

Transcript of Oral History Tape 80 Transcribed by Patty Rivera 01/7/04.

Interview with Elmer H. Glafke August 14, 1978.

Interviewer: Jerrold Gustafson.

Gustafson: Uh last time I was here something that we didn't talk about that I thought might be kind of interesting was when you were talking about going into the Army during the first World War. How did you happen to go into the Army?

Glafke: Well I was on the Fire Department in Michigan City at that time. You still got that thing going?

Gustafson: Right uhm-hmm.

Glafke: Where's the mike?

Gustafson: Right here.

Glafke: Uh...yeah that's the...I was...I was on the Fire Department down there and the war was on and in the meantime...thinking about gettin' in the service but uh...my number didn't get called but uh...in the meantime politics changed and then they had the uh...chief Fire Chief in there and a fella by the name of Stilley Bowman (?sp). He was the Chief. And uh...the Board of Works and the new Fire Chief come down the line there one day and they walked into the west door and he just says well Chief Charlie will take office this noon twelve o'clock and they kept right on walking and walked out the other door. And uh...so I said to the chief...I says uh...them's the days we worked uh...uh...well you worked all day and you got an hour off for breakfast, dinner, and supper. And I asked him if they could go to dinner and I says I'm quitting. So uh...he let me go and so when they come back I turned in my badge and after I turned in the badge why...a bunch of us went over to Harbor & Kemp's Saloon (?sp) on the corner and just talk over some of the things and...till we went to Gary and uh...on the way back why the damn train jumped the tracks. There were...I don't know how it got off that way but anyway we...practically marooned all night there on the South Shore. So then that same day why I went up to the draft board. Charlie Dietz (?sp) was happening to be on the draft board and asked him when my uh...how soon I'd have to go. What was my number and he looked it up and he says well I don't think we'll call you yet. I don't think he says you'll have to go. Well I says I like to go. Well he says uh...that was on a Tuesday and I think on a Thursday I was on my way.

Gustafson: Gee.

Glafke: And uh...there was some fellas there by the name of Ackerman and I don't think I told you that last time...his name's Ackerman. Roy Ackerman was his name. He's the...their folks run that fruit farm out there in Michigan. And another fella by the name of Dawson and there was uh...I think there was uh...two guys from LaPorte. Gee I don't know who their names was. And

uh...they give us transportation to San Antonio, Texas. But I had to...we had to get our own way from Chicago. And uh...I had a...we had a berth from Chicago to New Orleans but from New Orleans to San Antonio we didn't have no berth. But them guys didn't have no berth from Chicago to New Orleans so we doubled up. And when we got in to San Antonio why we got in there in the evening. Instead of reporting to the Army we went out to the...on the town a little bit. And that's what we did and we got to the...in the San...Kelly Field that's the sign right there.

Gustafson: When you decided to go that was volunteering...was that uh...were you...were you being influenced by a lot of patriotic feeling here? Was there a real feeling that a lot of guys that wanted to go into the war?

Glafke: Oh yeah...the way I went...probably at one time I was gonna go to work and run away from home and join the Navy. But...somehow or another my aunt find out about it and told my dad about it. I was just a youngster then around about eleven years old twelve. And I was gonna join the Navy. And uh...but anyway...my aunt told my dad about it and course he's my dad and he said I'll give you all the damn Navy you want. So I didn't go. But another fella and I we already...we...we was gonna do that. He...him and I both were gonna run away from home and join the Navy.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: But uh...it was uh...yes I'd like to went oversea.

Gustafson: Were the newspapers full of a lot of anti-German stories that made you feel that you wanted to go?

Glafke: Well I tell ya...after...no it wasn't so much of that but of course I'm German myself see. And uh in fact no I'm an American but I say my folks was all born in Germany. And uh...course anybody born in Germany they were...their name was mud. And when I was in uh...after I got transferred uh out...to uh...uh Arcadia, California in a balloon school from Tulley Field (?sp) why I met people out there they were Mexicans but they was really not...they was American-Mexican. They was nice people. You told them you was German they didn't want to part of ya. So uh...I was a Presbyterian. That's the first thing I could think about. Even though I don't wanna go to church. So we had a lot of fun there and...and uh...after I got down there why I met a...a...people there that way...always I used to drive the uh...the uh...Commanding Officer there at that time on a motorcycle and side car and...and uh...we pulled into Monrovia (?sp) one morning and...and after we got there why uh...this car pulled up along side of us and it was people by the name of Lopez. And they asked me where...they says soldier where did you come from? I says I don't know. I said I just got here during the night. It must've been after midnight sometime we arrived here and so...she invited me over to their house and that's how I got acquainted with them and uh...and uh...I was...well I'd...I'd take their daughter out you know that way it's...I tell ya...the...the first New Year's time when I was there I went to so the Tournament of Roses.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: So uh...we went. But her dad says to me...he says Glafke he says uh...uh...here's twenty dollars he says. And you take my car. It was a cadillac four cylinder and it was right hand drive too and uh...so I went down to Pasadena and I was going down Colorado Boulevard and cop stopped me and he says you can't go that...[indecipherable]...and I says...well...I says I was going to see the...and uh...watch the parade. So uh...he says just a minute he says I gotta go down there that way anyway so he got on the running board. Them days got running boards on cars so...by God he parked me right in front of the reviewing stand.

Gustafson: Wow.

Glafke: And he just made an opening and I backed right in there and I had a real good view of the parade.

Gustafson: Was there much anti-German feeling in Michigan City and LaPorte?

Glafke: I don't know about that. Uh...I...I really don't know about it. But I imagine it's...well...personally my think...I think that uh...the people here in Michigan City and everything when I was on the Fire Department and everything they probably figured it wouldn't be long and we'd be in the war, too. So uh...of course afterwards on there that way why they had it in for the Germans I 'spect you know. But anyway that's the...uh...after we got into it there was more hostile feeling than there was before. Fact of the matter is when I...when I was going with these...with the...the...these people down California they invited me to their relatives one time and uh...they was uh...this lady on there...when we first got up there why...I looked at a double barrel shotgun and they looked like double barrel cannons on there and she jabbered something in Spanish which I don't understand and this lady that I...that I went with...er these people then the...they jabbered something back in Spanish too that way and then finally this gal she was big...six foot...[indecipherable]...big lady and she come up and put her arms around me and hugged me and everything and apologized in English and uh...she...she said since the war is too many soldiers ruining too many girls see.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And uh this lady was a secret service operator for the government. She could speak over a dozen languages.

Gustafson: Wow.

Glafke: She was very intelligent and she had two daughters that was nurses and she had uh...one boy that was in the Navy and uh...but uh...everybody was keyed up you know it was...get this war over with you know. And stuff like that.

Gustafson: Uh-huh. Was it in San Antonio that you started training?

Glafke: Yes.

Gustafson: What was that like?

Glafke: Oh hell there's nothin' but tents out there and when it rained that way by gosh it...every time you'd take a walk in the adobe mud out there why hell's fire you get tired of walking. Hell the damn stuff you'd pick it up just like cement.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And uh...then...we had ditches you know. Or sewers you know and when you wanna shave you got down in the...in the ditch when it was dry that way so you can shave. And uh...then you'd get on marches you know. We did a lot of uh...of uh...we did a lot of the drilling at nighttime on there with a gas mask drill you know. Cause you'd have to uh take 'em apart and put 'em together in the dark. Because the German's using poison gas at that time.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: And uh...but that's...but then...by the way on the Fire Department on there I was over there to Michigan City last year and I was asked when I got on the Fire Department...I think I got on there in nineteen uh...fifteen I believe it was. And he give me the record. I made uh...the big sum nine hundred and fifty dollars a year.

Gustafson: In 1915?

Glafke: Yeah. And I made uh...of course we started out with seventy-five dollars a month worked twenty-four hours a day. That's three...uh one hour for meals. Breakfast, dinner, and supper. And then we'd have uh...when I got to be driver on there I got ten dollars more. By the way you talk to these kids now they got driver education see. I never drove an automobile in my life. But I learned to drive automobile driving fire trucks.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And we had a fella up there by the name of James Garwood on there...he used to be a steeple jack and he was a very, very nice guy. And uh he taught me all it was to drive...he'd get me down the street then he'd take me down the alley you know and he'd stop at the end of the...he would get another street now he says back up the way you come in. So I'd back all the way back up again.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: That's the way to do it.

Gustafson: What else did you do in training at San Antonio besides gas masks? What kind of exercises did they have you do?

Glafke: Well you get a guy up in the platform on there some commissioned officer or some that were Second Lieutenant or so and...and uh...you'd have to do you know is...spread your legs out and arms up in the air and then you lay down you know and uh...he'd get uh...he'd lower your body down and raise you up...you know what I mean...

Gustafson: Push-ups?

Glafke: ...[indecipherable]...that way you know and by gosh they'd drill you back out till you couldn't get up. Then we'd do a lot of uh...well we'd have a lot of forced marches on there that way. Hell we'd walk...we'd take our pup tents along with us you know and get out a ways that way and just pack for the night you know and then you have your kitchen with ya and uh they'd have ambulance follow them but I found I went to...[indecipherable]...that smoke them was the guys that dropped out of the line.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: Yep. Them guys...and if I had smoked they could figure they'd drop out of line...they didn't walk very far. We'd walk...oh I don't know fifteen miles maybe in war that way you and it was sometimes you'd walk you know just like ordinary do and then you'd walk you know in a...[indecipherable]...you know like one-two-three-four something like that see. And they'd keep that up and you'd all holler out at the same time you know that way. It was nice.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: I...I...I really...everybody says well oh they wouldn't go back again...but...but I...I really enjoyed it. It was uh...it was good training. Good training.

Gustafson: What was your equipment like?

Glafke: Well you'd carry a...[indecipherable]...rifle and a bayonet with the stuff like that. And uh...you'd carry your pup tent with ya and your mess kit from the hell whole damn works and it'd be on your back see.

Gustafson: So everything that you'd use you carried?

Glafke: That's right.

Gustafson: How much did that weigh altogether?

Glafke: I...I really couldn't tell ya. But to me it didn't...oh I don't know maybe twenty pounds at the most maybe. Cause you carry your rifle you know anyway you know on your shoulder you know just like over your shoulder you know and then you'd have your pup tent with ya.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: It...it...it wasn't very heavy. Well at least I didn't think so. Course any of you young people do a lot of things when you...[indecipherable]...do now.

Gustafson: What was the food like? You said you had a field kitchen?

Glafke: Yeah. Well the food was all right. Yeah. That's another damn thing on there that way. By golly when you...when you wanna go and...and...and go in the mess hall like and uh...you know at Kelly Field they'd have three garbage cans. One for the liquid. One for the garbage. And one for the bones. And there'd be a fella there and you had to show your...hold up your hands and any dirt on your fingernails you didn't get in. You...you took his job. He...he stayed there until he'd catch somebody. Then he'd have to have his shirt on you know and buttoned up and everything. So otherwise you wouldn't get in. But if you throw any stones into the garbage or into the liquids why that's...they had a fella there watching you too.

Gustafson: What was the purpose of that?

Glafke: Well to separate the...the bones and the garbage and the liquid see. I don't know what...what the purpose was of it. But that was just the rule.

Gustafson: Hmm. So where did you go from San Antonio?

Glafke: Well I volunteered for KP duty because after you get on the train once you wasn't allowed off the train but the KP's you know...and the cooks...they can get off.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: Well. They told us we was going...going east. Course I fixed up the uh...in the...in the baggage car where we...where we got our kitchen ready there and it had a fifty barrel drum there...wooden drum. And uh...sposed to make lemonade see for supper. But also it had another place there where I hadda get the fire going you know to uh heat the water and everything like that see. And I had the chimney fixed so that if we was going east that'd be you know to go that way but instead of that way by God the damned train went west. And it set the damn car on fire. And I had the lemonade made and I had to use all the lemonade to put the fire out because I didn't have no water on there. Boy it was a lot of fun that one. But the uh...we left in the afternoon and we arrived in Arcadia I don't know sometimes after midnight. It was from...[indecipherable]...Texas I don't know if it took us...yeah...it took us two days because I know I got off at El Paso and I could stretch my legs out there a little bit and I was the only one see. And the guards...[indecipherable]...too that way but we could get off see. But the...the other guys couldn't. And the clothes...[indecipherable]...the pants come down just below my knee going in there hell...[indecipherable]...

Gustafson: That's what it was.

Glafke: Oh yeah when I was down at Kelly Field they uh...they...they...they find out what you uh...in the first place in there when we got to Kelly Field...maybe I'm gettin' on this thing backwards on it...but when we first got in Kelly Field we set out there from the morning till almost three or four o'clock in the afternoon in the hot sun. Didn't get nothin' to eat at all. And then they finally got us in...in the...they just hollered your name out and they put you in...in the group maybe about six guys that were in a tent so and then uh when they give us a physical they had a tent and I betcha the tent was a couple hundred feet long and uh...when we come in they had a soldiers there with a...with a uh...garbage bag you know and uh...they give you...they...you

got your name and everything on a tag on there and then afterwards you stenciled it on that way and when you got there you took all your clothes off and you dumped 'em in the bag. That's it.

Gustafson: That's where they went?

Glafke: Yeah. And then you kept on going. There was a doctor examined ya...your feet. Maybe another guy that examined your eyes. Then another one maybe the ears and stomach and when they get out in your end there was a quartermaster on there and they'd look at ya that way about how...[indecipherable]...and they just throw the...they just throw the stuff at ya. They wouldn't let ya fit...[indecipherable]...but after the like my shoes that way they throwed at ya that you couldn't wear anything that way and same way with shirts or anything that might be too tight or something. But then you could exchange 'em afterwards see. And that would take you about a day to exchange the damn stuff and that's how you get in there see. And then uh...they lined us up on there. When you sign in that way you know you had your uh...you had your uh...uh...name and what you did before hand see. And I was a truck driver and I was on the fire department so they put me on the fire department.

Gustafson: In the Army?

Glafke: In...in Kelly Field.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And believe me it...I never knew fire department work was like that. Because uh...I was an axe man or something that way because and I...out in front there on the post there was your tools. And then you'd uh...you'd uh...slept in a tent you know and pretty soon the sirens start up that way and you get up...and you get up there and grab your stuff and get in line and uh...they start you out one-two-three-four and then on...then you'd have to run that way you know and Christ Almighty you run a mile or somewhere the hell that damn fire was and you got there you found out it was out or it wasn't no fire. That's what they had see. And uh...so then another time after when I got down in uh...California...I didn't want that damn fireman's job no more that way. So one morning we was out in reveille and uh I don't know some officer come out there and says anybody have any police department experience. Well I just thought my dad was a policeman see and so I'd know a little bit how he'd...how they...how they had worked there though I didn't know a damn thing about it. So I held up my hand and he said you're just they guys they're looking for...[indecipherable]... So uh...after we got uh in there I went to their police school and I'll never forget one morning...I was on guard one day. Another fella and myself. We had thirteen prisoners and uh we was sposed to see to it...like for instance these...these guys we went to...they went to some place on there that way where they would serve meals and uh...the cook he was the...he'd tell 'em what to do. All we had to do was see that they did it. Well by gosh there was just the uh...uh...I had uh...I had...I had six of 'em like that inside and the other guy had the seven outside. There was thirteen of 'em. The cook told this fella to clean that stove out a little bit that way and while he went in the pantry to get stuff why and this guy went in there too. And so they was in there longer than I thought they should be and so I went and investigated in there that way and there had this guy and his tongue was hanging out he had him around the neck and he was chokin' the hell out of him...[indecipherable]...kill him. So I just

grabbed him down there that way and uh...ordered him with the rest and we'd take the whole damn bunch back to the...to the prison camp where they had 'em there. And uh...they didn't try ya they just gave you an additional thirty days in the guard house. That's what they did. An extra thirty days. They didn't ask ya...they just took our word for it. And another time on there...this other...this other fella and myself we was guarding a bunch of people out there and prisoners again and there was a fella going down the highway out there along Huntington Boulevard in California and he had a whole big load of...of tangerines. Taking to market and this one fella says gee whiz he says boy I'd like to have some of them. And this fella...it was easy gettin' over the fence there it wasn't a very high fence. And this other guard let this fella go. Well when he got out there that way he says "toodooloo". And he went away see. Well when they got back this fella had to serve his time till they caught him again. And he was there by God for over six months.

Gustafson: Wow. Hmm. Were those American prisoners?

Glafke: Yeah.

Gustafson: What...

Glafke: Soldiers see.

Gustafson: ...what had they done to...

Glafke: Oh hell they...violated the rules you know that is for the....they read the articles of war to ya every night in the uh...in the...in the...in the mess hall.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: If you strike a commissioned officer it's by firing squad. And if you hit an uncommissioned officer it's life in the prison.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: Stuff like that you know. And then you have the...for instance uh...when you have your inspections on Saturday mornings and stuff that way you know and uh...and uh...or...or...well for instance...one time down there in Kelly Field down there a bunch of fellas they had a fella there he used to be in the Phillipines and he was a hard boiled Sergeant and these guys didn't like him on there and he went away one night and the guys there they got the...altogether and they got a damn donkey in there and they put him in his room. And when he got back see well they find out who in the hell did it see and that's how they get 'em in there see. Another doggone thing I...if the fellas on there you know...we had a couple of fellas in our outfit they were dirty you know they wouldn't take a shower or wash or anything. You get 'em out there and roll in...in the dirt and then take 'em in them square buildings you know wooden buildings you know and turn the showers on 'em that way and hose and everything. They'd have to clean up.

Gustafson: Was this in Arcadia that you were guarding the prisoners.

Glafke: Yeah.

Gustafson: What happened after Arcadia? Where did you go next?

Glafke: I stayed right there.

Gustafson: You stayed there?

Glafke: Yeah. This was a balloon school see. There was...there was training...you know there was no uh...there was no uh...just telephones up to the balloon you know the pilots up in the balloon and the people on the ground. There was no radio. There was no...[indecipherable]...or nothing like that...or a two way radio or nothing like. Everything telephoned. And uh...the reason that they'd be up there there was artillery spotters see and uh...and in..in..in..in the war at that time on there when the artillery'd fire you know if they'd be up in the air high up there and they could spot where them shells land that way see. And now they had...they had a map that oh musta been about three-four feet square see. And uh...they'd have these motorcycle and side car. I was with one of them on there too. And you had a flashlight with bombs in the car see and you'd get up in the mountains you know in the foothills and everything that way you know and you throw them things out you know and then they'd...[indecipherable]...the white smoke see and these fellas in the balloon had it spotted on there that way see.

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: And uh tell ya where there's at see. And communicate that to the fellas in the balloon. That's what they're sposed to be see. And these airplanes they make them pictures on there they go down fly so on and uh about every half mile they'd click a picture and then they'd move over you know so far and they...and they'd go back again that way and then they'd develop and put 'em all together see and see it ain't...it was crude them days see. That's what they had.

Gustafson: Did you ever go up in a balloon?

Glafke: Oh yes.

Gustafson: What was that like?

Glafke: Well if I talked to ya like I'm talkin' to you now that way you'd think I was shoutin' to you.

Gustafson: Oh?

Glafke: It's uh...I used to...they used to get a...send a balloon up every morning you know...what they call a weather balloon to find out what the atmosphere was up there and one morning it was misty and it was raining a little bit and misty that way and they sent a balloon up anyway and we got up to about uh...oh I say between eight hundred to a thousand feet something like that and when you get up it's just like when you come out that you come out of a...everything was foamy like...the clouds you know...there's all white clouds below and the sky was blue you know and

the sun was shining you know and you could see the balloon expanding a little bit that way too you know. But the minute when you get through it you come down and it'd be raining down below.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: Yeah. At one time on there in uh...this thing...how long this thing run one hour?

Gustafson: Yeah.

Glafke: And uh...at one time on there they had six balloons up in Arcadia and they had a field. Well this field was uh you know where the court house is or the library is...well that field was at least that square all around see.

Gustafson: Wow.

Glafke: And they had these what they call F...F-W-D's...that was four wheel drive trucks and they was uh...had cables on 'em and them cables go on up to 'em and it'd be a thousand feet up in the air see and uh...they was heavy too see that the balloon couldn't lift 'em up see. And uh...at that time they was using uh...hydrogen gas in 'em see.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: Like the first time. And then they'd uh...well they'd space on maybe...oh a quarter a mile away or maybe a half a mile distance that way in the...in the big circle around that way see. And uh that way the balloons wouldn't...they...they'd stay all still that way see. They wouldn't get tangled up. But one day they got up there that way and there was all the balloons...it was just a very nice day...but all of a sudden we got a wind storm come up and there just uh...

[Side one of tape ends]

[Side two of tape begins]

Glafke: ...on a circle that way the uh cables that held them up there they got together that way see. And they'd...and they'd try to get uh...they couldn't move them trucks because as fast they moved the trucks you know why they...the...the balloons would move too see. So they had to ease 'em down easy that way you know but they didn't want 'em to touch one another. But uh...finally up there one of 'em you know it's the friction the cable on there that way. One of 'em broke loose and he got about uh...oh he musta had a hundred feet of cable on or something that way and I remember yet when that thing come down...it...it...it come like uh that see.

Gustafson: At an angle?

Glafke: The fact of the matter they...they usually went away that way see. But as they haul 'em down this balloon was in that shape about there...in...in a perpendicular position that way and the basket you know was almost was the guy coulda got outta the basket and gotta hold of the rope

and slid down there see. But uh...somehow or another they didn't do that. I guess they was too damned scared there was uh...two people in that basket. Well uh...pretty soon it straightened up and went up in the air. And I could just see it crossing the...them eucalyptus trees there. They was high trees there and went over there and uh...somehow or another that way the basket broke loose there and dropped this fella and they had springs in the...in the bottom of the basket too that way when they come out. He was just the like the a lot of practically broke every bone in his body on that. But that thing drifted away and it drifted towards uh Riverside. And they sent out a couple trucks and myself on the motorcycle with a officer that way to chase it that way you know and get most of it recovered. And they...they found it down there just oh maybe on the other...between Riverside and down there San Diego and uh it got stuck on the bar and the cable got a hold of a bar and it ripped it off that way but somehow the weights on there held the damn thing down. It was quite a deal.

Gustafson: Were there a lot of accidents like that?

Glafke: What?

Gustafson: Were there a lot of accidents like that?

Glafke: Not too many. That's the only accident...oh we had one other one you know they...they was making a...a movie you know...uh...uh...and uh from Hollywood see and uh...something about uh...well they acted it all out on the ground that way you know and this fella you know he's going to go up in the...in the...in a balloon that way and jump out see. And it...it was a love story see. And uh this fella...Harry Brandt (?sp)...he was from Portland, Oregon and him and I were standing there at the...at the...by the...by the...by the uh...garage you know and uh...I don't know if he said it first or if I said it that way...he said wouldn't it be a hell of a note if he jumped out now and get tangled up with his feet that way. And hell he no more than got through...[indecipherable]...and got the words out of their mouth and by golly that's exactly what happened. And they had a hell of a damn balloon again and that ruined the picture see.

Gustafson: How long were you at Arcadia?

Glafke: Oh gosh six...[indecipherable]...possibly almost two years.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: Another thing down there with the...when we got in this...the balloon school...in that...in that place where we was stationed at...there used to be a horse race track and uh a fella by the name of Lucky Baldwin owned that. And uh there was a nice beautiful tree...[indecipherable]...and uh they was...they was cuttin' them trees down on there but this particular tree he wouldn't let 'em cut down. And they had the racetrack already laid out...[indecipherable]...so they had to move that race track a hundred feet out that way on there that way it'd preserve that tree. And that was a beautiful tree out there that way. And uh...but uh...we used to have grandstands along the highway or somewhere that way you know when you have your horse races. And uh...it was what a...a...blow them things up you know because it had to have more room. And uh...so uh one night they put dynamite on 'em and every night about

when they have retreats you know about five o'clock...they had guards out there to stop the traffic see because when they blow that damn stuff up the rocks slide all over that way. And one night it got to be oh pretty damn close to five o'clock and...and uh...uh...I take the Sergeant or the Officer of the Day or I don't know who the hell it was anymore that way...some officer in our camp on there ordered me on a motorcycle and get out there and to hell with that he said get out there damn quick and...damn quick he says. Well I got on my motorcycle and I went down to the main stem out there and just when I was gettin' by the uh main gate I see some soldiers standing at attention you know and they...the band was playing the Star Spangled Banner you know.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: And geez when I got back on there that way...well that...I got out there and uh...they already blew one of 'em up that way you know but uh...I had to hold the traffic backed of it because you had to get a crew out there after a while to clean the streets up. The little stones and rocks and everything else see. And it really just shake the earth around there.

Gustafson: Yeah.

Glafke: When I got back I by gosh every damn guard and officer of the guard and day and everything was there and they...they arrested me. Took my motorcycle and locked me up.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: And I was a man without a country for not stopping and saluting you know when they was taking the flag down and everything else that way and...and uh they couldn't figure out where the hell I was see. And they found out I was in the guard house. Because uh...the...at one spot after nine o'clock it was getting dark over there when they got me out see. They had to do a hell of a lot of explaining to get me out there.

Gustafson: Hmm. How did serving in the Army change your attitude towards life or anything when you came back when the war was over?

Glafke: Well...we didn't uh...on the first place we didn't have nobody say well...you fellas that was in the service we can get a job here or something like that you know. Nothing like that. You just chipped it for yourself and got whatever you could see. And after I got back I just...of course times were different then too that way...you just laid around that way until you got a job. I finally got a job. And I finally got a job bus driving. I was driving from Michigan City to Gary.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: And uh...then uh...I did that for quite a while along there and uh I used to come to LaPorte here to see uh...a fella here you know that we used to do that before when I went to the service you know. The fellas come from LaPorte and Michigan City and meet in Michigan City and we'd come over to LaPorte you know and we'd go over the tavern a little bit and shoot the bull. I used to...[indecipherable]...stuff that way and I happened to be over here one day and the old Fire Chief on there...Tom Whorwell (?sp) wanted to know if I was...wanted a job on the Fire

Department. And I said I don't know. And he says...well...he says I need some fireman. And I said well...I was once before. And I said well I give it a whirl. So I come back and uh when I came to work that way I'd go to the bus that night to Gary and uh...that was my last runnin' so when I got through...see they...they worked nights a little bit over there too you not...over in Gary. A lot of people in Michigan City worked over in Gary in the steel mills you know. And when I got back I was...when I come back to LaPorte that morning to go to work why he told me my job was the back end on the higher man. I had no training...what the hell...you learnt as you went. And uh...I set down in the chair and went to sleep. I was tired.

Gustafson: Yeah.

Glafke: So that's how I got in LaPorte. Didn't have no idea to staying here at all that way. But uh I lost my mother when I was just oh...nine-ten years old and uh...it...it was an...it was an exciting experience for me to be out see that way see. I spose every young fella's got the same idea see. The...the...that's an adventure that like see. That's because when I got home from the service that way I...uh...if you had any clothes that wasn't issued to you that way they wouldn't discharge you from the Army but I cleaned mine out pretty good but after a while when I got home and unpacked it I had shirts in there that was about an eighth of an inch thick. It was the...it was uh...issued for Siberia.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: That's where the...this outfit that had found out you know to another friend of mine that way that we were supposed to go to Siberia. Cause they had a...you...you read in the...in the...in the Legion...I don't know if you read the Legion magazine about the...about the Polar Bear division?

Gustafson: No.

Glafke: Well that uh...they had...uh...a lot of troops over from America that way fighting the Russians.

Gustafson: Oh?

Glafke: Yeah.

Gustafson: Right after the first World War?

Glafke: Yeah.

Gustafson: And you woulda been one of the guys they...

Glafke: Yeah. Right...a Polar Bear. They call it the Polar...Polar Bear Division.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: But uh...I read an article about that here just a short time the Legion magazine. But anyway...gettin' back to here again that way...well I just got back here that way and uh...well they just...[indecipherable]...just a come along that way. That's it see. And uh...in...in a way I'll tell ya...it...it...it give ya the Army...those...those people that was fortunate enough that didn't get killed or get wounded or maimed or anything that way...to me I think it...it...it's a wonderful experience for any young man to go through see. For the simple reason that way you...you learn just...you learn something then you look...and you...but today there ain't no discipline. No...no discipline. No...nobody pays no attention to...it takes...now them days I worked in the Fire Department on there twenty-four hours a day you get one day a week off. That's it.

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: And uh...we had horses them days too see. And uh...you hadda clean off the stalls and things of that kinds you. But...somebody told ya something to do it you did it. See. That's it. Today you tell somebody to do it they won't do it. See. Look at the people...look at...look at the policemen and firemen and teachers and all that stuff you know. They...they...they're defying court. They're defying the...the...the uh...law. That they themselves is supposed to protect you know the policemans and so forth and the teachers and everything. How in the hell can you expect kids to uh...to obey the law when the teachers break 'em?

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: Sure they need more money. We needed money too that way but by golly boy when it uh...I know one time we was wanting a twenty-five dollar raise and we got five dollars and if you didn't like it you quit and got another job. That's it. Well today they get that fringe benefits and everything. Well that's just as much as a raise. Nobody paid my insurance them days. I paid my own. I bought my own uniform. My own clothes and everything. Nobody bought it for me. And the only dog gone thing that they...they give me was a rubber coat and a helmet. That's all. I furnished my own boots and everything else. In fact I furnished my own rubber coat.

Gustafson: Hmm. Was there uh...much of a rivalry between Michigan City and LaPorte in those days?

Glafke: Always was. Always was. But uh...not...not so much in...in uh...police or fire department or anything that way. It...it was mostly in baseball or school activities or something of that kind see. But as far as police and fireman no there was no rivalry that way at all.

Gustafson: What....

Glafke: My...my dad on there was on the police department and uh...he had uh...they used to have race riots over there.

Gustafson: In Michigan City?

Glafke: Oh absolutely. And uh...

Gustafson: What...what years would this have been then?

Glafke: Well way way back in the thirties.

Gustafson: 1930s?

Glafke: Thirties...twenties...in the late twenties-thirties and uh...they'd uh...well...the blacks you know they'd have the...the race riot out in Canada everything that way and the cops used to have these here uh...uh...billy...they wasn't billy clubs they was just a little uh...well a sap or something that way it's about that long and it had lead in there see. And then they had rawhide around that way you could put it around here that way so they couldn't get on it. Well hell if a guy become unruly they'd rap you at the head with that way and knock you down. And you might be out.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: Well they didn't say well I'm gonna read ya the law or anything that way before arresting ya. Why hell they didn't do that see. And then...then these blacks had these...these razors you know. And you know how they work a razor don't ya?

Gustafson: No.

Glafke: Well...I...I'll show ya after while. They got one there that way. They opened 'em up and put 'em up that way and hell the...man I'll tell ya...you ain't got a Chinaman's chance. They can swing that around and cut ya right in two.

Gustafson: Were these big riots? A lot of people involved in these riots?

Glafke: Oh sure. Hell they threwed my dad in the harbor that way and cut his uniforms up and stuff like that. You betcha.

Gustafson: Wow. Hmm.

Glafke: You betcha. Turn it off once that way and I'll go where to show you where the razor was. And they was to drive that...like that. Another thing...policemans walked the beat them days too see. And uh...course people have problems you know. Instead of going to a lawyer or something the policeman was their friend. And uh...they'd ask him what they should do and the policeman advised 'em what to do. And they'd have a lot of respect for a policeman see. Which today they don't see. That's the difference. And...and to me on there that way I think the whole system of justice is all wrong. Instead of having more prisons and uh...and uh...jails and everything like that...they make the laws a little bit stiffer and then they'd have on top of that...you go over in Europe for instance today and you drink and if you're involved in a minor accident and you drink you lost your license forever for life.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And they could do the same thing in this country.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: And drugs like that too see. Because there's too many people gettin' killed that way. Innocent people gettin' killed see. And uh... people don't have no respect for the law no more see. They just practically take the law into their own hands. Well them days on there uh...the policeman was the neighborhoods friend. And they walked the beat that way and they knew them and he'd stop and talk with 'em and...[indecipherable]...like that you know and. That's the difference in times.

Gustafson: How was...was your dad killed on the force?

Glafke: Yes.

Gustafson: What happened? Was that in a riot?

Glafke: No. No...he...he walked the beat and all...you know where the uh...uh...Franklin Street is where uh Jewels store...you know about that way...in Michigan City over there. Well uh...that parking lot there where the Jewel store used to be the Pierre-Marquette (?sp) Depot.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: See. And uh...and on south Franklin Street when you cross the track going south there's a liquor store on the corner.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: Well that was a call box right there. Well my dad...he called in there that way. And then he went over to the depot and started a fire for uh...the uh...man opened the...the depot you know in the morning and then he'd walk down Franklin Street on the way back to...to the...depot...the police station see. And he met this Mexican. And any suspicious character ran out at the street they locked 'em up. See. You know in order to find out where he's going see. And uh...so he asked this fella what he's doin'. And the fella he didn't...he couldn't speak no English. So my dad took him over to that call box over there and called up the station and tell 'em to bring the paddy wagon down there he had a prisoner. And uh...now then...it...when they search ya they get ya off balance and make ya lean onto something you know and then they search ya see. Them days they didn't have that on it. They didn't have no police training like that. Like they do now. So...they made him put his hands up there and while he searched his arms all the way down and legs that way when he come down this guy had a 45 right up his sleeve pressed up there. And hit him right in the eye and killed him right there.

Gustafson: Gee. Hmm.

Glafke: And while he was talkin' to the uh...the Sergeant of the police station they heard the shot up there and that's how they got the guy see. And uh...there was just a light...a light snow all on

the ground. Just enough to make a print in the snow. And this fella had a shoe on that had a whole in...in the...in the...in the right about the big toe see. And that's how they found him see. Al Spares (?sp) in Michigan City wrote the story.

Gustafson: Oh sure.

Glafke: See. And the...and the detective magazine. And uh...they finally caught the guy and that's another thing on there. Uh...course maybe I shouldn't say that on there that way. Maybe people might go to work and make something out of it. I'll tell ya after when you shut that thing off.

Gustafson: Okay. I can turn it off now if you wanna...

Glafke: Yeah.

Gustafson: Uh from living in Michigan City and LaPorte, in both towns uh what would you say in those days was the biggest difference between the towns? Was there a different atmosphere or attitude between 'em?

Glafke: Well there was a different class of people for one thing. The place where I lived they was pretty down on the Germans. All that...all the back of the prison on there and all along Willard Ave and out there that was all German people that way you know and Polish people it seems that time and they all kept up their property nice and everything that way and uh...and uh...there used to be a theater down there on...on the...on Willard Avenue too d'ya know that?

Gustafson: No.

Glafke: Well you know where the 8th Street and Willard Avenue is?

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: Well there was uh...let's see...there was a...it's...it's about uh...there used to be Wilkie's Bakery and Grocery was on the corner and then there was another store there but there's another store looks kinda square in the front. That was called the Willard Theater.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: And my brother was operating that theater. Willard Theater. Movie house. That's right. And uh...and then you know another thing that my grandfather and them they'd give me a dime and go over to the saloon and get a bucket of beer that way you know for a dime. Heck you'd get a big bucket of beer for a dime you know. And...and that's what they do. A lot of them Germans and then...and...and the prison over there they used to have a band you know and they'd have band concerts there every Sunday and maybe sometime every day and...and as we'd sit in the back of the house that way you know when I was a youngster that way...on the...my dad had a grape arbor you know and it...it just covered on the sides you know and they had benches you know and....and this uh wind blow from down the south you could hear the strains of the prison

band. And then uh...and then also we used to go down there on uh...uh...fishing in the boat that way and there was uh...on...when you go down Lincoln Avenue. Now that's closed now I guess a little bit...I guess they got that street closed to go to the lake. Well if you walk on Lincoln Avenue and cross that there used to be a building out there that was the prison water works.

Gustafson: Oh.

Glafke: And uh we...we'd leave our fish poles in there and when we'd catch fish we'd leave they...they...they...them prisoners lived out there see. And we'd give 'em fish you know and stuff like that you know and they'd take care of our boats for us you know and stuff like that see. And uh some of the things like that...[indecipherable]...and the...you don't walk like that no more see.

Gustafson: Would people use horses and buggies a lot more in those days?

Glafke: Yes. My dad had uh...I think he had at one time a half a dozen horses. You go out and uh...say you go out on a Monday and Tuesday. The most of your...where your customers go out close to your store...you go out and you take orders what they want and you mark it down. And then uh...we'd have milk and we'd have grains and stuff like that too you know to sell. And then uh...we'd put the orders up you know and lay 'em all down and maybe on a Thursday...or...when Thursdays it was the days the farmers came to town. And uh they'd bring all their stuff in there and uh...and uh...my dad...on Willard Avenue there's this place there between 7th and 8th Street on the west side you'll see where the pavement the curb is back towards the sidewalk see. Well right side of that house was a store. My dad had built a store there. And uh...one...one time there was a fella come in there with some cantaloupes. You might think that I'm tellin' ya a big story but them cantaloupes they was big as watermelons. Now I'm not kiddin' ya. And they sold for twenty-five cents a piece. The meat was in there that thick in 'em. They was delicious.

Gustafson: Did...did he grow 'em here?

Glafke: No...this farmer...some farmer growed 'em but the next year he never got any like that. And they...they brought the cantaloupes in there and I'm tellin' ya fella...I'm tellin' ya the honest to God's truth. They was as big as watermelons and they was delicious and they was sellin' 'em for twenty-five cents.

Gustafson: Hmm.

Glafke: And he used to have 'em pile up in front. We'd have a regular uh...uh...out in front stand you know that way where you can go. And then you'd deliver them groceries after that see on a Friday and Saturday you'd deliver 'em see. Get up mornings early that way and clean the horses up, curry 'em you know and feed 'em when everything gets 'em up. Now we had a milk route too. We'd go out and...and uh...and uh...deliver milk.

Gustafson: Was LaPorte quite a bit like Michigan City in those days?

Glafke: Smaller. LaPorte was smaller then. You know where Liston Brown's Realty shop is down Lincolnway? That used to be a big feed mill out there.

Gustafson: Oh?

Glafke: Yeah. And uh...and where Casper's Television shop is on...[indecipherable]...Avenue there you know where the LaPorte Bank is back in that way right across there that used to be a horse barn...livery barn. And uh that Farm Bureau place...that red building on Clay and State Street...that used to be a livery barn too.

Gustafson: Is that by...[indecipherable]...Garage? Is that on that block? I mean next block up.

Glafke: You mean uh Casper's?

Gustafson: No the uh insurance. That's on State and Clay?

Glafke: No that was...

Gustafson: Okay...I...I know where you're talking about. Yeah. I was thinking the wrong side. Right. But the two towns, would you say that uh...the atmosphere was different? Was there more activity in Michigan City or were there more...[indecipherable]...

Glafke: Yeah of course it naturally would be over there that way on account of the uh...out there in Michigan City out there where that Eastgate Shopping Center there used to be a park there. Doll's Park. D-O-L-L. Doll's Park. That was in Michigan City. And they used to have street cars here and some of them big baseball games out there and everything you know and then out on 10th and Willard Avenue west of 10th and Willard Avenue in that area there was no house there that used to be a big ballpark there. And they have circuses in there too. See. Big circus come in.

Gustafson: Hmm-hmm.

Glafke: It...it...it's...it's kinda different now that way you know. Times has changed that way.

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: And they'd have uh...uh...course Michigan City had the uh...the waterfront over there you know and the lake you know and there's more activity over there than be over here see. Although they'd have a lot of baseball over here and things of that kind. So.

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: But most of the times over there that way they...they was about the same over there. Course being this would be the county seat there'd be different type activities here see. And them times you'd have the A.J. Rumley Company instead of the Allis-Chalmers here. See they made them steam tractors at that time see.

Gustafson: Right.

Glafke: And that's a thing that passed...[indecipherable]... It was more a farmer county or that way and stuff like that see. But as time goes along they grew up.

Gustafson: I don't really have any more questions. Do you have any more stories or anything that you'd like to say particularly? Before I turn the machine off?

Glafke: Oh I don't know by gosh the only thing that I uh...I lost my wife here since...in 1964 and I live here by myself...[indecipherable]... I'm going with another lady out there and uh...just uh...you know...just socialbility that's all you know that way and...companionship you see. That's the whole thing see. And try to keep myself busy. It's just uh...well...I'm eighty-three years old and I don't...[indecipherable]...I just take it a little bit easy that way that's all. I work on my car a little bit. I'll clean the trunk out now once that way. That's about it that way. But I enjoy every minute. I...I...I retired from television-radio repair here about five years ago. And uh...I still got people that see me on the street that way and wanna know if I'm still doin' any television work because I had a lot of satisfied customers and uh...course them days seven dollars and a half was worth...[indecipherable]...fix...[indecipherable]...in the home...[indecipherable]...today on there that way honest to God twenty-three and twenty-five dollars on there just to come out that way and...well I...I ain't brought up in this age that's all. I ain't brought up in this age. That'd be just something that uh...well I tell ya'...why I just couldn't sleep nights that way that's all.

[Side two of tape ends]