

SDSU Archives Oral History

Interviewee: Calvert Norland

Interviewer: Lyn Olsson

Date: February 20, 1995

Today's date is February 20, 1995. My name is Lyn Olsson. The following is an interview with SDSU Emeritus faculty member, Calvert E. Norland, Professor of Zoology from 1947 to 1976. This interview is being conducted with support from a John Adams Humanities Minigrant.

Calvert Norland (CN): I have a terrible memory now. I've lost most of my contacts.

Lyn Olsson (LO): Do you feel that you've lost more of your memory more recently?

CN: In a way, yes.

LO: Because you don't have the same contacts out here at State that you used to?

CN: I hardly have any at all now. My only contacts, really, are just with the luncheon out at Anthony's.

LO: You're going out to Anthony's?

CN: Yes. I go there fairly often. I try to keep in touch with some people. But, then, a lot of people are not into that. Kurt Bohnsack, for example. I've known him for a long time and I've liked him very much.

LO: He's a great guy.

CN: It's only rarely that he comes out there to the luncheon. I don't know why. He's always welcome just like anybody who has

been a teacher here at San Diego State. But he rarely comes, so I never see him. This man I'm pointing to here, I haven't seen in years.

LQ: I wish we could print that name. Who does attend those luncheons out there, then? I went to one once, you know. But a lot of those people that were at that luncheon are no longer alive.

CN: That's right. Well, I don't even know the names of a lot of them. I know Crouch best of all. I've known Crouch more closely than anyone in the faculty. We were very good friends. I always liked him very much. I always try to find out about his wife. She's not well.

LQ: She isn't?

CN: No. She's in very poor shape.

LQ: Oh, I didn't know that. Mary, right?

CN: Mary. But Dr. Crouch is very sharp, I think. He manages to keep abreast of things. He knows a lot of people -- being a Department Chairman makes a big difference.

LQ: Did you ever serve as Department Chair?

CN: No.

LQ: Did you ever want to?

CN: No. I never liked that idea.

LQ: Do you recall what the hiring process was for you when you came here after the war? What was it like? Did you have to go through an interview?

CN: When I was still in the Army, I decided I wanted to teach at a college. I thought of San Diego State.

LO: Why?

CN: Partly because of Dr. Harwood. Dr. Harwood was an alumnus at Pomona College and went to Cornell. He got his Doctorate there. Then, he came here. I knew Dr. Hilton at Pomona. He was a professor I had, and Harwood did too.

LO: As an undergrad at Pomona, you had Hilton?

CN: Yes. I [] about Harwood. Not too much but I did inquire. I wrote a letter to San Diego State's Zoology Department asking if there was a possibility of being in Zoology. I was about to get out of the Army and I got a very favorable reply from Harwood. We found out that we had similar professors at Pomona College. You see, it was a case where being at a certain college made a big difference.

LO: It made a big difference. Pomona was the place to be.

CN: He liked Pomona College very much. They lived up that way anyway so it was a convenient place for him to come. His wife, also, was from Pomona College. Pomona College students tend to stick together, I guess, because I married somebody from Pomona College, too. We were very good friends. It didn't take any preliminaries to get well acquainted with him and compare notes about Pomona College. We were all very compatible. We all liked cats, too. One of the cats I had for the longest time was just a pet that I got as a kitten from Dr. Harwood. I had him for years and years. We used to take care of their place if they went away for the summer after I started teaching here. That made a very nice arrangement.

LO: How were you hired here?

CN: It was through Dr. Harwood specifically.

LO: So, he recommended you and, then, the president gave his stamp of approval?

CN: That was the way it was. It's because Dr. Harwood was Head of the Department. If you're the Head, you have a certain privilege, I suppose. If you heard of someone who was at Pomona - - Pomona College people stick together quite often.

LO: They have quite a reputation when it comes to Zoology, Botany, and Biology.

CN: They've got some very good people. Dr. Hilton is from Cornell and Dr. Harwood was at Cornell. I think they may have known each other from a long time back. There was no hold up at all. I just came directly in from the Army.

LO: What did you do in Honolulu?

CN: I was, sort of, in the Sanitary Corps -- partly. Anything that had to do with insects, control of any kind, and just sanitation in general.

LO: This was with the military. You were in the Army.

CN: I was in the Sanitary Corps in the Army.

LO: For some reason I thought that you had one year off from military service and you went over to Honolulu just to see what it was like.

CN: I was there in an official capacity. Among the last episodes there, I happened to be going to China. I was going to Shanghai.

LO: When was the trip to Shanghai?

CN: That was after the war was declared ended. I was there for a year or two.

LO: Tell me about some of your world travels. How did you get to Shanghai, and how did you end up in Calcutta, and what other places did you go to, and why did you go there?

CN: I think that was the way the services had it, at the time that war was being declared and people were being drafted. I didn't want to be drafted so I went to Washington, D.C. and stuck around there. I finally got an opportunity to get commissioned in the Army in the Sanitary Corps.

LO: You chose what you wanted to do?

CN: I chose what I wanted to do so that I did what I could do the best. I got good training. I started at Camp Pickett in Virginia. I was a student there, then, and this was really like going to college again but in a very specialized way.

LO: You had already gotten your undergraduate degree by then -- before you entered the military?

CN: I had my Master's Degree. So, I got in. I had very good training. I must say that the people I had were splendid. They had the ability to put the problems over because a lot of them were from World War I. When I got into the Army at Camp Pickett, they associated me with the Medical Department. This was beside the duties that I had which were sort of routine, you know. So, I would be in the office, usually -- attached to the Office of the Surgeon who was in charge. So I had good medical training only in the sense that I was useful in inspection in barracks for cleanliness and for hygienic purposes, and in mess halls for the things that you could get into trouble with in mess halls, including, even, cockroaches. They had bed bug problems in the

military. I had the training, though, for that sort of thing. It was always enjoyable for me to do things that I knew about and could do. Then I got sent to Carlisle Barracks for further training in (what would be a good term for that?)... it included [] water sanitation, barracks inspections for all kinds of vermin, bed bugs, cockroaches and the like.

LQ: Anything the military might be confronted with wherever they are around the world.

CN: That's right.

LQ: You said Carlisle Barracks?

CN: Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania. Who was the president who lived near Carlisle Barracks?

LQ: You're asking somebody who is not really up on American history.

CN: What was his name? Well, it was one of our presidents. I think he served over there as president. Well, it doesn't matter. When I was there I met a lot of people. One day I was crossing what looks very much like a campus -- it was a training school for people -- and somebody called my name. At that time I was a Lieutenant. He said, "Lieutenant Norland." I looked around and there was Professor Hermes who was my teacher in [] in Berkeley. Hermes was in the First World War doing practically the same thing but he was really not so much an entomologist as he was a parasitologist. He was really one of the primary people interested in furthering the cause of malaria control in California which we had a big problem with.

LQ: Did we have a malaria problem in California?

CN: Yes, a long time ago. He was one of the first persons that I ever heard about that was connected with the... He was a professor at the University of California at Berkeley and he had some connections along with the Health Department in the State of California so he was perfect for that. I think he was maybe a Colonel before he left the Army in the First World War. I remember seeing him though. I had a very good time because he was there. When he called my name, I knew right away that he'd picked me out and knew who I was. He said, "I'm going to be giving a lecture on parasitic worms, directly, and I want you to help me out." So, I went to his lecture on the day that he was giving it. It was a nice lecture hall with lots of students -- right up to the podium where he was giving his lecture -- and he started talking about these worms. He said, "Now, I have this case that I am going to give to you and it's like a tube." The top of the tube opened but he didn't tell me what was in there.

LO: It was not glass. You couldn't see what was inside.

CN: No. I didn't know what was in it. He said, "I want you to stand up here, beside me. I'll be at the podium and I'll be talking." There were the soldiers right in front of us. He said, "Now, when I say a certain word, I want you to pull the top off and point the tube to the audience." I imagined that it was one of those spring snakes, so I flung it out to the audience. They were scared to death. He got the biggest kick out of that and laughed. It was a nice introduction, wasn't it? It was just a lot of fun and I enjoyed seeing him again and talking with him. I don't know that he lived that much longer. I was never able to

see him again except at that training school. I learned most of the things that I needed to know there at Carlisle Barracks in a very good way, I think.

LO: What kind of experiences did you have around the world?

CN: Most of my work, then, was connected with a Surgeon's Office of some kind. Each base, in that part of the world overseas, was pretty much just a repetition of what an Army is composed of here. You'd have a surgeon for a particular military organization. I was at Myrtle Beach Bombing and Gunnery Range, for example, for a year or two.

LO: Which is where?

CN: Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. It's a popular vacation place for people who live in the South. It's down below Virginia. The bombing and gunnery range was built right in the middle of a swamp in back of the beach. The beach is beautiful. Everybody goes to the beach for the summer. It's not too far from Charleston. I got a chance to see Charleston.

LO: You've seen a few places, haven't you?

CN: I have. Then, I went from there to the air base at Palm Beach, Florida. Palm Beach has the spa there. It's very fashionable. We had an Officer's Club arrangement. Somebody gave it over to us for the duration. It had a swimming pool, marvelous kitchen facilities where they made cocktails and we had all kinds of drinks there. West Palm Beach was where we lived. It was adjoined. Palm Beach is right on the coast and West Palm Beach is the town, generally, and, then, the air base was beyond that. I stayed there for, it seemed like more than a year, but maybe it

was only a year.

LQ: You met your wife at Berkeley. Was she traveling around with you all the time when you were in the military?

CN: Pretty much, until I got overseas. Then, we went from Myrtle Beach, to Palm Beach, and from there I got a lot of training in mosquito control because we had lots of facilities, lots of water running, and alligators, lots of snakes, lots of malaria because of the mosquitoes. I stayed there and acted as an entomologist. As soon as you were gone, somebody else came in. They were training somebody else. So, I got to meet several of the people who had already been there. I went from there to New York City where they were contemplating forming a new Air Transport Command. It would be just for the United States but somehow or other it never worked out. We were on, I think, Pine Street. It's right in the middle of the [climaxial] center of the country. I was there for, what seemed to me, quite a while until they finally decided not to push that through. Then, they sent me to the military base in Missouri, below Kansas City, right on the river. I stayed there for a year or two. That was a long time, it seemed to me. In the meantime they sent me to a malariology school in Omaha, Nebraska. It was the old fort at Omaha and they sent me for additional malaria training. It wasn't so much the mosquitoes as it was the malarial organisms themselves like the plasmodia.

LQ: But don't you have to have mosquitoes?

CN: Yes. They did. We had lots of water and lots of opportunity to sample mosquitoes but you have to remember that malaria is,

ordinarily, more tropical in its behavior. There was plenty of work in Florida to do because everything is warm there. With the Gulf, of course, there's water all over, and breeding grounds, and everything is ideal. In Nebraska, there was very little. There are malaria mosquitoes and there are rivers but it's too cold for them to really become an epidemic form like they were in the Carolinas and in Florida. I was going to the part of the world where there was lots of water, lots of mosquitoes, and lots of malaria. That was good training. I got the chance to study the plasmodia, and details so that I could identify them. But I also got a lot of other things. DDT was just on the market. It was just coming in to use in the military. They had a little bit that they were using there just to see what happens -- how do you put it on, how much, and so on. We tried it. Immediately I could see that everything is killed. It doesn't matter what it is -- fish, any kind of thing that lived in the water. That's when I started to be very wary of the idea of using wholesale DDT. But I felt safe.

LQ: Was there any other eradication method?

CN: That's a good question. I would have tried fuel oil or something very light that would dissipate. But you put DDT in the water and it kills everything.

LQ: Did the military use it, though?

CN: Oh, yes. I was not happy about that because if it did that much damage right in front of me, I knew it had to be that way everywhere. But, to some people, the war is everything and human life is more valuable than anything else. But do you have to go

to that extreme? But, now, in a barracks, it is safe -- safe in the sense that you don't come in contact with it. You spray or you fumigate with cyanide. I would prefer fumigating and killing bed bugs that way. They lived in the cracks in the wall and they would come out and bite you.

LO: They would go into the bed and vacate during the day.

CN: That's right. That's different from mosquitoes. So, you have a closed environment. That has it's problems but I thought it was much safer. We tried a little of that and I continued to use DDT that way but not in the water if I could avoid it. To me that was dangerous because you killed the fish, and if you killed the fish, you killed the livelihood of the people who lived there who need the fish.

LO: And, in the long run, you are doing more harm than good because, of course, the fish eat the mosquitoes.

CN: The first criticism I ever had when I started teaching after the war was from a student who said, "I like your course, all right, but I think you are old fashioned because you didn't want to use DDT much." I said, "I don't mind being criticized for it but if you're going to recommend it in agriculture, you're going to cause problems, too."

LO: How long ago did that student criticize you?

CN: It was shortly after I came to UCLA. I had been there about a year.

LO: This was still when DDT was the wonder remedy for everything.

CN: I always tried to avoid it where possible because when we

started using it in India I said to myself, "We're killing all the fish. We may be killing mosquito larvae too, but the soldiers aren't that thick in there and the natives have to live on the fish. That's what they are eating. That's their livelihood."

LO: Tell me now, you went over to India and spent some time in Calcutta. Was that primarily in Calcutta?

CN: Yes. What I did was I went, then, from the United States (shortly after I came back from Carlisle Barracks and malaria school in Nebraska) and got assigned to Calcutta. I went by plane from New York City.

(Side Two -- Tape One)

CN: It's off the South coast of Africa. From there we went to Casablanca. I stayed in Casablanca for about a week or more, only because I wanted to. I could have just gone straight on to Calcutta but I wanted to see the Walled City. I never got a chance anyway. They wouldn't let me in. I stayed there, though, and enjoyed it. I corrected a few sanitary problems they had. They had a motel -- a modern resort. Casablanca is very modern, very French. I noticed in this building where we were staying, it was like a fancy hotel. They had all these stalls along the side -- toilets. They were all downstairs. I looked in there and said, "What are those brown marks I see all over the wall on one side of me?" It's only on one side because they only use one hand -- there's no paper, and they just use the wall, see? That's interesting, isn't it? It's, of course, the Moslem way, at least in that situation.

LO: I didn't know that.

CN: The next thing I saw is the natives scrubbing the floor of this motel converted to a place for people in the Army to stay as they went from one place to another. I said, "Where are they getting that water in the buckets?" And I looked and they are taking it out of the big bag that's up in front, the [enlister] bag which has water that is disinfected so that you don't get a disease from it. They are dipping their dirty buckets in there and taking it out, you know?

LO: You mean this is water that you are supposed to drink?

CN: Well, we were supposed to be drinking it but I thought I could make a fuss, see? So, that's what I did and we got that one corrected. I went to see the Health Officer for Casablanca. He was French.

LO: So, you made some very sorely needed corrections there in Casablanca.

CN: Yes. Well, it was just sheer chance because I was curious. I went up and saw the Health Officer who has this marvelous apartment overlooking the whole area of Casablanca. It must have been four stories up. It was absolutely beautiful. I had a little experience right from the beginning.

LO: Good, practical experience.

CN: Yes, good, practical experience. Just exactly what I was paid for which I respect them for very much. Then, I went from there to Cairo, Egypt and I allowed myself to be grounded there for a week on account of a cold that I had developed. So, I had a chance to explore and I got to see some pyramids.

LO: Were you purchasing books along the way?

CN: Yes, I did.

LO: So, you were buying books as you were traveling. Some of them were not bound.

CN: I could never resist a book. I got a nice two-volume set on the flora of Egypt by some author there that I had heard about. The books are beautifully illustrated but not too large. I could take them. I bought them and I put them on the plane when I went on to go to my next stop in Caraci, the capital city of what is now Pakistan. Pakistan was part of India at that time and the British were in control of all of it. Caraci is where the hangar was for the zeppelin that blew up. It was right near the base where I was. It was a military base for flyers -- for the British. It was about seven miles from the airport to Caraci which was the big city in that end of the world. That was the place where we all entered by air. I enjoyed that stay. I stayed there about a week. I got acquainted with the air base and how it operated, and with where the soldiers lived in the barracks. It was important for me because I knew if I were in malaria control those would be the types of places my problems would come from and also from hospitals in air bases or in places where you might have open air theaters and it's warm and mosquitoes like to be out. I stopped and looked at the military base and I looked in the air hangar which interested me because of the zeppelin. Of course, the zeppelin wasn't there. The hangar wasn't in use very much but it was so large that it had a climate of it's own. Sometimes it would rain in there when it wasn't raining outside.

LO: I'm not surprised to hear it. That's the same as the huge

dirigible hangar up in Orange County.

CN: Is that right? I was so amazed at that. I thought that was wonderful. I stayed about a week there and bought a lot of books.

LO: Would you pack up the books and ship them home?

CN: Yes. I'd try to do that. I wanted to tell you about my experience when I left Cairo after about a week. We had to stop and tank up a plane. There were oil wells right from the beginning on the little islands right on the end of the peninsula. We stopped there and it was hot. It was late at night and I just got out and walked around. You could hardly breathe, it was so hot. They tanked up and then we went on. Somewhere in the middle of the next day, or in the late morning of the next day, we went over Bhagdad. The pilot said, "We are now going over Bhagdad. Be sure to look at that." So, we did. It was just a little place down there with a river running right through the center of the town. That's the only chance I had to see Bhagdad. It was fun. Then, I went on to Caraci. Then, from Caraci I went directly to Calcutta. I think we stopped for a refueling in New Delhi or someplace like that, and then on to Calcutta. My quarters were with Air Transport Command. They were along the Hoogly River, a number of miles -- maybe eight or 10 miles from Calcutta itself. It was a jute mill and the British had taken it over for military use. We used that as headquarters. I stayed in town. I decided I didn't want to live out there. It was just too monotonous and too dead. I lived in a hotel in Calcutta. Every day I would take a military bus. I had one hotel room in the middle of the hotel. There was a dining hall below which the

British used quite largely. I got a good chance to get acquainted with what it was like to live in a big crowded city like Calcutta.

LO: Even then, during the war years, it was a densely populated area.

CN: It was very interesting, to say the least. I learned a lot by doing that. I found out what kind of situations soldiers could get themselves into if they did a lot of traveling around in a big city like Calcutta. What are the hazards? You could get bitten by a malaria infested mosquito on your hind end at night. You had to see that the room was screened. I had to see that there was mosquito netting over my cot so that I wouldn't get bitten because there was a patio down below. My room was so small that I had just one cot for a single person to sleep on and it could only be placed one way because it was too big to be placed the other way. The room had one window at the end, and one door at the other end.

LO: Well, it was easier to catch any mosquitoes in a room that small.

CN: That's right and that's what I did. I got a chance to see the kind of life that more Hindus knew about than Americans. I had lots of liberty to do things.

LO: Just as long as you did your work.

CN: Right, exactly. One thing I loved was writing malaria reports each month. I remember one time in Kunming, China I met a friend of mine that I had gone to school with. He had then gone to the American Museum of Natural History in the big park in New

York City. He was an [anatomologist] by that time, there, and he hated to do reports. I said, "I don't mind." I could do research that way because I bought lots of literature and I read up on all the mosquito problems and malaria problems.

LQ: Did you ever come down with malaria yourself?

CN: No. I was careful. I had to be. These soldiers are sitting out there at night in the warm climate with their pants rolled up, sleeves rolled up, and they are getting bitten around the neck. It was a matter of malaria disciplined control. We said, "You have to put on the ointment to repel mosquitoes, and you have to have your shirts buttoned, and you have to have your pants rolled down, and your sleeves rolled down."

LQ: It was hot though.

CN: Yes, I know but it's the price you pay. It's either that or malaria. I hadn't been back in Calcutta more than three weeks and they had a malaria epidemic in Caraci (where I'd just been) that was probably the biggest malaria epidemic that had happened.

LQ: This is for the military personnel?

CN: Yes, for the military personnel. The motor pool officer was down, the Surgeon was down -- everybody was sick with malaria. We went back and it was just a matter of strict discipline, enforcement of all the rules, uses of all the things that we had, and control. That was the only time I ever had the problem. It was just about three weeks after I left.

LQ: Can we talk, now, a little bit more about San Diego State? It's getting late and I don't want to keep you too much longer. You were in the first wave of faculty members that were hired

right after World War II.

CN: It must have been about then.

LO: I think they started hiring people around 1946, maybe even earlier than that, but, anyway, you were part of that first wave. Did you find yourself among the faculty members that had to teach classes in disciplines that they were not real familiar with because there was such a high demand for classes and the demand had not yet been filled by new faculty members? Was that a problem for you?

CN: Actually, it wasn't a problem for me because I could design a course at my ability to accommodate. I tried not to get into anything that I didn't know anything about. [Anamology] was easy. I taught medical [anamology] right off. I'd already had classes in it at Berkeley and I'd had more training in that than most people would get in any other discipline.

LO: You knew it inside and out.

CN: Yes. I don't know how dentists or doctors would have gotten more training but, at least for me, I was, then, teaching practical courses in economic [anamology] and medical [anamology].

LO: The reason why I ask that is because I've heard from some faculty members that there was such a high influx of students (the number of students was so high) and they didn't have enough faculty members yet to teach all the required courses. So, they were all, kind of, filling in wherever they could and they had to make up on the spur of the moment and teach themselves these things so that they could teach their students.

CN: It wasn't a problem for me. I had enough background and

training already in biology to get away with what I needed to do. Most of the courses were beginning courses, introductory courses, in biology. I had a few of those, too.

LO: Where was your office when you first started here?

CN: It was in one of the temporary buildings. Then, when they built the Zoology building I had a proper office. But in the old system, they were quonset huts and I had my office in a quonset hut. It was all right.

LO: Did you share it with other people because I've heard of anywhere from 10 to 15 faculty members in a quonset hut.

CN: There might have been that many in the building but I never shared with more than one. I shared a room, eventually, in the -- it wasn't the [] building, was it? It wasn't the zoology building. Didn't they tear that down?

LO: No. They haven't torn down any of that.

CN: All right. Then it was the [] met Dorothy Harvey. She had an office in that building.

LO: That's where the campus lab school used to be -- the training school used to be. Then, they converted that to Natural Sciences.

CN: I shared an office with her a long time but not right at the beginning. Well, maybe it was at the beginning.

LO: Would you tell me about Dorothy Harvey?

CN: Dorothy Harvey was the Botany teacher at that time. I shared an office with her for a long time, so I got well acquainted with her. She seemed eccentric, I think, to a lot of people. She was eccentric but, then, I'm used to eccentric people. She used to

take my wife, Betty, and me around quite a lot, to get acquainted with the County, especially places where there was good botanical collecting. It was very easy to do that with Dorothy being a botanist. My wife was a botanist too, and she and Dorothy got along very well -- at least at the beginning of things. Later on, I'm not so sure that Dorothy Harvey didn't die with the same problem that Betty had. They got very difficult, both of them. Well, you would, of course, coming down with Alzheimer's Disease.

LO: That's a very difficult thing to deal with.

CN: It really was terrible. And I never knew if Dorothy was ever diagnosed with that and died of it or not, but it could have been.

LO: Seriously, I can't tell you. I don't know.

CN: Anyway, it wasn't easy to share an office with Dorothy but we did for a long time.

LO: Was she a good instructor? Did the students like her?

CN: Well, yes. It was one of those things where you either thought a lot of her or you didn't like her.

LO: She was probably a pretty tough instructor.

CN: Yes, she was, and she was eccentric which the students knew. I got along with her pretty well. I don't like to quarrel with anybody.

LO: We've got really good photographs of her in her earliest years.

CN: She was very interesting and we went on lots of field trips in those days.

LO: Just all over San Diego County?

CN: Yes. Up to the desert...

LO: Did you collect specimens and press them?

CN: Yes. In the park, a long time ago, we used to do that. I don't think they dare anymore. Of course, it's a big park in Anza Borrego Desert. We took many a trip out there with Dorothy's classes and maybe my classes.

LO: Did you ever take a class out?

CN: Sometimes I would take a class out and we [flecked] insects. Sometimes Dorothy and I would go out together and combine field trips.

LO: Alvena Storm has some interesting stories about how, in the early days, on her field trips, students used to have to take their own cars because there was no centralized transport. Now, they are getting students out there by bus but that wasn't being done yet.

CN: We had to do ours by car, too.

LO: Did you ever have any mishaps or exciting experiences out there in the desert or in the mountains at Cuyamaca?

CN: Not really. The field trips were, sometimes, pretty extended. We'd go out to Salton Sea. We went out to a mountain there that was not well understood or known. I remember taking a class out there. I got a little side-tracked one day and I went by myself. I saw this sharp drop in the cliff side. It went straight up. I worked my way, sort of, up and that got my hand over the edge. I pulled myself up and stared right in the face of a rattlesnake. I dropped down about 10 feet. I said to myself, "Never again will I do a silly thing like this." It could have

bit me right in the face.

LO: That would have been the end of you.

CN: That would have been the end of me. We took lots of field trips to the desert and to the mountains. We'd go up to Palomar. We'd take pretty long trips. We'd go clear out to the various deserts -- not to the Mojave. We had good field trips. Dorothy was good in the field. She knew her plants and could identify them right on the spot. She was used to doing that.

LO: Sure. That was what she did. That was her experience.

CN: It was really wonderful. I learned a lot from her because I had to get familiar with the area.

LO: You had to become familiar with the insects of the area, and you needed to know the plants of the area.

CN: Yes. I got acquainted with Harbison, who was the curator of the insect collection at the Natural History Museum in Balboa Park, and that's how I became familiar with the insects of the area.

LO: Harbison of Harbison Canyon?

CN: Yes, the same family. His grandfather was a pioneer in beekeeping. His grandfather was the first beekeeper in San Diego County. Harbison was interested in insects and I wasn't interested in bees by any means. I was allergic to bees.

LO: I was wondering about that because would you have a couple of books in your collection about beekeeping?

CN: Yes. I collect a lot of books.

[Tape Two]

CN: Harbison was taking a course at Berkeley in [anamology] from

Essing at the same time I was. So, I knew him from up there as a student and when I came down here he was curator of the insects in the museum. I had been in contact with him. Mrs. Higgins was the botanist there. She was very old. She must have been close to 100 years old when she died. Betty and she got along pretty well. Betty worked with her, helped her collect, and brought her lunch occasionally. They worked together quite well.

LQ: I have never had the opportunity to see any kind of resume that you may have worked up in years passed, so I don't know whether you have published extensively. Did you do publishing at all?

CN: No.

LQ: Did you ever work on any special projects? Well, you like to write, so did you do research?

CN: Not really. I did write, kind of, a summary of all the things that I've done.

LQ: I would love to see that. Do you have a copy of that at home?

CN: Yes. Let me tell you what I did because, you see, I worked with Orange County for a long time.

LQ: I didn't know that.

CN: I got out of school and my first job, after I came back from Berkeley (I got my Master's up there), was with the Orange County Agricultural Commissioner's Office as an [anamologist]. I worked at that for a number of years. I could see that I was not going anywhere so I went back to Berkeley and did more work. But the trouble was, then, the Second World War interfered. I got caught.

I wouldn't give up my experience in the Army for anything but it changed my plans. I told you about the problem I had with finishing off my Doctorate's Degree at USC.

LQ: That must have been terribly frustrating. You were really aiming for that PhD. It must have been a great disappointment to you.

CN: It sure was.

LQ: You couldn't be promoted to full professor. You were associate professor throughout your entire career here. Did that ever rankle you? Was that a real problem for you or did you, kind of, brush it off?

CN: It was unavoidable. There was nothing I could do about it. I had a sick boy on my hands and my wife was sick. There was no way I could handle getting a Doctorate. It was only one course away. That was frustrating. I can't imagine anyone being that mean but a number of people did get caught in that same situation. But other people got away with it, somehow.

LQ: There were different evaluators.

CN: Yes, there were different ones, see? So, that's how I got caught and it didn't do any good. Whatever they did (I'm not sure) in the Department, they did give me, if not an official full professorship, they acknowledged the equivalent.

LQ: Oh, they did? I didn't realize that. Well, we're looking at an old catalog.

CN: If you look in the newest one, it might have it in there. Anyway, my retirement came off as being full professor but it was not in the ordinary sense. I don't think I got paid that way. I

remember when one of my favorite people around here came up to me one day and she said, "Congratulations." I couldn't understand what she meant by congratulations. It was because they had decided amongst the faculty that they would make me, at least, an honorary full professor. Whether it was official or not, I don't know.

LO: Well, you're listed here as professor.

CN: Is it listed as professor?

LO: Yes. You are in here as professor.

CN: They said they were going to do that in spite of everything. I was shocked by it. I didn't really believe it. I still don't really know if it's true or not but I know they made a big point of it.

LO: You are Professor of Zoology.

CN: Okay. Isn't that nice?

LO: It's good to come to campus every now and then. You always learn something.

CN: I would say that the CBI experience for me was accomplishing something that I always wanted to do and never thought I would ever do. I wrote my own ticket when I was over there. I would go to all the bases, though, and we had them from here to as far as Ceylon which is very close to the Chinese border up to the Russian []. I was there a couple of times, walking over an unexcavated, unexplored, undiscovered army of manikins down under the ground. They only found that in the last decade. I just walked right over them.

LO: You used the abbreviation "CBI." What does "CBI" stand for?

CN: China/Burma/India. I don't know why in that order. I really saw an awful lot of China.

LO: I didn't realize you spent a lot of time in China. I always hear about you're spending time in Calcutta, India.

CN: Well, I was headquartered there. I enjoyed being in the service from that standpoint because I didn't have any restrictions. They let me do whatever I thought was best. I was always trying to keep ahead of a malaria epidemic.

LO: You wouldn't want to be responsible for it.

CN: No, I should say not. So, I was very careful. I went to China several times. I had a very good trip. For me, it was an escape to see the world. Any time I decided to go someplace, I could do it.

LO: Did you ever go back after you started working here as a teaching faculty member?

CN: No. But, in order to make up for what I didn't get in salary here -- because life was tough with a sick wife and a sicker son -- I worked summers. I either taught here at summer school or I would go to Arizona and work for Phelps-Dodge as a pathologist. We spent many, many summers there, working for Phelps-Dodge, getting well paid, and getting lots of experience in the field. I learned as much pathology as I did anything else.

LO: What did you do with Phelps-Dodge?

CN: They were smelting copper.

LO: This is where you did the evaluation of the damage to agriculture?

CN: Yes. They were really in contention most of the time between

the State and farmers. Then, after I worked there a long, long time, I also worked summers at a cotton plant in Mexicali where they bought, sold, and bailed oil from the seeds. It was a big Mexican cotton company and I worked there because there were some Americans that were associated with it. One of them was an [anamologist]. He heard about me and he got me to come. I worked there for several years, just in the summer. I got paid well and that was good for my courses because I knew about cotton insects. I consider those important to me. Maybe some people wouldn't. I wasn't a theoretician. I was an applied biologist. That's really what I was my whole life. I didn't do research in the ordinary sense of the word. I did it in the field. It was a matter of whether we were saving the money. That was the biggest evaluation. I was well prepared to do that because I was trained, really by Essing, to do that. I used to go around with Essing a lot. He'd take me on these trips. As a member of the [Anamology] Department, growers and people of the orchards all went to see Essing. He'd take me with him so many times that I got a personal education just going with him and listening to him talk. I was so pleased about that. I told you that he had been to Pomona College and he graduated in 1901. It was a big thing. I worshipped the ground he walked on. That was all built up in my educational career from my college. I never resented doing these things.

LO: Well, it was what you enjoyed doing.

CN: I did enjoy doing it. I liked to do it, and I liked to help people, and I liked to know enough to do things like that. I became a good [anamologist] but I didn't do research in the sense

that a lot of people think of research.

LO: You gained a practical experience from the field. And, of course, you passed that along to the students here. I hear all kinds of debate about whether or not this should be a teaching institution or if it should be a research institution but you can't have good teaching without some experience and some form of research. You may not consider it research, but research in the pure sense of the word.

CN: That's right. I'm testing out a lot of research that went on and I had it in many ways but I felt it was worthwhile. I tried to get young people to think in long term situations. "Let's not use DDT if we don't have to." I spent quite a little time at the end of my career in the Army (before I had to come back) in French Vietnam. Well, it was French, really, to begin with and then it shifted, and, then, later we came there in war. But, when I was there it was, sort of, ancillary. We had some people there but not too many. We didn't develop a big military establishment. I also got to see some of the Dutch Indies. That was just when the Japanese were surrendering. I can remember I went from Calcutta with two friends of mine. They were colleagues. We were all Majors -- one was a water supply man, the other was a veterinarian who was in charge of inspecting meat, and myself who was a []. We three went to the hospital in the Dutch East Indies just as the Japanese were surrendering. The water expert goes up to a Japanese Colonel (or some important military man) who is now dethroned, so to speak, and he points to his sword, saying, "Give it to me." This guy looks at him. He's just been demoted so he

takes it off and gives it to him. I thought, "How did that guy have the nerve to take the sword away from this high ranking military Japanese officer?" That's the sort of thing you came on, you know? I was also in Saigon. I got there and the Japanese soldiers were still armed and walking around. Here I am, getting there very early on, which was interesting. They were all docile but there was a lot of problems between the French and the British Navies. They were in a state of uprising. I had a crew of four or five sanitarians. What they did was to come along with me to make assessments about how much equipment they needed and how much supplies.

LO: You needed some assistants, then?

CN: Yes. You need a laboratory helper, and so on. I had about four or five guys attached to me just to do these things. They were with me and they were quite alarmed at seeing Japanese soldiers running around.

LO: But there was nothing to be concerned about.

CN: No, not at all. I let them get out and I stayed over a little bit in Saigon. It got pretty sticky. A group of the military intelligence men were there in Saigon. The military intelligence was stricter then, than it is now. I don't know whether they have military intelligence anymore. At that time, they did. It was very interesting. They were all there. I was the only young American around as far as I could tell. I had a hard time getting out of the place because we stopped our usual runs and I couldn't get out to get over to Bangkok. There was a Lieutenant Colonel or a Major -- he was the son of one of the

Chief Justices in the Supreme Court -- who was trying to get out of the place. He took a jeep, he had a driver, and he tried to leave but they had the road blockaded with bamboo. This guy and the driver got waylaid, were shot, and killed -- both of them. So, that made me think, "How am I going to get out of this place?" It was really interesting to do it. I got out with the help of a Canadian and an Australian. There were just two of them and they were using this small plane. It was an SC46 or something like that. I hopped a ride with them and I got back to Bangkok. It was the most interesting trip I ever had because it was climbing over that dense forest in Vietnam. You have no idea how dense it is. You can look down and see nothing except the tree tops -- nothing below. There's one ancient city in the dilapidated ruins by a big lake that was right in the center of it. I flew over that thing about three or four times. These flyers were wild. We got into Siam after hours of flying over the forest and a storm developed. They didn't know whether to go up or down. Finally, they went up but we ran out of oxygen. Then, we had to come down and we had all of the rumpus of the low altitude. There were water buffalos, and cattle, and everything running in all directions because this plane was so close to the ground. I was so glad when we got where we were going. It was fun.

LO: It sounds like you had a lifetime of excitement packed into a few years.

CN: I went back to Vietnam. I stayed in Saigon. It's a nice place. I never got out to the North. I wanted to go up there but

I never got there. But I went to Saigon. There was a big opera house that an American bomber had dropped a big bomb right in the middle of and it was decimated on the other side. But that was what you had happen. I stayed in a gorgeous hotel there. It was like a spa. They ran out of food and we were blockaded about that time. It was quite an adventure.

LO: It sounds as if you had so much exciting stuff happen to you during that time period.

CN: It was hard to replace. That's why I stayed on a little. I just wanted to see a little more. I got to Tokyo that way. I'd never been to Tokyo. I wanted to go to Tokyo. From Tokyo I went to the seaport town of Shanghai on the other side of China. That's an interesting place. I didn't care for it too much. Let me tell you something that's kind of interesting. I was on a plane -- this was much later -- and I came from Honolulu to Guam and from Guam (and other islands), I went to Shanghai. There was hardly anyone on the plane. There was a man that was sitting near where I was. There were empty seats all over. This was a military plane. He came up and sat down beside me. He said, "Do you mind if I sit with you because I'm lonely." There wasn't anybody else to talk to. I said, "Sure. Sit down." We started chatting and we had a lot of things to talk about because he worked for a sugar corporation. He was a civilian engineer. It had nothing to do with the Army but he had a chance to go on the plane so he took it. He said, "I'm going to see the Vice-President of China. Would you like to come along?" I said, "Yes. That would be interesting." So, I went. Dr. Sung was Vice-President of China.

The President would have been Chiang Kaishek. You remember all the sisters there were. Dr. Sung was Vice-President and he lived in Shang-Hai in a beautiful home in a city block. The engineer on the plane wanted to get a lease on some island for the sugar company. I never heard whether he got that or not. I lost track, you see. When we went to Dr. Sung's, they prepared tea. Dr. Sung had a study. There was only their one house in the whole block, and they had Packard cars. Later, they invited me back. They sent the chauffeur in the car for me at the hotel where I was staying and I had dinner. All the family had reunited. There were students from Berkeley (these were cousins), some were on a voyage to various islands and countries (they were in the Diplomatic Corps.) A lot of them were there. They had this beautiful home. But when I first went in there, I met Dr. Sung. The engineer and he had a little conference in the study. I never heard whether he came to an agreement or not. It didn't matter from my standpoint. As I was waiting there for him to be through, Dr. Sung's mother came out. She was important. She was a woman who was not only his mother but was the mother in that family in a big way. She came out and her feet were bound. She was tiny and they had high chairs. She got a chair, pulled herself up on it, sat down, and her feet were hanging in the air. It was the most interesting experience and, then, they invited me back for a big dinner. They had a grand piano, and a huge table meant for the extended family, and this great big lazy susan in the middle. They all sat around the table. I talked, especially, with one girl who was a student at Berkeley and who liked to talk. She

spoke very good English and she was crazy about music. Of course, that's one of my great favorites, so we had this wonderful conversation. It was just a lot of fun. The Diplomat or Envoy who goes to Cuba to represent China was there.

LO: Did you ever have any contact with any of those relatives again?

CN: Never again. That's the way it was in the war. They were so enthusiastic and, of course, a lot of them spoke English. They were very well educated. I felt tremendously uplifted by that because they were nice people. We had animated talks about who was the better composer and things like that.

(Side B -- Tape two)

CN: I stayed in a French hotel one time and we ran out of food. We only had a little soup left. We got caught in that. But the Vietnamese people were what interested me. They're like the natives in any country -- in out of the way places that you don't normally go to. They were not especially friendly with the French. I don't think the French were getting along to well with that country. There was the problem, also, of the Japanese being imminent winners of that war.

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