there, and we were on the reverse side of a hill; the Germans were over there in the village and we could hear them. You could hear their mess kits rattling; you could hear the wagon wheels on those cobblestone streets that they've got in all of those mountains in Europe. We could hear that; it's like going downhill to, you know, because a hill has a lot of, probably could hear Dodge City noise up here. And we could hear that down there, and still there were times when you smelled the, when it was about chow time, you could even hear their lunch, you know, their utensils rattling as they were going through the line, and I was sitting right up there and all of our vehicles were stuck back in some trees, hidden out of the road, and this antitank gun was kind out of in the open, but we had, there were two of us on guard at a time on that antitank gun, and we were supposed to be there when a tank come around the corner and had a square-on shot at it, and then the most usual weapon was I think a bazooka, you know one of these deals that's sits on your shoulder? And it shoots a small artillery shell, really. We were up there in that area, and it wasn't communications, it wasn't what I was wanting to do then, I could hear the Germans on the other side of the hill; this was all right, but it was you know, after all, I had some of my own blood over there, too, in this place, but didn't know about it, but I was sitting out there by myself in that pit that we had dug for the guy to sit in, and sit beside, or whatever, and then I heard a sneeze. I could already hear the mess gear rattling, just on the other side of the hill. You know, to give the Germans quite some kind of smart. They had done a lot of things in this world, and I was so damned scared silly, so scared up there I didn't know what to do, and then the sneeze. And it was in the mountains, you know, and then occasionally there was a little flash of lightning. I know, that it's a wonder I've got a neck left yet, because every time it lightnined, I tried to make a 360 with my head to see where the sneezing was coming from, and I finally found it. Do you know that sheep sneeze, like you wouldn't believe?

Interviewer: No, I don't know that about sheep

Stach: I saw a flock of sheep out there, and I felt about this big. Scared to death, you know, 18-years-old, gosh dang it anyway.

Interviewer: How did you, did the war end while you were over there? Or how did you get back or what happened from now on?

Stach: I wound up in, at the end of the war, see we were running around 35 miles a day, and at that time I was a jeep driver, and since I was and had officers to handle, and I was with this communications thing, it was kind of like a worthless thumb because you are not in spot. Well the troops were moving so fast at 35 miles days, the cooks would set up a kitchen like at the front, and then by that time in two days, we'd be like if things worked out, be 70 miles up the road but there were about 5, 4 or 5 of us car drivers, jeep drivers, we'd have to go back and pick up the cooks and then they had these Mermite cans about this big around, and so tall

Interviewer: About what, two feet tall and a foot and a half across?

Stach: Yeah, maybe that might be a little bit big, but then it's something on that order. But our trailer had a bunch of them, and a bunch of them inside the jeep, in the back seat of the jeep, and when the people heard, because we always had around 30 or 35 miles to go there every other day, Vernon Osburn, a man from Detroit, was a cook friend of mine, and when I had to go back to the kitchens, said, "I don't want to see you go back by yourself. I'll go back with you." Ozzie, he was a big city kid; I was from Kinsley, Kansas, you know. There's was all the difference in the world. Then to tell stories, you know them for life. But he rode back with me to the kitchen. So the next morning we got up early, it was 3:30 or 4:00, and throw these big Mermite cans in the trailer, and in the back seat of the jeep; it was so full we had the top up on it, and there were three of us; there were three of us sitting in the front of the jeep, and the in a jeep; we were sitting over a ship loader and a bunch of stuff. Jimmy was a little fat cook; he wasn't good for much else, ornery, but he was a good cook, but he was a young fellow and he was very, very pudgy; he was just sitting in the middle and Ozzie, my friend, was on the outer side, and it was in the mountains up there and that's in the coal mining area where the dust is black. And we were driving with those little blackout lights, little saving with the black-out light, it's just that somebody can see you and avoid you, because it's the hooded lights that our aircraft can't see, and with just one of them one, just on the one fender, and so we took off and here's this guy from the, the young lieutenant from motor pool, that was up there and he was very impressive young man, and he was really actually a nice guy, but he got out there and things probably like, busier than us, was, they were running late. Bud, we've got to get going up there, as there was about 5 of us in line out there, and we takes off down the road and I was just was not two men. And I was, it wasn't Kinsley, you are as big as anybody, aren't you? Yes, I didn't have a lieutenant's stripe, but I as big as anybody, and I stayed on that, and I could the lights disappear behind me, and the guys got left, because we were kicking up a lot of dust; it's in that coal country, you know, and finally, and I missed a slight right turn, but it was, so I just sloped up the field and it wasn't, just jumped the ditch; I did jump the ditch, but it wasn't real steep, just a gradual slope, like the ridge of a hill, and finally the old jeep laid over on the side. Well, it didn't roll because we had the top up on it, and those arms kept it, the army's cooking jars that are so tall and this big around, in the back seat of the jeep, and there's my buddy, Vern Osborne, on the bottom when that jeep laid on the right side, but Ozzie was from Detroit; he'd been in wrecks before. Because I asked him, "How did you even get out of there?" and he grabbed the windshield, pushed the canvas up with his fingers, and grabbed the windshield because this fat cook was on his side and was stomping the tar out of him, trying to get out of there. When the jeep laid over on the side I caught myself because it didn't have doors on it yet, no sides. And I caught my left elbow on the back side of the jeep, the windshield, and then I pulled myself up and out of there, but that lieutenant came back, and he was madder than all get out. One of the little drivers behind me, one of about four guys or five, he finally got all collected back there together, and they chewed that lieutenant out and they used pretty plain language. Nobody could see at all, kicking up so dang much dust on the front end of it, so it's a wonder they even made it this far up here. There's nobody else around. That was pretty neat. And I got, because it cracked the windshield, too, and I thought that I was going to catch a lot of heck for that, but I got back to the motor pool, and Lieutenant Olsen of the motor was a nice guy, and he just, all he said was, "Stach, they don't make very good mountain goats, do they?"

Interviewer: Okay, so how long were you there in the mountains and

Stach: Well, I was in like, came back to the states, but I was in the mountains until we went across the Rhine River and I wound up in Weiblingen and Alsace/Stuttgart. yeah

Interviewer: You need a break?

Stach: Well, there's a silver box back up here behind me, that little silver box

Interviewer: A silver box

Stach: It's just a little bitty

Interviewer: Oh, down on that shelf, that's it

Stach: Yeah, that's it; yeah, when the Americans were opening Europe, they rescued a whole lot of things, and kept them, deprived them from that; this little box is something that I brought back from Germany

Interviewer: So you brought the box itself?

Stach: Yes, and it had some things and stuff. I've got a little thing, and I did not realize until yesterday I was looking,

Interviewer: A swastika?

Stach: A swastika. Now look on the back; this is an actual signature; I knew this man, Herman Enseil

Interviewer: Enseil

Stach: He was a professor in the college in Stuttgart

Interviewer: How did you know him?

Stach: We were billeted in a bunch, right at the end of the war we were billeted in a bunch of civilian houses, and

Interviewer: The guys over here?

Stach: Yeah, a lot of, some of the 100th Division were in the stuff in here; the rest of my combat rifleman's badge, too, yeah, but Herman Ensel is the little guy and he taught languages in the college in Stuttgart, and I had dated with his sister-in-law actually, his wife's sister, and she was a nice lady; she was a little older than I was, because I was just, that's where I had my 19th birthday, so her husband was a prisoner of war in Russia, and she had a little Imgardt, a little girl, and I was, I've always had time anyway, but Herman Ensel taught languages in the college at Stuttgart; his mother had written, Lois has got some letters because

Interviewer: So you knew Herman from dates?

Stach: No, no

Interviewer: How did you meet him?

Stach: Just from over there

Interviewer: You just met him while you were over there

Stach: We were, what the Army did, they took over about a block or two blocks of this town up here, in Weiblingen, and left us in that area up there because that's where we were at the end of the war. And of course you didn't move anywhere, why the civilian population, they had to make room for us, and so then we got to and I met people. This time, they were all Lutherans, and I'm a Lutheran rascal. So there were a lot of things that went on to then, and Herman Ensel had two kids of his own, just small like second or third grade group, and Hannah had this little preschool girl, and my family was home, so we talked a lot from up there. This old professor had taught in the college up there at Stuttgart. I liked him so much. He was an older fellow and his wife was kind of the old "Dutchy" people like all of my grandmothers and stuff up there; they were fairly pudgy little old ladies, you know, and when I talked to Herman Ensel up there, and we were talking. See his brother-in-law was a prisoner of war in Russia, so but then we could kind of talk eye-to-eye, and I said something to him up there one time, and was laughing because I had not had too much hair; I have a lot less left. He didn't have too much, and Herman said, well, you know there is this saying Germans say. I got to eat some meals at their house, and whatever, I got to haul them up and get them some groceries or something, and we came back, we lived a family life there. But Herman and I, most of my family, like my Dad had a fairly bald head too, you know, and all this. And he said, well this could always fit somebody else, too, but he said that the Dutchman do have a saying that, you know, the less there is on the outside, the more there is on the inside. And so I said "You're my man. That's just what I need."

Interviewer: The war was over at this time?

Stach: Yeah

Interviewer: And so you had this good relationship. You were in a German family and that basically, how the American troops were treated? And your bed was lost in war

Stach: Yeah. We've got some real smarties, you know that? Probably I've earned part of that. I've watched this film that's been on here so much this year Christmas, what is it called? Buddies? Or something? No, brothers

Interviewer: Band of Brothers?

Stach: Band of Brothers. Oh, and when you see those trees out there, that's what I remember. I was greener than a gourd, I was so damned skinny when we got over there, and then that first fall, some, I wasn't even, I just was 19 then, and we had been out there in the woods and one of the rifle companies, I wasn't in the rifle company then; the rifle company, this war was not like the other one when you would go over the top and all of that stuff; this was long distance; we were trying to see who could shoot the most artillery shells from here and over there, but we, I don't know how to explain it the best, just a lot, the people looked like I did. If I had been good Lutheran I'd been in the middle of it. I wasn't in Italy. I understood a lot of the things these people were saying; I had some bit of knowledge of the German language. It took me so long to get used to, well some of this other movie had been here the other night, you know where the widow, not the widow, but the lady was out in the mountains up there,

Interviewer: The Christmas story?

Stach: Yes

Interviewer: That's a good story

Stach: Oh, yes, and I can't argue, I have seen people that I would, could consider an enemy, you know, that looked just like I do. But that's back in service. I had an Uncle John Daubert that was in World War 1 and he was kind of an ornery pup himself up there, and he was the oldest, one of the oldest in his family, and my mother's family, and when I got back, he said, "Well, Bob, what do you think about Europe?" and I said, "John, there were a couple of girls asking me over there if I knew where John Daubert was" and he was real good about it. I've enjoyed so very much like that.

Interviewer: Well, how did you get home? What was your ride home? We didn't have, did you ever have any R and R or anything, or were you always on the move?

Stach: No, there was nothing to have on our billet. I did take one lady, this was in the war, we were close to Brussels, and Harold Shockey was a friend that I met from Illinois. Shockey and I, we were because we went there Shockey was... and we, we had another guy that had a steel guitar, a regular guitar laid on his lap. We had this one string accompaniment, we had us a quartet, and we sang over our own little PA system in the civilian neighborhood we had in Weiblingen up there. Shockey was real good; he was going to play at my wedding, but he died first

Interviewer: So what kind of songs did you sing?

Stach: Over there?

Interviewer: Were they the popular ones

Stach: Yeah, they were popular ones, because every now and then I heard a real tune, now and then, what's in things up here that's I'd probably not, I don't have the right spirit toward war in Europe like I went to war somewhere else. But that's going to be changed now, too, because we know that I am a minority in Dodge City now, too, don't you?

Interviewer: Okay, so how then, how did you get home? Did they put you on a boat or what?

Stach: Yeah. I've never been on a plane in the service, period. But I did, I kind of thought that maybe I might like to stay over there a little bit, but our division was picked to go to Fort Bragg, and it still was fairly new. We had to, for instance, the switchboard that we had to know to center, we were supposed to have a toward drop switchboard, which means 12 connections, but off of that you could get a lot more telephones and that because if you had one wire and one ground return, so you could double the circuits or triple them, but this is not, we had a 36 drop keyboard there in Weiblingen and that wasn't big enough because we were becoming civilians, and Americans are halfway friendly people, dad gum it anyway. So we had, our division was hooked together so much it exact on this material thing up here, we had a, I think, it was 106th Division that relieved us one time at one place, and since I was a jeep driver, you had some responsibility; most of all for a vehicle and then you had an obligation to kind of take care of others, so we always had several people in the jeep every time we moved from one town to another. The 106th Division came in to relieve us, and we had a guy by the name of Jacobis that drove one of the smaller 6 wheeler trucks, not a semi, but 6 wheeler, pulling some kind of tank weapons; there was 1 5000, and Jacobis, and Jacobis was, he was kind of an agent of a whole lot of things, he was a real good guy, but he was as ornery as heck, too. And he was a jeep driver, so we were getting ready to leave this one area, the 106th had come in to relieve us, we were getting ready to leave out, and I was sitting up

there waiting to find a spot in traffic, so I could pull out with my jeep and trailer, and here's Jacobis driving by, about ¾ ton truck with a trailer on it and weapon on it; he just going on by there, just waved to us, and I don't what in the devil this was about up here, but later on down the road we caught him, kind of forced him within the convoy, he has personally fixed, one of them had stole a dang jeep from the 106th that was relieving us, and it happened to be the truck that came after him, rolled a truck load of clothes and stuff in the back of it, this is how we got stuff, and then when we got to the next stop, this lieutenant also that talked to me after I had laid that jeep on its side, we got up there to the next stop and Lieutenant Russell looks over the vehicles, that's his job to make sure they are running, and he said, "Stach, I need you over there a little bit. I want to talk to you." and so I set this is something to me to find out about our services this way, but I went over to where he was at, and he said, "Stach, we've got a little problem. We've got an extra jeep in here, and I don't want to turn loose of it, because it runs. Well, what I'm going to do is , you are down on the bumper, a tag number, soldier, company and whatever in the mobile vehicle. We're going to put your number on that, but also your ID on that other jeep. I don't want to find you suckers parking side-by-side." Oh, lieutenant, that guy there. No, there was one old Dutchman in Weiblingen, I would talk to them, and I told them that this is the 100th Division is supposed to go to the Pacific, since they had just been over and they had a lot of their equipment and stuff with them, and confidentially, when I was in basic training in Texas, we used the rifle and all the real rough ways of killing guys, and you'd jab at them with your rifle, you know, and that's what we did in basic, your enemy was a German, I mean was a Japanese, and that's kind of one thing that did me off balance when we went to Europe, but I would have had a hard time fighting in Europe again anyway, and I wouldn't have near as much trouble going to the Pacific, but since I couldn't swim. Two times in my life I would have learned to swim in three minutes if they had given me the chance: once was before I went over and once was before I came back. I still can't swim

Interviewer: What was the name of the ship you came back on? Do you know? Remember?

Stach: No

Interviewer: Would it have been a big troop ship?

Stach: No, it was a Liberty ship

Interviewer: Okay

Stach: Liberty ship, I think it was a 1400 or something

Interviewer: And you came into what port?

Stach: We came back into New York. I saw the Statue of Liberty. Oh boy. That was nice. That was something I thought I would never see. When we were at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, before we went over, we were about a half dozen of us that caught the bus and we went to New York, so I have seen Times Square. You see those things up there that, of course, you only see it and it's over with, and everything leads to another one.

Interviewer: Well, then you landed in New Jersey

Stach: No, we landed in New York and went to Leavenworth

Interviewer: New York, and then did you , came from there on a train?

Stach: Yeah, train to Leavenworth

Interviewer: A big troop train?

Stach: Well, it was, but it gradually dwindled down, I remember when we came out of Topeka, getting to Leavenworth, there was this little old creek down here, with timber alongside it, and it was peaceful. You didn't have to be looking around the tree. That was one of the first things that kind of shook me a little bit, was right after we went on line, on the first on November, I was back, our headquarters had, so you were back at the time, headquarters, and you not catching rifle fire all the time. You were back here, behind it, and you had live artillery, tree bursts and stuff, the artillery is supposed to detonate when they hit the top of the tree, just as easy as when they hit the ground, so they had taken a bunch of prisoners, and I don't know what there were, I swear there sometimes were 50 or 60, probably, and it was raining in the north woods, just like the brothers thing up here. That's not worth it, but that's the way it was. It wasn't as stay on the ground, but it most usually was a hit. In the woods over there in France, it took clear of it because they had taken their sticks and stuff but they did until we got over there and started throwing things out of there, but they had some captives, some prisoners, and I don't know what there were, maybe 50 of them or something or other like that, and I've never seen anybody quite so miserable in my life as them, in November and December. We had a raincoat that would shed water but Germans are pretty dang well equipped anyway, but theirs was a heavy woolen coat, and that when that one overcoat, they'd get soaked, I'll bet that sucker weighs a ton, and I felt so sorry for this one, no chairs sitting around here, and they didn't even have any rocks to sit on, stand there, lean against a tree that's wet. Here I was probably a hundred and twenty pound weakling or something like that, and I remember I walked over there close to the step, about 25 or 30 prisoners or something like that, no place to put them, so bunch them together and run barbed wire around the trees, but there around barbed wire you have to get down in the mud and I was just greener than a gourd, that was just a few days after we went on line, and packed there in the middle of the German woods, and I was set there on my tail then, because I was up there with, those coats looked so heavy on our guys, and you saw all ranges of ages of people. See they were drafting old people and young kids; they had the young people, you know, in their groups that they had, and here's this whole batch of them up there just nothing but stand still and there's more rain coming down. And they keep on having the days, they just keep, even five minutes is a long time, and we're thinking about all these things, and then one guy was leaning over there, just right next to the fence

Interviewer: You got the date, then?

Stach: and this guy looks over and, I knew I was miserable, but I was on the winning side, and I knew sooner or later that they'd end this. On the other side there was. And I thought about and then this one poor fellow with an overcoat piled up, move up and said, "Bitte." That's please. "Bitte eine Zigarette?" and so I thought, if I give this guy a cigarette, he would yank me by one arm and throw me in there and those guys would chop me to pieces in a minute, and then when I looked over there to him, gosh darn, the odds were reversed, and so I gave him a cigarette and helped him to light it, and he said, "Danke." so where is the fighters when it comes over? But boy, there were, an old professor there that taught in the college at Stuttgart who had, he was the one that said, I said something about Father's pretty bald, too, you see they're just that-away. He said, "Well, that's an old German adage up there, you know, the less there is on the outside, the more there is on the inside." I did, I made friends with first sergeant and I'm not much of a politician, wasn't then, much of a politician, cause I was just out of school, but I didn't want to go the Pacific, so I had the first sergeant, after we had sent some people home, all of the points I could scrape together, my length of service, and all of the others, 34 points. They started sending them home, a lot of people, with 160 points. I remember where I was going to be 50 years from now. But, so I, one of my friends that I had had in the lower ranks, became first sergeant on this method, because they

started discharging people with 160 points and they'd come down one point a month or two points a month, and I knew, I could see that I was good for about 35 years, but one of the friends that I had had, in the company headquarters, which is the first sergeant, and I said, "Man, you've got to get me out of here. I don't want to go to the Pacific." So he sent me to Heidelberg, and then because all I was until then was a PFC, private first class, and so when I went to Heidelberg they sent me to the MP's, and I keep telling people twice in my life that I had, when I had two down piles,

Interviewer: You were in the 100th Division?

Stach: 100th Division, yeah, Infantry Division

Interviewer: We have a file that we're keeping on everybody, so I need some of your pictures and stuff. He gave us, we can take these pictures home, and then I didn't need it; and one of the news. We have some album pictures, and I can start it and I can set up and get it started and

Stach: Can you imagine a two story house with a single person filled with

Interviewer: I can imagine, I know I've got a little too much, too, and you being the youngest, you've probably had a lot of it; he's got them, he has the Sons of Bitche; do you have that shoulder patch? I loved that because it said.

Stach: I don't know, is it in this thing here? I may have

Interviewer: Is that in your army uniform and stuff

Stach: Oh, over in the bedroom, yes.

Interviewer: I don't think the army shoulder patch is there; no, I don't think so. Your bedroom?

Stach: In that dresser

Interviewer: Okay, yeah

Stach: Well, that little deal there with the refund up there, that was worth \$10 a month. It was \$5 a month for expert rifleman when I was in Texas, and then when I went over, that was combat

Interviewer: And you used the, I shouldn't be asking this now, but had you used the gun as a kid, hunting and stuff?

Stach: Probably, once or twice, a BB gun, but not rifles. Our folks didn't really care for that too much

Interviewer: And then you got thrown in the middle of it

Stach: Yeah, well, but since I was, had done, did just a little bit of line work, just four months or something or other like that, four or five months with the railroad, we were climbing poles and stuff, and that, it did beat some of the troubles in Texas because I was sitting there in that hot summer thing in the army barracks, trying to learn dit, dit, dot, dit, dit, the Morse Code. Drive you right out of your skull

Interviewer: Now, do you remember what the last thing

Stach: Well. Not in the dresser, on top of the dresser in the newspapers and stuff up there. I had some different things scattered about the postmaster in Garden City, too. I found some publicity up here the other day and got things in papers. I thought I was a sacrificial lamb for a little while when I went to Garden. I replaced a guy from Garden with years, and you know what Garden and Dodge think of each other. And when we went to Garden the was in Garden, and Wichita knew that, and they knew the little old lady that was postmaster here in Dodge, and she sent me over there and I was postmaster for several months in Garden City, but then my wife lost her folks ten days apart and I was still driving over there when we bought a new house and had to move on top, and I finally said, "Send me back to Dodge." I was tired doing that for my wife.

Interviewer: So if I find it you can go ahead and then we'll have to get it. Okay, so you were trying to get out of here?

Stach: Well, I was trying to avoid going to the Pacific.

Interviewer: There we go. Okay, we'll try to continue here

Stach: So I talked to the first sergeant and said, "You've got to get me out of this outfit before it's going to the States." So he sent me to Heidelberg and at Heidelberg, see I was just a PFC all the rest of the time, and when I went to Heidelberg all of these, everybody doesn't want to get their fingers dirty. There are things over there in Heidelberg, so they sent me to the MP's. Two times in my life I really thought I was dumped on: first time when they told me when I was in the infantry that I was headed to Europe. The second time was nothing more in the infantry and sent to the MP's, and so I thought I was about hitting the bottom. But Heidelberg was not destroyed by the war. It was a nice place up there and they made me a corporal within about two months, and then the first sergeant transferred, he had come back to the States, so I made a three-striper as a regular sergeant, and the peace town of Heidelberg hadn't been destroyed. That was a beautiful place. I really enjoyed it. I would have loved to have toured Germany, but it didn't work quite the way that I wanted to. I did have some pictures but I gave some of them, gave a bunch of pictures away just a short while back to my nephew in Amarillo. I'd forgot about that. I've got a nephew at Pratt that's in the Guard now, the one that had gone to college here at Dodge, and he had been in the Guard as a lieutenant colonel. A lot of difference between a buck sergeant and a lieutenant colonel! But David was I just paid my dues

Interviewer: Oh, okay. So you were in Heidelberg, and you were there how long?

Stach: Oh, about a year. Long enough to just relieve it entangled with another man and all this kind of stuff. I at one time my good friend from my own church, believe it or not, but he was a convert to the church because, to my church, because he married a Lutheran up there, and Shockey was a real good guy, just as honest as the day is long. He told me, he said, "Stach, you'd better take this gal from, Bob, you'd better take her back." I said, "Her husband is a prisoner of war in Russia. She's got this one little tiny tot." But she was, I don't know, 25 or something, and I was 19. but we were both Lutherans, so that , I said, "Shockey, I can't do that." and he said, "Spoils of war." Oh, my goodness sakes. But I did enjoy Heidelberg very much. I had the rank of a sergeant and I was up there in Heidelberg when, who was it, Patton up there, that got bugged up in a car wreck? Yeah. And we got billeted up somewhere close to Heidelberg there, so we brought him in, and had him in the hospital which was a castle in the hillside, and then we had, he made the jeep drivers wear white gloves. Can you imagine that? Had to wear white gloves because of the visit of royalty that had coming in to see this general sitting in a hospital up there, and the thing that, I even saw, I saw it on the, I didn't know who it was, but I saw it. I myself and one other jeep, we took two jeep loads of high point guys to return to the States. We had to go about, I can't remember, or 50 miles, somewhere down the road, to take them to a port so that they

could go on the boat and be returned to the States, and this guy and I were coming back on the superhighway; the little superhighway, they could make a 100 miles an hour; that was when we were still putting stuff on the ground up there yet, you know, and here come, we had stopped once, just for a rest break alongside the road, and here's this car went by and this general flag a flipping on the front of it, and here was the general; he was flying by. Of course he wasn't having any wheels except his own, and then I saw that vehicle after, you know he was injured badly in? that old coot fell off of the back seat, during that, because of his advantage, but when he was up there in that hospital, there on the hillside, he was the mighty . He made the jeep drivers wear white gloves. Can you imagine? We were holding the steering wheel with white gloves. That just bears the socks out of it

Interviewer: Well, let's come back to Edwards County. And there were a few of you on the train, you said. When you got back was there any celebration or ?

Stach: No, I didn't tell the folks exactly when I was coming in. But since I had had six months on the railroad I knew about everything! And I was standing up in the vestibule, this came in from, that train came in from Hutch, yeah. So I really hurried down the line up there at Dodge

Interviewer: Where were you discharged from?

Stach: Leavenworth

Interviewer: Leavenworth, okay. So then you got on the train to go to Hutch and then

Stach: Yeah, so, well coming back I didn't have any problems up there on the train develop except that I knew that the railroad crossed over Main Street in Kinsley up there, that the trains go right from the back to the depot. Well, that night up there they had me standing in the vestibule car and stuff, so in the vestibule they had started that somewhere out of, I don't remember whether it was, there was a passenger used to come around the old to Larned. I told her the train came through Larned, it comes just straight out of Hutch, I think, but I knew I was ready for a long time because I had worked on the railroad up there and exactly where we were, so we get close that up and I was going to surprise the folks, and until the big deal was in the country; just didn't know when I was going to be home. And I was watching up there and knew the habits of the trains because I'd been around the depot a lot, in less than two years head of that, see. So I know the congregation of people that was to be down town all the time up there and meetings up there, so the train, this one stopped. There was a train at the depot yet, so this other one didn't get that far. It stopped, and that stopped, the door that the conductor was going to let me out of, was right at Main Street in Kinsley, and I was for the last two years, it looked so nice that up, and I had my duffle bag with me up there, and it was a big as a guy, and I told him that, first of all, I had been solitary in the car, and I said I was surprising when my folks, I hadn't told them when I was coming in, so they weren't going to be at the depot, and since where they lived at was just a block off of 6th up there, I thought well it would be a little closer if I walked through that end of, walked down town there. I could have been a company. That's something, so I walked down Main Street with my duffle bag over my shoulder up there right up to their house; the folks had company there

Interviewer: Did the people greet you on Main Street?

Stach: Well, it wasn't a Saturday night so there wasn't that much traffic there. It was a week night. There were a few people there but it just looked like I was somebody carrying a lot of groceries.

Interviewer: So, you got to the house and surprised your folks.

Stach: Yeah, they had company from Greensburg, that were another couple visiting them. It was pretty good.

Interviewer: And then what did you do right after the war? Would it be that bad?

Stach: Well, I had 90 days to pick up my job. They had that guaranteed part, and I hadn't had anything for free at that time. We had seen such a rough spot of life. When I see the turkey farm and the chicken farm in Kinsley in the 40's up there and see all the stuff and even rabbits, we even ate rabbit, too, you know. You know we were out there clubbing them to death and whatever. And then to come back up there and to have something like this, and I didn't really know what I wanted to do then, so it was kind of hard to decide, so I had 90 days to pick up my job, but I was going to take that. Now, I was going to buy a car, first of all, and I didn't, it didn't work out right to where I had that much money at home. I had been sending money home, but I also told the folks to use some money and they were buying their home at that time, and it all worked out by the ...there. But in that time there were some of the people that got through that, I think they need servicemen. Old Shockey had told me all the time that I was in Germany, he was of Rockford, Illinois, and he was just, he was a real prince of a guy, and he was a guitar player, and when we were in Weiblingen there we used to sing over the neighborhood up there, so he kept telling me that he didn't know where his wife's family were at, but they were somewhere in Kansas, it was Rozel! I didn't know that; Shockey got, one day I came home from work, I'd been working somewhere in Offerle or somewhere, and we'd come home and Mom said, "Harold Shockey's going to be back later this evening." And I hadn't heard of Harold Shockey because he worked to the back where I left and went to Heidelberg, so I hadn't seen him for a long time. He had this wife back there, and when he had checked with her, she had people at Rozel. If I had known that during the war I would have had a fit, you know that? 18 miles from my birthplace. There's a few guys that have gone through here but not a lot of them. I tried to call one of them the other day. It was in that 100th Division magazine that I had there, because one of them is still living; that's in the 100th Division from the news and stuff that they're having

Interviewer: So what job did you end up taking?

Stach: Well I still had down seniority on the railroad, so that's what I stayed with. I went back to that and I stayed with it until after I was married.

Interviewer: And that was in '52?

Stach: In '52, yeah. Then I moved to Dodge here, and I bounced around a little bit. I sold shoes for a couple of years at Eckles

Interviewer: Did you live with your folks when you came back and worked for the railroad then? or

Stach: Yeah. Well, for a little while, and I then I took the maintaining job at St. John, and Glen Shelley was at Kinsley, I was the same thing or doing, what's Dean's name that was a maintainer out of Kinsley, too? Dean Sollitt, yeah,

Interviewer: That's when you met your wife when you were up at St. John?

Stach: At St. John, yeah. I used to pay my telephone bill up there. She was a clerk up there. She had been chief operator up there. Her folks had moved out in the country, out in the sand hills between St. John and Stafford, and when she went to high school they had her stay with somebody in town, and so she got her job with the phone company. She was an operator for awhile, and then she was chief

operator. Then when she came to Dodge up here, this was kind of nice because we didn't know very, when we left St. John, when we came to Dodge, that she knew her company was, they had a little start of a company there in Dodge, when we saw that the company went to Dodge, and she knew one of the managers and he said we're going to bring as a lot of these accounting offices in all these little towns, Anthony and Harper and St. John, we're going to move to either Great Bend or Dodge, and said if she was going to Dodge, we know we've got a solid helper right there. And I never could make her believe it, that they had about 40 people in the office up here when they finally sold out to Victory Electric

Interviewer: Okay, well, you talked quite a bit about your feelings about fighting in your grandparents' motherland, Back here in Edwards County, growing up in that German community, what were their feelings toward the war.. You said they had come from Russia

Stach: Well, I didn't notice it too much because I was too young and ignorant. Now, my sister could add just a wee bit to that because she's a little stinker. She was a very little stinker, then, and she used to go to South Side School and, do you want to tell them what that was, Lois?

Interviewer: We may need to come over here so you're closer to the mike because we found another one that didn't pick up. We've got the mike on him

Lois: We were at South Side School and it was recess time, and we were outside playing, and some of the kids realized that we were fighting Germans, and we were fighting Nazis. With a name like Stach you are German. So they called me a Nazi, and we got into a fight out there, and the teacher graciously came out and brought us in and set us all down in the classroom and explained that all Nazis were German, but not all Germans were Nazis. But I knew my brother was overseas fighting

Interviewer: Okay. Obviously, How do you think the war changed you?

Stach: Oh, I don't know. It probably made me aware of some responsibilities that I probably wouldn't have known for a long time. Folks take care of people, and I had wonderful folks, and I don't know if they had passed on responsibility or not. I think they would have tried. Dad lost his dad when he was only about seven, so he didn't have any dad. He had all of these "Tantas", all the aunts, raised him practically. His dad died when he was seven years old, so he didn't have anybody around up there except all these people that, it was a little bit embarrassing to hear them speak in German when you knew we were of the you know, before I went to service up there. We were patriotic, you know. We knew in high school that we would be patriotic in a minute and it doesn't mean you have to give up everything and sacrifice, but it was total cost

Interviewer: Responsibility was what you learned

Stach: Yeah

Interviewer: And when you came back to Edwards County what were the changes that you saw, you know, what changes did the war bring about to the town?

Stach: I don't know, but I do know that by gosh I thought I could buy a car or two because cars were what, like a thousand dollars then, 900, something? I didn't know they could be leased, you know, when I was kid, I used to peddle papers, too. Oh, yes, I had a spy tell me that you used to peddle papers, too, did you?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Stach: Okay, well, Kinsley Mercury, Harlow Tibbits and his wife, I delivered papers for them for a long time, and Nevins Hardware was a big store in Kinsley, and by gosh they've got the bicycles with a balloon tire on them. You know, when compared to those skinny little bouncy things, and I bought that balloon-tired bicycle, it had a rack on the back with it because this, I think it was a real little bitty stinker, and I made her a little cart, too.

Interviewer: How old were you at this time?

Stach: I was about out of high school. I was going to be a printer at one time. I was a printer's devil

Interviewer: You were a lot of things!

Stach: Well, you try a lot of things. I was a printer's devil when I was a freshman

Interviewer: Where?

Stach: In Kinsley

Interviewer: In the Graphic?

Stach: No, for the Mercury. No, Graphic was a nasty word. The only thing good about the Graphic was they used to have a 57 millimeter anti-tank gun sitting by it. No, I was doing, I was going to be a printer's devil up there. A guy by the name of Foster, Foster was his first name, he had a little trouble hearing the stuff. He was I-tap operator and I was doing to do that, but as long as I kept my studies, my grades up, I could skip study hall, and I did that most of high school because I was working at the Mercury up there, and then in my senior year I was working at the Coop.

Interviewer: That money, did that help the family? Your earnings, or was that your money?

Stach: Well, I bought my bicycle with it because it was, my bicycle was going to be, I think, 27 or 28, and then with that rack on the back of it, brought it to 32 dollars, and I paid Harlow Tibbits 50 cents a week on my bicycle. He and, you know he had me for life? That was a nice time up there

Interviewer: Did most to the guys that you knew come back to Kinsley after the war, or did they go off into other things or GI bill or

Stach: No, I didn't use the GI bill or anything. No, when I got back I was going to use the GI bill and get some college, but see I had a job guaranteed

Interviewer: That probably was quite a good job

Stach: Dad kept telling me, said get a job like Glenn Shelley's got. Glenn was a nice old guy, not such an old guy, either. He was just a heck of a nice guy, but yeah, I had kind of planned on that and then when I got back and Shockey took me all the way to Rozel, we got back and we visited; we kind of got some that out of our system, then I realized that I was a human being again, you know, and whatever. At basic training down there when they teach us to arm your rifle up there and throw, jabbing that blade into,

Interviewer: Bayonet?

Stach: Jamming that into these bags and stuff, it was all right when they were little yellow then, but

when I looked at people over there that and then I could even understand their language even when they spoke a different language, that puts a different tune on things

Interviewer: So you a psychological adjust when you came back trying to get out that war mind set, or
Stach: No, not really. I was just too young and dumb to know anything about anything like that.

Interviewer: So did your ancestors, you said they went to German, so were they good Germans, too?
That Lutheran German, of the Germans

Stach: Yeah, maybe Lois could clear a little bit of that; she's done a little bit more on the family history, but we had, I think the Stach side of our family didn't have as much difficulty because I think they had better stuff when they come over. Because in 1902 they took delivery of one of the steam tractors, took delivery of it in Wichita, Kansas. I don't know how it got from Wichita up here, what they

Interviewer: Railroad, I suppose

Stach: I would think so, because it only made maybe two miles an hour or something other, right?

Interviewer: Okay, Lois is back there now.

Stach: Mom went to school, I'm not sure where, I don't know whether it was, they moved out here. Mom was born in Michigan, and they moved out here. Her one brother was born in New York and then the rest of her brothers were born around Kinsley, not in Edwards County, but they were not particularly settled. They were in the area, so Mom went to school in the Edward County area, Rozel, and they spoke German when they went to school, and they were punished if they spoke German, if the teacher caught them speaking German.

Interviewer: When was your mom born?

Stach: Mom was born in 1905. Mom said that on the playground she and her brothers and others like them were called Little White Ruskies because they were light-skinned Russian-based Germans, so yes, there was some prejudice, but nothing harmful, mainly name-calling

Interviewer: Would you consider them Volga Germans

Stach: From the way Mom talked my granddad was a German inhabitant. He served in the German army, was conscripted to serve in the German army. The German army was going to conscript him a second time, and he said, "I'm going to Russia" because Catherine the Great said German farmers work hard; come plant red wheat in Russia. So they went to Russia. Well then, the Russians needed help; they were going to conscript my granddad, and he said, "I'm going to the United States."

Interviewer: So he wasn't in Russia very long?

Stach: Evidently not. Long enough to have a son born there. My oldest uncle, if my mother's whole family had lived there would have been a family of 12 instead of a family of 6. Several children were born in Russia and died. I think one of the children died in New York when they came over and was maybe one was born in New York and died, so there are two baby sisters buried out at the cemetery where my mother is buried. But as far as I know Granddad didn't stay too long so, but because they came through Russia, Mom said that they were picked on in school.

Interviewer: And then ?

Stach: My Dad's uncles never became United citizens, United States citizens, but they did all of the legal things, they were legal aliens, and they bought war bonds because they were supporting the United States but they couldn't give up their emotional ties

Interviewer: These are Kinsley questions, okay. These are things out of the newspaper, and it said, Who is Marie Stach?

Stach: She is Grandmother

Interviewer: Grandmother? Okay. This is in 1924. It says Marie Stach and Joe Shook bought a confectionery store, opposite the post office.

Stach: That was a mother and a son-in-law. That's adding up now. I haven't done all of the legal research

Interviewer: Okay, and then I have in 1922, I have Stach Toys. What do you know about Stach Toys?

Stach: I don't. That would have been Clarence and, Helmut Stach, probably.

Interviewer: Yeah, Helmut Stach. I have a Helmut Stach, but I don't

Stach: He was the one,

Interviewer: Helmut was an uncle?

Stach: Helmut is an uncle. He was an uncle to Don. Granddad was Reinhold. Helmut was his brother. Helmut had a store across from what used to be the old post office. That was the confectionery.

Interviewer: So when I have, this is 1901, so I have a. I know, you just don't, can't remember this stuff. Okay, it says W.A.Stach starts a men's clothing store

Stach: That's a third brother

Interviewer: This is Helmut?

Stach: That must have been Reinhold's brother William. Do you remember Carol Smith who came into the library and was asking about our family and you called me and I contacted her? That's her grandfather or great-grandfather,.

Interviewer: These are also out at the homestead and

Stach: Evidently, I don't understand why, Granddad Reinhold came over. It must have been his dad, Edward, came over and evidently brought his family with him. There were, I don't remember how many, but William, Helmut, and Reinhold, evidently the family had money in Germany. The sons must have divided and each went into their specialty, Reinhold went into farming, Helmut went into a business store, confectionery-kind of thing, William went into clothing and moved to Nebraska

Interviewer: I have a W.A. Stach was a merchant tailor

Stach: That's William. That was clothing

Interviewer: Okay, and who is Albert Stach?

Stach: That's another brother. I will bring you the genealogy to show you this. He was prolific

Interviewer:Prolific. Okay, So

Stach: You think that's bad? You should see the family that the Stachs married into: two Stach brothers married two Muenchow sisters and there were nine Muenchows. That's why I'm related to everybody in Edwards County. This relates to Kuhns, and Tuchtenhagens, and I will show you the genealogy

Interviewer: I have two really other quick ones. You said you spoke, you had German in church up north, right?

Stach: One Sunday a month

Interviewer: One Sunday a month, okay, and when you combined with the Kinsley church, did you still have German when it became Our Redeemer? Did you have German?

Stach: No, that was war time, and you probably It was '47. I remember that in That's some of the most beautiful music I've ever heard

Interviewer: And with that, do you think we've covered everything? Probably not. Okay, I'm going to Do you have anything else you want to add?

Stach: No, but if you want to pick up any odds and ends on where we came

Interviewer: Well, we're going to do a film on you now

Stach: You've spent a lot of patience. I would have to thank you for all of that.

Interviewer: Well, we thank you.

Stach: She did a lot on that family research

Interviewer: Oh yeah, she's got a good head for it, too. I don't remember it. I do the family research but I can't keep it in my head

Stach: Well, she's a teacher, dad burn it.