Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, NPS
An Oral History Interview with Lander Radford
113th Company
1906-1912
Interviewed by Tom Hoffman and Elaine Harmon, NPS
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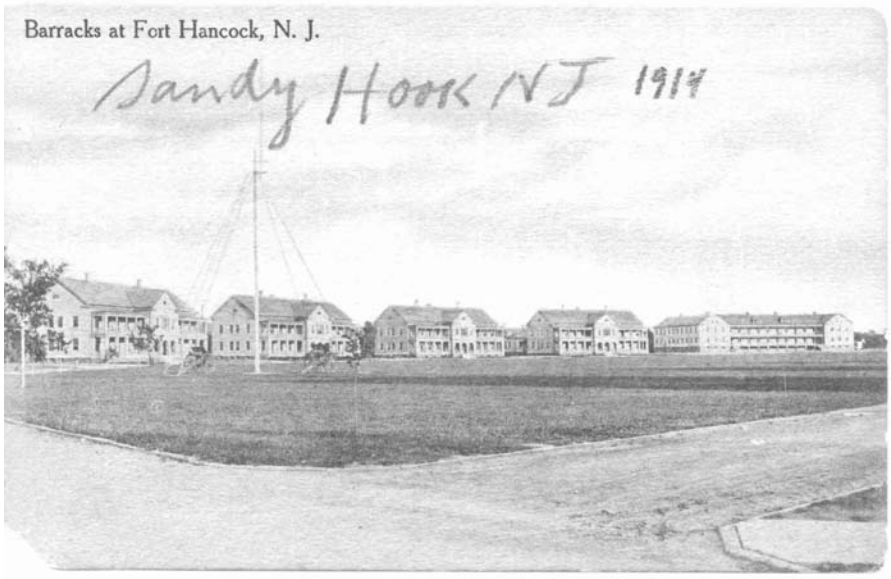
Transcribed by Mary Rasa, 2011



Barracks and Parade Ground at Fort Hancock from Mr. Radford's time.


Battery Granger with gun crew c. 1910. Mr. Radford worked on this gun.
Photos courtesy NPS/Gateway NRA Museum Collection

Editor's notes in parenthesis ( )

TH: It is a Monday afternoon and this is Tom Hoffman, acting park historian at Sandy Hook, New Jersey. We are very, very privileged and honored to have a very, very special person to be here at Sandy Hook who has just attended our annual veterans' reunion. And he is here with his wife and we have some other folks here too and we are going to have an oral history interview here right here in the building, in the Sandy Hook Museum, the old Post Guardhouse. So without further ado we are going to go around and announce who we are attending this interview. Lander, do you want to start?

LR: My name is Lander W. Radford and this is September the 15th 1980 and I am having the time of my life here reminiscing with the old veterans. (laughs) Among which I am about the oldest I guess.

TH: Okay, next.

JM: I am John Mulhern, a resident of Sandy Hook from 1908 to 1927.

EH: I am Elaine Harmon and I am in charge of the Sandy Hook Museum.

MR: I am Maple Radford, wife of Lander Radford and we are happy to be here and enjoyed everything and my husband served here from 1906 to 1912.

JS: I am Joe Scalan, a friend of the Radfords.

CS: I am Christine Scalan, a friend of Mr. Radford's daughter. I have known her since I was five years old.

TH: Okay. We have got everybody here and I guess the best way to start is by looking over some old photographs we have in the Museum Collection which I am sure will bring back some memories for Lander here and I would like to start off with one here. It's the picture of the barracks and I wasn't here, Lander, when you went over here to your old barracks, but I hear you really got a thrill about going back over there.

LR: Yes. I did. It's about the same except on the ground floor they have some offices in there where we had a squad room. We had the showers and the lavatories on the ground floor and the recreation room and that left room for a small squad room. And the range section of the company occupied that room with 21 men who were designated as range section. They worked in the primary and secondary stations. That's the only changes that I have noticed in the old building. They haven't changed it. It's kept in pretty good condition considering the time, 64 years ago I was there. I saw it last, now this typical squad room scene, I don't believe that I recognize anybody here.

TH: But that was a lot like when you were here. Is that the…

LR: That's right. These wall lockers were the same. The bunks were the same. We got these I think it was in 1908, 7 or 8. We had then foot and head parts that were metal and there were wood side rails and then they condemned those and we got these all iron beds that were much more sanitary but I couldn't identify anybody here.

TH: What would you keep in like those wall lockers back there?

LR: Oh, hang up your coat, trousers and then we had foot locker trunks and then we had another little box, oh about 15 inches by 8 by 8 to keep our shoe polish under the bed. Like this, but I don't see any of those trunk lockers that we got issued around that time to us. It was something like a steamer trunk but I held lots of things like socks and underwear, shirts and things like that. But the rest was a good wall locker you could hang up our coats and woolen shirts and the likes in there.

MR: Are you going to tell him about the fight you had?

LR: Oh, no.

TH: A fight in the barracks? (laughter)

MR: He had one in the bathroom.

TH: What happened there?

LR: Oh, it was just, we were just a couple of rookies. So, I was the youngest kid around I guess so most everybody was picking on me. I got tired of it. So, this I occupied the outside bunk next to the lockers, you know, and that was considered a favorite. The closer you were to your locker was handy and it showed some rank or some sort but he was in the second, this fella was in the second bunk and I was on the outside. I had a few weeks priority on him, you know. And one day I was out. We were testing the telephones way out on the secondary station here, there. I walked about ten miles I guess and I said, "Hello." Then go onto the next one. I went on and it was raining too and I went through the rain and I came on back and I came into the squad room. You kept shoes lined up under the bunk, you know, right to the side. My bunk was diagonally pushed back. Shoes were kicked all over the floor. My clothing was taken out of the wall locker and was thrown on my bunk. I said, "What on earth kind of a cyclone did this?" So, this fella here had been recommended for corporal but he hadn't gotten his warrant back yet. So, he was taking advantage before he really had the authority. I said, "Who told you to do that?" "I did," he said, "I did that." I said, "That's not a very nice thing." I said, "You could have waited until I came in and we could have done the job together." He said, "That's alright." I said, "Who told you to do that?" "Corporal Elder told me to do that." I said, "Corporal Elder is not squad room commander. He had no authority to tell you to move these bunks." "Look," he said, "If you are looking for trouble you can have it." Well, that was it. I said, "Where is John Evans?" When I first came in he knew that was John Evans' bunk on the outside all neat and trim and my was kicked all over the place. I went looking for Evans and I found him down there in that

shower room, lavatory you know with all the washbasins. That's where I confronted him. It was a question of the bunk change but he jumped in my face and he said, "Look. If you are looking for trouble you can have that too." And he squared off in front of me and I took him down in one wallop. It was lucky if I say so. I wasn't much for being in fights. (laughter)

TH: Did you get in any reprimands for that?

LR: No. He got up and said you (inaudible) fella. So, about an hour the place cleared. I got afraid. I thought something bad was going to develop out of it. But I went over and we lived across the street from the mess. (inaudible) I had worked in the store room of the office of the quartermaster down there, the quartermaster building. So, he came over and he grabbed me and he looked at the glass and his eye was closed and his face was turning black and blue down there. He came over and, "Come on outside," he said. I didn't want to fight outside and I (inaudible) another swing. And then, of course, the sergeant in charge of quarters was in the mess hall there. This was during meal time and we didn't want to get locked up so we didn't. He went to get a Luger automatic. He came from West Virginia somewhere down there. Man, he swore vengeance. He was gonna kill me if that was the last thing he ever did if he caught me off the reservation. So, two or three fellas warned me, "He's dangerous. He is gonna shot you. You watch." I said, "Well, I hope I never meet him." So anyway, one night around midnight I was going across that old drawbridge in the Highlands, myself and another fella and Evans, his name was Evans and his (inaudible) was coming over and I thought he was gonna kill me. I said to myself, here it is. This is it. The lights over the bridge there and the rail wasn't too high. I had made up my mind if he makes a move towards me I am going to throw him off this bridge into the Shrewsbury there. And I was all geared up and set for that. I thought he was going to pull a gun. But he kept his hands by his side. So finally we said so long after talking for a while. I kept my eyes over my shoulder until I got in the dark. So it wasn't long after it, oh a few months, one day he had a bottle and he got his corporal's warrant and he was a sergeant then. He was a nice fella, you know, too ambitious. He sent out for me to come to his room. And I said, "What the heck does he want?" I expected a gun to be ready when I went in there. He had a bottle in there. I knew they were clinking glasses in there and drinks in there. And I went in, he said well, (inaudible) he put his hand out and shake hands. He said, "Let's be good friends." I said, "I never had any animosity towards you. You are a nice fella. You got in a little trouble a long time ago." He said, "Let's be friends. I found out you were one of the best fellas in the company." It was the liquor talking then. (laughter) So, anyhow I was discharged and he became first sergeant and after three months I got a bonus for re-enlisting. Three months pay with permission to take three months leave of absence with pay upon re-enlistment. So, that would give me six months out with pay. And this friend of my Evans, I got a three months leave of absence and I wasn't back and of course it was another month before I was to be back and we got a new captain who didn't know me from Adam. He hadn't heard of me none. He came after I left but Evans insisted he wanted me to be promoted to corporal before I, while I was away in absentia. Anyway the captain said, "Well, I don't know this man." He had a heck of an argument with the captain there. He said, "He is qualified. I'll vouch for that." He said, "He might not

want it," or something like that which I didn't. I went back to the Quartermaster's Department with sergeant's pay if I took corporal that would have been seven dollars less. So, I just went back to Quartermaster the first opening which happened shortly. Anyhow I don't know what became of Evans. He was gone when I got back. He was discharged but they told me about this how Evans had wanted to have me promoted while I was away. So (inaudible)

TH: But generally you got along well with everyone, all the soldiers…

LR: I never had any trouble with anybody else that I know of.

TH: Lander, where do you hail from? Where did you come from? Where were you born?

LR: I was born in Kentucky. Soon as I was able to walk I got out of there. (laughter)

TH: You mean did you join the Army and end up here?

LR: That's right. They stayed farming and everything down there. They couldn't see that. So I…

TH: You wanted some adventure right?

LR: Well, I didn't like that slaving four o'clock in the morning. That was the main reason.

TH: When did you enlist into the Army? Do you remember that?

LR: The 15th of March 1906. I was discharged from the Army, June 10, 1912. Of course, I was discharged before that. March 4, 1909. Then I was out another three months in New York. I took a job up there for the three months and then the next three months when I re-enlisted and they gave three months leave of absence I took three months leave and went down to my Mom's in Kentucky.

TH: Was this your first Post? Were you sent right here from Kentucky?

LR: Outside of Columbus Barracks, Ohio. They trained me there and then I was assigned to my permanent company here. I was assigned to the 113th Company and I landed here on Memorial Day 1906.

TH: Where did you come in? Where did you arrive at Sandy Hook? Do you remember was it over at the wharf over here?

LR: We got out at Jersey City off the train, came across, walked down to the Battery, Battery Park, boarded the Governors Island Ferry and went to Governors Island. It was Memorial Day, of course. My company. the company I was assigned to was there. A

neighbor of mine was in the company. I met him on the boat there. I went to school with him. We had dinner there with the Infantry at Governors Island. They had just come in from one of the parades, you know, in New York up to Grant's Tomb and back and Soldiers and Sailors Monument up there. And we got on the boat and came on down. And they always have a chicken dinner on Decoration Day and another chicken dinner, supper it was about four o'clock. Opened up a keg of beer in the mess hall and everybody had a good time.

TH: That's your first day…

LR: I come in there was a terrific storm that afternoon. All the darn trees, any tree of any size went down through the woods there. Just flattened them of the loads. (inaudible) for all of the next day, two days we were out cutting clearing the roadways, cutting the larger trees out.

TH: Here's the wharf as it appeared years ago. Is that where you landed? You brought down by boat. You must have come into the wharf out there, those docks out there which is now the U.S. Coast Guard area. It's the U.S. Coast Guard area.

LR: Well, right beside the dock about a quarter of a mile on the waterfront there on the bay side the old, they called it a Life-Saving Station in those days. And it was a Life-Saving Station there. I guess it's near the same place now.

TH: Yeah. Right near it.

LR: Yeah. Well, that was what they called the Life-Saving Station. They patrolled down the beaches here at night all night long. You would see them walking down, up and down the beaches at night. And yes that's the dock and its kind of a long range picture there.

TH: Yeah.

LR: Now we landed at this dock one time on the way from Texas. An old Army transport, that's a big boat ship and apparently they couldn't land here when the tide was in and around four o' clock in 1911 it was around some time the 25th of June I think it was and the captain of the boat said he could land there because that was a straight trip up to New York and we could get on the boats and all. We wouldn't have been home 'til lord knows when that night but we disembarked at this old dock and we marched right at 4 o'clock going back from Galveston, Texas at that time. That's the time we had the (inaudible) the escort.

MR: How come you didn't go down together?

LR: Oh, the headlines in the papers said the newspapers had it, "Taft rushes 40,000 troops in spectacular dash to the border." The Mexican border, you know. We were supposed to go to Veracruz and land there. They did later on and there were some

marines and a lot of them were killed. But we got escorted the other way and anyway we turned into Galveston and we went out to old Fort Crocket (Texas). We stayed there at Fort Crocket. There was 5-inch guns and they had been washed away from the erosion. They left them on the pedestal about 10-12 feet high and that was the only thing, the only thing that represented that place as a fort. Fort Crocket, I said, "Where is Fort Crocket?" I said to myself but it was designated that and built the guns there. There was nobody manning them and I guess hadn't been for lord knows how long because once they had the dirt and sand and right up to the guns base and now the guns stood on the pedestal and nobody could reach them. So they built it up again. So, while we were waiting there they built target butts and had small arms practice and I guess they thought we were having it too easy and they got us ready for the fifty miles to Houston and Galveston. We were over on the island on rail cars and we camped over, we got off the island and it took all day and we started to march to Houston and back and we ended the march and the heat the word got out, I was told or heard wanted this data for their records to see what a soldier could stand without any real tough training. Like we weren't trained, you know. We were here in the winter. It was March 8th when we went down there. We hadn't had any tough training except for some calisthenics in the mornings and they wanted to see what a soldier could stand at such and such a temperature. It was hot there, over 100 (degrees) at times. The road was fifty miles from Galveston to Houston and that glare, that sun coming up there was really something. But we made it. Camped up there in Magnolia Park and stayed overnight and turned around and marched back again. So, it was I saw two man overcome by heat that day. They were strapped on stretchers. There was no shade in that park. It was all pines. There was no shade at all.

TH: I have to ask you when you, getting back to Fort Hancock when you found out you were going to be assigned to Fort Hancock did you have any feeling about that? Did you ever hear anything like good? Was it at that time when you were a young soldier was it a good post, good duty? Did you hear anything like that? You know what was your first impression when you first got here?

LR: Oh, I didn't know much about Fort Hancock. Talking about this place, that fort in New Orleans, Fort Jackson I believe it was and San Francisco the Presidio out there. Those were other artillery forts (inaudible)

TH: So, when you came in here on your first day you came in here at that wharf and you marched over here. Did you report to this barracks? I am under the impression it is Barracks 25, the one nearest us right here.

LR: No. We reported right to our company. We marched up here and somebody came out and designated what men would go to this company, what would go to that. It was my lot to get down the 113th (Company). That was this building right next to the (Sandy Hook) Lighthouse.

TH: Were you issued any, did you bring any clothing with you? Did you have like a pack of clothing or did they issue everything to you when you arrived?

LR: No. They issued us at Columbus Barracks (Ohio). We stayed there a couple of months I guess. Well we reached there about March and stayed in Louisville for a while, three or four days and then we went up there and we stayed there a couple of months. We got there Memorial Day. That was May the 30th. We were out there in March. It was a couple of months.

TH: I was wondering what the Army was issuing soldiers at that time. What type of equipment and clothing were you getting at that time?

LR: We had the blue coat, dark blue coat, navy blue coat and jacket and blue trousers, rather light blue. We had blue overcoats that were the same color as the trousers at that time with capes with red lining. The looked very pretty in a parade when they pinned those red linings back over your shoulders.

TH: I am trying to find a picture of that. Here's a picture of the 76th Company at Fort Hancock in January 1910 and they have the blue uniform on their, of course, they are not wearing the winter overcoats. There is another picture here taken of the 56th Company on November 30, 1911 and they have got their overcoats on, but I don't think they were the blue ones. I think this was the later issue.

MR: You might find yourself in one of those.

LR: This is the old olive drab overcoat that we got to take the place of the red gauged blue coat, light blue about the color of the trousers but...

TH: A sky blue like, yeah.

LR: Now this I believe, that' not that stand up color is it? We had the stand up collar for dress.

TH: Right, yeah.

LR: But that wasn't the dress. This is just the garrison wear. See they buttoned all the way up and the shirt finished of there something like a shirt collar, you know, and you see the officers and their collar stand up, see. Then we got dress uniforms with that stand up collar and there were clasps inside the collar stand and we had a little strip of collar, white collar and you put it in and you put it on and you are all dressed. You had the white collar and coat and all on there together. You wouldn't need a shirt. You just put it on with you undershirt.

MR: When did you wear those white gloves that you have told me about hitting the mosquitoes and how they would look with them? (laughter)

LR: Well, the white gloves when we went on guard or on parade I believe. I know when we went on guard and white name silk gloves. I think (inaudible) silk and we just used those for guard duty. (looking at photograph) But then this is 76th Company and I

wouldn't recognize anybody there today. They do look like some familiar faces but I couldn't pick out a name now.

TH: Yeah about how many men were here when you were here, when you served here?

LR: Six companies I think all together when I left. It was four companies, first but see there was 113th, 48th, 55th, and I think the 36th Company. I think the 36th was a mine company if I am not mistaken.

TH: That's right.

LR: And those four companies and then they had over here they filled the other quarters beyond the four here. There was four here already occupied and they built some for the 96th Company and some other I think it was the 136th Company. So two companies up there. (Barracks 74 was built to accommodate two companies in 1910.) They added on and put those double buildings way down at the end there. I remember when I was in the Quartermaster Department and was the Construction Quartermaster was set right up there in the Quartermaster Building and he was in charge when they were building those buildings. Now this is the…

TH: These were postcards, these old pictures.

LR: Yeah. What company was this?

TH: This one I think said 56th.

LR: The 56th Company.

TH: Yeah. One said the 76th and one the 56th.

LR: Yeah. I think it was the 56th that came in here and the 96th up there. I think it was.

TH: But about here, looking at these pictures here about how many men were like in your company at that time?

LR: Well, in my company at one time there, 1910 or something like that. I don't know exactly what year it was we were allowed 109 men I believe in the company we had 35 and the Army and then they were allowed 85,000 men and they dwindled down to 35,000. So that the time that, I think it was Teddy Roosevelt's time. I think he tried to do something about it. He did do something about it. He raised the pay from $13 to $15 a month and got all the pay, got all the trimmings that he could get us, you know, the fringe benefits. A couple of hundred dollars, maybe more. It was much almost double of what it was before. He did that over and he got enough men and we got almost up to full strength after that.

TH: Getting back to what your wife May pointed out when you had to wear white gloves and you slapped mosquitoes. He told you a story of what would happen with white gloves on. What would happen?

MR: The blood would be all over.

LR: Oh smashing them. Well, you had a mosquito netting, or head nets, you know.

TH: That was issued to you?

LR: Yeah. For the guard you know. You would go out they would eat you up on parade. You just stand there an hour at attention and they would just eat you your neck all around you. So, these head nets we had those campaign hats on, you know, sort of like what you boys wear.

TH: Ranger hats.

LR: And we had these bags made out of mosquito netting and shot all around there like the jockey's saddle blanket if you want to carry that. You put that over your hat and the shot would hold it around here over the shoulders and neck and you feel like a ghost going on there at night. I tell you it was a great help. Of they were so thick there out here on the Parade Ground even in the daytime. You got down there during evening parade and you see the man ahead of you and the blue coat would turn brown just literally covered with mosquitoes. Just eating on his neck you could see it up there with blood, you know. I often wondered and remarked why they didn't spread more diseases than they did but I never remember them bothering anybody outside of just pests. I mean they didn't carry any disease that I know of at that time or heard of.

TH: What would be some of the common diseases or if you caught cold out here you could end up with pneumonia? Back in those days they didn't have modern medicines. What were some of the common things you might end up in the hospital be things like pneumonia? Because usually mosquitoes carry malaria and what you are saying is they weren't getting that here. Would it be accidents, you know, things of that nature, soldiers would end up in the hospital?

LR: No. I know malaria where I lived down in Kentucky by the Cumberland River, the swamps were full of mosquitoes and they were full of malaria and they really gave you the business there. I had it when I was about 10 years old. Finally we ran across quack medicine called it some doctor's tonic. It guaranteed in the first dose if you had that chills if you had another one after taking the first dose it was it would give you double money back or something like that. But it worked. I had seen it cure at least 10 cases including myself. I can testify to that. I don't think the doctors wanted that and I think it went out of business not long after. I don't know if they still have it but that would cure malaria just like one day you would feel rotten and next day you had the chills and then shake and shiver and then run into a fever (inaudible) well that tonic that would knock that chill out and you would never have another.

TH: What were, getting back to the clothing issued at that time you mentioned you had a dress uniform, a garrison uniform like these fellas are wearing here.

LR: Yeah. That's the garrison.

TH: I am also interested in, because you served in the Army when they were changing the uniform from blue over to a khaki colored uniform and we discussed this in a letter when I wrote to you over a year and a half ago and I am very interested in knowing when the famous what they call the Stetson or the Montana peaked campaign hat came into use? You mentioned that to me.

LR: I guess it was in use. I know it was in use when I first came into the Army. (inaudible) When I worked here in 1907 Quartermaster Building in the storeroom we had shipments of the campaign hat and they were sent then of course we got the blue caps we got the khaki cap, the small khaki cap, now these this change of overcoats came around 1909 or '10. That was followed by an olive drab overcoat, I mean suit or uniform and they also had those standup collars in front. And then we had before that khaki summer clothes they had long trousers and the jacket was made something like these garrison blues here with a collar like that. With a pocket on each side and then they would change them with these legs and leggings you would wear with them, breeches and then stand up collar. You put your collar in there and you were dressed. That was a little, for hot days rather uncomfortable. These other were practical.

TH: Did you have to buy any pieces of the uniform or was it all issued to you?

LR: Everything was issued to you. I think I got a hundred dollars, first enlistment and about two hundred or something on my second enlistment upon my discharge a cash allowance and I had a job and an account. You had to open an account by drawing something and the rest was paid in cash.

TH: How did those soldiers like yourself feel about the uniform? Did you feel it was a smart looking uniform? Did you have any feelings about it? Any faults in the uniform? Your personal feelings about it.

LR: Nobody ever complained that I know of. These OD you know, Olive drab overcoats they didn't bother with that cape anymore but after nobody ever picked about it. And then we got a dress guard going along with those full dress piping, you know, around the shoulders jacket I guess navy blue and light blue trousers.

TH: What about I am interested in knowing about the summer months because back then there was no air conditioning and it gets kind of hot here sometimes at Sandy Hook. I am wondering what would you wear? Did it make you cool or was it bitter?

LR: Well, we never, we were used to it then we didn't know any better. But I don't think we ever suffered with the heat upstairs or even downstairs we would get a breeze from

the bay here or get an ocean breeze going the other way. They were large windows and you would open them up. They were screened. We also had mosquito netting hanging on T irons to put on your bunk to put that netting on every night and drop it down or the mosquitoes would eat you alive. If you got one in there when you went to bed it would talk to you all night.

TH: I know. What was a typical day here when you soldiered here? What was it like? How would your day start and end? What would you usually do?

LR: First thing when I came here I reported to work the same as if I had a steady job as a civilian down at Battery Potter, dismounting those 12-inch guns. That's where you worked every day if you were not actually on guard or some other duty. Battery Potter I worked all summer there, my first summer here as a rookie and we didn't have to wait for somebody to told you to do standing guard go down there and report to work there every day if you were on guard or KP or whatnot. Finally the engineers there built a big trestle on top of that parapet all the way down to the railroad tracks on down near the Proving grounds there. And they put those flatcars up there and they put two rails on this trestle on a big ten by ten (inaudible) Then two railroad rails down there and then greased them up and put cables on those big cables two of them. One on each end of the barrel of that gun, that 12-inch gun and skid them down there and put them on those flatcars with all the rest of the machinery the same and they were shipped I believe to the Philippines Islands, Manila, Corregidor I think they wanted it for. That entrance over there. So that's and if it wasn't that work you would do some other work.

TH: You were down inside Battery Potter. You were down in there helping to dismantle.

LR: Took all of that machinery out of there, part by part with those 60 ton jacks and that's why the second class gunner is supposed to study those things. Jacks, shims and (inaudible). All three of them. And moving those guns and that machinery and I don't know we never had an accident there.

TH: It must have been heavy work. I must have been really heavy.

LR: Well, we had jacks and six five feet long blocks, 12-12 blocks to build it up and jack it up. Then we dragged the machinery with those shears, big strong posts together with a pulley up there and we raised that thing and put on that thing and raise that thing maybe ten feet at a time. Just keep on dragging it. And did the most of it in a month or two. One summer we worked on it until winter it could have been snow.

TH: Right.

LR: And then our primary station was built on top of that parapet later. Where they worked before that I don't know.

TH: At that time you were dismantling Potter because it was considered obsolete. Is that the story you heard at that time?

LR: I didn't hear that. I didn't know why we were dismantling it but I don't know why it was obsolete at that time. I don't know why they did that but they got the job done by the Army and they built a trestle and of course they had to pay for that.

TH: During the time that you soldiered here, and I asked you this question in the letter, you never heard a story about who designed the fort.

LR: No.

TH: And I have mentioned to you that we have heard the story from people whose parents were here and John Mulhern who is here today who heard the story when he was growing up at Fort Hancock that the noted architect, Stanford White designed the buildings at Fort Hancock here. And I put it to Lander. I asked him if he had ever heard the story when he soldiered here.

LR: No. I never heard that.

TH: Never heard anything at all.

LR: Stanford White I didn't hear anything about him designing this Post. (Fort Hancock was designed by the U.S. Army and not Stanford White) I would have read about him being a great architect and then he killed Harry Kendall Thaw and during my time here I read about that in the papers here and that's the only way I knew Stanford White is because he was shot and killed by Harry Kendall Thaw up on the roof garden there in New York somewhere.

TH: But it is interesting. We are still trying to find out where this story originated because you had never heard anything to that effect during your time here that John has heard stories going way back.

LR: I just imagine that we had a lot of smart Army officers in the Engineer Corps or any other corps and had a lot of ideas. They developed this plotting board that we had here and Warner-Swayze were two Army officers that developed this position finder here.

TH: That's right.

LR: Azimuth instrument and why couldn't it have been some Army officers who had the idea here and got it over and somebody ought to, it should be rather easy to find out it seems to me if you find the right place to inquire.

TH: Getting back to your day starting for a soldier it would start very early in the morning right? Did they get you up by the bugle call back then?

LR: Yeah. There was a bugler who would come right outside of the Guardhouse here. Stand right out there and blow the first call in the morning.

TH: What time would that be in the morning? Roughly?

LR: I think it was 5:30 first call.

TH: Would you hear that over in the barracks?

LR: That's when I get up. (laughter)

TH: That stays with you. Your Army service stays with you.

LR: Yes. It was a habit that is hard to get out of.

TH: I guess all the boys would be tumbling there out of their bunks in the squad room.

LR: Oh yeah, of course after I got this fancy job that I had it was really a racket. He would call it, I didn't have to, I had a permanent pass. I didn't have to ask permission to be absent at all time except when actually on duty. The only time I was actually on duty I was company and would line up there at muster on payday. And my job was down here at the Quartermaster Building and so I didn't have anything, any other duties at all. I took the boat to New York. (I) took the train out to Highlands anytime I wanted. My work was up here. Go off on the weekends and never have to ask anybody because I had that pass. It was alright.

TH: Did you get to leave the Post much and visit anyplace in New Jersey, like go sightseeing? Because you weren't from the state, I am wondering when you had free time if you went sightseeing?

LR: Oh sure. I would have a pass and go down there. Down in Long Branch, Asbury Park down on the beaches, Sea Bright, Highlands along that stone wall. It was rock. All you had was nice beaches but along '17. '18 storms just ripped to pieces. Knocked, I think, every building down, several of them between Highlands and Sea Bright on that peninsula there.

EH: What do you recall at 5:30? Did you get dressed, go to the mess hall, because we are trying to reconstruct a typical day? Did you wash up and go to the mess hall for breakfast?

LR: Well, the typical day was average order, you get the first call from the bugler and everybody get up and if you had time you go down to the washroom and wash up and you didn't have to get dressed. You could go out in your undershirt if you wanted to because your going to take calisthenics anyway. And the old sarge down there that would run us down the road there so that we couldn't get back after 10 minutes. (laughter) So, we get out there and exercise for oh, about 15 minutes and when it come

time for recall I am getting a little ahead of myself. First Call: that means get up. Next call was assembly. That means assemble out here in front of your companies for calisthenics. And next call would be recall. And after recall would be mess call. And then there is no other calls, maybe drill call or something like that. This old sergeant would get us out there and just when it was time for recall we would be right out in front of the barracks on the Parade Grounds he would get us up and start us running down the road there, an old fella too. He had he ran us down so far that another sergeant there he was (inaudible). So instead of this, just double time, you know which is about half time, this sergeant said, "I am going to fix this son of a gun who march us down there when we got the recall and we were about a mile down the road and get to breakfast." So he says to the company, "Keep up with me now. I am going to run like blazes." He knew this old fella wasn't in any condition to run that fast, you know, keep up with. So, we took off down the road and around the bend and we passed Battery Granger and the other sergeant got the leggings around that bend. It looked like he wasn't in sight. He couldn't make it around the bend. Finally we slowed down. We couldn't keep running all day. The sergeant didn't say a word. Ran us all the way back but after that he never started us on that long run down the road just when it was time (for breakfast) (inaudible).

TH: Okay. Yeah she is almost gone. (Tape ends) (Tape restarts) These are pictures we are looking at. Let's look at these. Here is a picture. Once again this is the 56th Company out here October, 1911, out on the mess hall porch, out on the porches of one of the mess halls out here. What type of food were you eating at that time? What were they serving up, Lander when you were stationed here?

LR: Oh, we had good food. We had a good mess sergeant at the time and he didn't take all that G.I. stuff, rations, you know, like that slaps of bacon. The mess sergeant would take a check instead and turn that into fresh vegetables and stuff like that and pork. We had good cooks. Oh yeah everybody was out there. Sunday dinner especially, Sunday dinner, we had second to none. And Christmas and Thanksgiving we had on the table in addition a bottle appear and have a banana and a bowl of nuts and grapes and all fruit and things like that in addition to turkey and everything that went with it. And oh, we had depended on the management. And then of course, we had company funds like $1,500 to $2,000 a lot of money then in those days. They'd buy extras. And a lot of that bacon and beans and stuff like that. They loved that. But some of them just took it government straight and didn't have company funds like those pool tables over there to play. (inaudible) pool tables and you'd shoot pool there at three cents a game and all that went to company funds. And there are other things that went to company funds like that. You'd get that fund built up there and it would help out with the rations.

TH: John Mulhern has told me often about the pig pens which were out across the marsh out here.

LR: The what?

TH: The pig pens, they used to keep the…

LR: Oh, I know them. The pig pens, (laughs) our captain was the man (inaudible) of the 113th Company. He was a man. He was big man because he had about eight pigs out there I think in the end. He had a pig farm and when the pig pen would get dirty he wouldn't clean it up he would just take a couple of men he didn't like much out there with him and say, "Come on. Move this fence over there to a clean spot for the pigs." (laughs) I was just telling the colonel (Mr. Mulhern) there about (inaudible) he had him cleaning out the pig pens and building fences. So, they got filled up with the platoons. They actually tried to throw a big 150 pound pig trough over there on top of them one day. He was hunkered down working inside, you know, that board fence couldn't see through it. I think these (inaudible) they dropped it on top of him. That's a fact. So that man was so bad with his company he knew he couldn't draw them to combat without being shot by them. And he was (inaudible) he would punish them for that. But he went to World War I and he knew he couldn't go into combat because he was a dead man and apparently he wouldn't kill them either. (inaudible) He said he got drunk and he stayed over there drunk and he died, still captain. He was just scared to death.

TH: Did you ever go out to the pig pen site out there?

LR: Oh, I had seen it there but I never had to work out there.

TH: The son of the Post Tailor, Bernie Duze has told me over the years I have known him the past five years that when he was a young boy growing up out here when his dad was a tailor he remembers going out there with his brother and they used to be a gravestone out there of a Civil War officer. Would you recall that by chance? Do you remember anything like that?

LR: No. The only grave that I know anything about was marine buried out here, by what do you call that base down here by where that battery is?

TH: Arrowsmith.

LR: Down at Battery Arrowsmith. I was just about (inaudible) 12 feet off the road, you know, a dirt road at the time the only road they had and there was a clearing place in there and there was a marine in there with a wooden marker, grave marker. It said it was a marine that died of some contagious disease and was taken off a ship and buried here. I think the account said he was digged up later and returned I don't know where he was buried now or what they did with him or his body.

TH: Probably the National Cemetery over in Brooklyn, Cyprus Hills where Halyburton, those British sailors ended up. That leads me into my next story about graves here. You had quite a hand in the famous discovery of the Halyburton…

LR: No. I didn't even know where they found them. They found them out yester here (inaudible) I was then a store keeper in the Quartermaster and those people that discovered and dug all those bones up put them in a large box. The box was four feet by four feet with all those bones. They brought them in there and I wondered what they

were and where they coming. They brought them into the storeroom. So among the bones there was horse's hoof with a shoe on it. So, when I made 13 or 17 I don't know what I remember of boxes of the people, the number of men killed. I was, we made one little box about 30 inches long maybe 8 x 8 inches and had them made in the shop. Painted and put a certain amount of bones in each one. And one made to put that horse's hoof with the shoe on it. It came with it so maybe it was good luck charm or something like that. And I prepared the tag for each box with all the names typed in letters in there. I said, "This contains one of the following," on each and every box. The British consul in Brooklyn and sent them up there (inaudible) and I believe he then had them buried there in Cyprus Hills National Cemetery. My memory was that I knew we shipped them to the British somewhere and I didn't think. I forgot about Brooklyn. You reminded me and I remember now. It was Brooklyn, not Washington, or Arlington. That's all I knew about them. I don't think anybody here knew about the burial spot out there because they torn down the original monument that I think Halyburton's mother came all the way over here and put up a monument there and the French sailors got off there one time and bashed it to pieces and destroyed the whole thing and they lost track of it until they dug them up again and they started searching there and they found, they went back and they found out who they were. How they got there.

TH: I just think it is you are a special person because you actually saw those bones.

LR: Oh yeah. Saw the teeth there, some skulls were almost intact. The teeth will last the longest I guess of any bones of the body, you know the enamel. I have seen Indian skeletons taken up and the teeth were still solid after I don't know how many hundred years.

TH: Yes. We have the picture of the bodies being found right up over there. Have you seen that picture? There's that picture.

LR: Yeah. I have one of those. (inaudible) That looks like it could be Sergeant Mitchell, a provost sergeant but I think it is somebody who belongs to maybe the ordnance school.

TH: We got a picture…

EH: What color was the box you were painting you mentioned before? You said the boxes were built and then painted. Do you remember the color?

LR: Oh I think it was painted like a varnish color.

EH: Oh just stained, like shellacked or something.

LR: Yeah. Just ordinary boards and boxes. Made them over in the garden shop and…

EH: You said you tagged them. Was the tag a paper tag or a brass tag?

LR: Just a paper tag on the end of it.

TH: Lander, here is the picture on the day they found the bones in the burial vault and you can…

LR: This fella here looks something like Sergeant Mitchell, the fella we were talking about but he wouldn't have been there I don't think. These were all civilian workers that I guess worked for some contractor that was building the railroad or something. Now, here is an enlisted man that probably just happened along there and is curious just looking in on it. The rest of these are all laborers they look like. But this man definitely has a campaign hat on with the hat cord and all and the fatigues. That is a fatigue suit. They were brown then, like canvas. Tent cloth or something they were made out of.

TH: That is the man standing the third from the left in the picture there.

LR: He is, I don't know what he is doing there. He may be he could only be there in charge of an Army detail and these are definitely not Army men. No. This looks like these are the only two Army men there. This fella and this fella and here is the similarity. See.

TH: And in fact, the feet, it looks like they still have the leather shoes on.

LR: Well, we didn't see any shoes. I doubt if they last that long. Well, they just might.

TH: The bones whitish in color or were they yellow with age?

LR: They were a dirt color. Some of them were soft and they gathered up what they could get and put them in a box. No. I didn't know where they got these. They brought them in there. (inaudible) We had to ship these and get up a certain number of boxes and go up to the carpenters shop and have them made. We come to the conclusion about size and what they could hold. And these boxes were so long and were a big square and (inaudible) And I remember Sergeant Timmons, Post Quartermaster Sergeant he was, and he had a driveway and down at the bottom where it says common seaman or something like that well, Timmons says, "Well, I guess they all arrive pretty much the same now." Then he got in trouble again. The next morning we had an Englishman working there. He was a retired sergeant major in the American Army but he was English born, you know. He was big tall man about 70, 75. He was an English worker in the office, retired sergeant major I believe it was and Timmons says to me the next morning, I sent these out on the evening boat, four o'clock boat going out. The truck picked them up and took him down to the boat. The next morning everybody assembled coming into the office. Timmons said, "Those stiffs go out last night?" Oh, Swabby was there, you know, Swabby was an Englishman. Oh boy, did he bawl out, bawl Timmons out. He said, "Sergeant Timmons I want you to understand that I think that is a very disrespectful way to speak about these remains of these English gentlemen." "Oh Swabby," he said, "I didn't mean a think and I apologize." He got in trouble when he said that about the Englishmen.

TH: Did you get to look at the building where you worked, the old Quartermaster Warehouse?

LR: I didn't go in.

EH: That was locked.

TH: That was locked up.

LR: I shoveled coal in that coal bin between the Commissary and Quartermaster Building too. That's collapsed now. That's a disgrace. That's a shame.

TH: Was that building here when you were?

LR: Oh yeah. I shoveled coal in there. My face was black.

TH: That's the building. That building was there when you were here?

LR: Oh yeah and up a little further on the last house they would stack them right up to the ceiling. They would get them up there with tongs and sometimes they would come loose and smash…

TH: When you worked in the coal bins I guess it was a fatigue uniform you wore?

LR: Nah.

TH: What was that made out of?

LR: At that point in time it was made out of brown canvas, just plain like tent cloth maybe not quite as heavy and just an ordinary jacket and trousers.

TH: And that was dirty work, coal dust.

LR: I believe we unloaded our own darn colonel had us shovel it right into that bin there and had us dump it in there, you know. We couldn't dump it. We shoveled it out of the cars. Somebody had to do it each time they came in and I happened to be on a detail one day at that ice house one time, stacking that ice house there and we got it all over the place and it come sliding down. We had a time.

TH: What was the coal for? What was the coal used for out here?

LR: Coal?

TH: Yeah. Was it for heating the…

LR: All the officers' quarters, the troop quarters, all the buildings, they all run on hard coal and they all burned all the heat in the quarters here.

TH: What did the, how did the Quartermaster Office service the Post? What was its role where you worked? What did you have on hand?

LR: We had everything that was used on Post. All the clothing stored there. All the tools, extra tools, companies had a lot of stuff issued to them you know. Receipts, officers had to sign receipts for all the tools and the furniture that they put in the house. They make out that was one of my jobs too to make out inventory lists and receipts and get that officer when he came in to sign it. And I was just telling somebody yesterday about Captain Hains out here and his father was a general, General Hains and his mother was there and they moved in two days before to # 10 Quarters. And it was the general and his wife and his son Thornton was his name, no Peter C. Hains and he had a brother and I made out his receipt and made him sign and get a bill number and two rooms and a hall in the middle. This captain was walking and I stood there looking through the screen and he was going there from one room to another sticking (inaudible) and the general was trying to calm him down and he didn't pay any attention. He looked right at me and I kept ringing the bell and they were waiting for him to go out, the captain to come out. The captain paid no attention to me. (inaudible) I took the receipt and took the captain to ask him to sign it and he scrawled his name on there. I came on back and the telephone room was in Headquarters for the telephone switchboard and two fellas worked in there as operators and they were friends of mine and I used to spend the evening with them and I would take over the board sometimes and they would stretch out and read or something. So about 10 o'clock that night the captain and his brother got in the officers carriage with made its rounds before the boat time. If they wanted to go on the boat they got on the officers carriage and drove them to the boat. So, on the way down I saw Thornton and Peter C., the captain getting in both stinking drunk. And the officers carriage and go down to the boat and I didn't think about it. So that night at 10 o'clock there was long distance not connected to the local switchboard. There was a phone on the wall. So I answered. They said, "This is Mr. reporter, newspaper man, and the captain, here, they say his name is Captain Hains and he has just shot a man here and we would like to know his full name." (inaudible) I said, "Well, let me see if I can get it for you." So I called up his quarters and his mother answered the phone. I asked if she could please give me the captain's first name. "Oh what's the trouble, what's the trouble." She knew there was trouble. I didn't know at the time but I wasn't going to tell here. I said, "Its Headquarters and we just want to get the captain's name on the roster." So Peter C. she said. She seemed sort of relieved. The next day the newspaper had the headline Captain Haines has killed W.E. Annis as he came on the yacht there, the Bayside Yacht Club. Hains was walking off the boat. Shot him down there and killed him. His brother stood with a pistol ready to not let anybody interfere. But the police took care of him and he was tried and he spent eight years in Sing Sing Prison and his mother and father lived here, the old general about two years after while the trial was going on and they finally sent him to Sing Sing and they finally ruled. They only had to pay their electric bill and their coal bill and pay their bills. Another job I had was reading electric meters. So, one day I sat there in the Quartermaster Office and I had my feet up on the desk and some old

gentleman walked in there and walked up and I didn't pay much attention to him and he said, "I would like to order some coal." I grabbed my pencil and I watched him and he said, "I am General Hains." and it didn't take me long to bounce off of that desk. General Hains went to Headquarters for Captain Hains and that was before I went up to get that receipt signed. They stayed up here about two years and I don't know they moved to Virginia.

TH: It is very interesting that I wasn't aware that the officers had to pay for get billed.

LR: Well, he was a retired general and the captain was in Sing Sing so he was just living there as a retired. He didn't have any right to any allowances. He was retired general. That was a triangle there somehow, General Hains' wife.

TH: That is interesting though. Did the officers have to pay rent when they lived on Officers' Row? Was there any rent involved that they paid to the Army?

LR: No. No.

EH: Was it referred to as Officers' Row or Officers' Line?

LR: I just called it officers' quarters. And the stable that was the stable that we were at yesterday alright.

MR: And there is a story about that.

LR: Oh another story you see that window there? When the moon was going down over the Bay there on a cloudy night sometimes I would see it myself and the reflection on that window when you were somewhere on post looked just like a smoldering fire in the hayloft where the horses were. You'd be half asleep, you know, walking up there two o'clock in the morning you happen to look up and you would just be certain that the hayloft was on fire. It was the stables and the hayloft it just looked like a smoldering fire in the hayloft and they gave us a fire alarm. We would call for the guards post #3, fire. So, everybody got out. We had to push those by hand the fire apparatus, you know. We had to push from the Firehouse up here somewhere down to the Proving Grounds. On night the powder house was on fire. Push the heavy hoses and pumps and so forth but anyway we go down and there was no fire. (inaudible) wanted to know where the fire was. (He said), "There was a fire there, I am sure of it." They took him out and forced him in with the rest of them. (laughter) I think he got thirty days.

TH: Oh gee.

LR: False fire alarm.

TH: When you were here did the soldiers like yourself do much writing home? Was there a lot more letter writing to keep in contact with folks at home and friends?

LR: Oh, most of us did. You would go over to the Y, the YMCA and get free paper and envelopes over there and writing tables over there. I would write pretty regularly. You had somebody to write to.

TH: Do you know or can you remember of any soldier keeping a diary? I ask because I am wondering if soldiers did that kind of thing back then on Post if anybody was that interested in documenting your life.

LR: I used to keep on of those myself but god knows where it went to. (laughter) Even the officers used to come to me looking for data of what happened on such and such a day. Even the company first sergeant used to have a little book. When I was in Texas, and expected to go on over to Mexico and singled out twenty one of us for (inaudible) scouts. They got us horses and brand new saddles and spurs and everything. I had riding experience. And they also took those (inaudible)

TH: Yeah.

LR: And send back messages incase we…everybody had to have the wigwag and semaphore and we were put over in the came right in back of the division commander and (inaudible). Boy, we had some (inaudible). I used to go with my company and eat. We used to go with our respective company for meals. We had to wear our spurs all the time, you know, (inaudible) the boys would start to kick. (inaudible) So, I said, "When we start on that march to Houston that 100 mile hike you won't be laughing at me then. I will be riding and laughing at you." Well, it came the day for us to take off. The night before we were getting the horses all ready to ride there and do the scouting on the way to Houston. Two or three of the officers in our rank didn't have any horses so they took three of our horses and left three of us without horses and decided we had to walk too. So we had to… We took our spurs off and marched to Houston and back.

TH: When you were here did they have I guess it was mules they had? I know John has told me that.

LR: That's right.

TH: That there was more mules than horse power here.

LR: We had mules and horses. Mostly mules and they had some saddle horses there.

TH: Mules are very, very famous in the old Army, the Army of your time.

LR: Oh yeah.

TH: The good old Army mule.

LR: If you went about 18 miles a day you were doing good. By the time you get up and go in the morning and stuff unless you were forced to had to.

TH: Another question I had and I didn't ask you, did any of the soldiers here, were they interested in photography? Because some of the pictures that we are looking at were taken in like 1911, 1912 by Smedley, well known photographer.

LR: Oh, I know Smedley. Smedley I think I sent one picture up here of myself in a khaki uniform.

TH: That picture of you that you sent?

LR: Smedley took that.

TH: Smedley took that picture.

LR: Smedley had an office on the Bowery in New York. He was down here every week or two taking pictures, but some of the enlisted men were taking pictures too. They were interested in photography.

TH: But a few of the soldiers were at the time you were here, 1906-1912 they were interested in it?

LR: Yeah. I noticed one fella by the name of Harrison. He was taking pictures all the time. He was developing them and everything. Do you have some?

TH: Yeah. I have right here some very good pictures. These are probably the most interesting you would be interested in. There is your old gun battery, Battery Granger.

LR: That's Battery Granger. Now we were talking about how many men were needed in the gun crew. This would be a good place to count them. This is the rotating man. He rotates that gun around and around.

TH: That's the man on the right?

LR: He reads it. There is a reading opening right there and you can read that in degrees that this gun is (inaudible) That's where he gets it from. And he sets the azimuth and he calls it right there. Over on that side not shown is the elevation wheel, drum. Range drum, range drum they call it. On the elevation they press it and all this could be done by electricity but we usually did it by hand. This man here he does the tripping. You would get that level and all…

TH: It's a wheel he is holding. He is holding a wheel there.

LR: Well, one of them has the tripping lever, the trip lever to raise it, the battery. And this is the gun pointer. Now what is this fella doing here? If this is a 10-inch gun and it looks like it…

TH: It's Granger, 10-inch gun.

LR: Well, there is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. There should be two men on the other side, that would be 14. And then back here, of course, you have got down in the ammunition rooms you have got a crew down there to send these shells and powder up and then we have got two men, three men on the carriage that carries the shot and projectile and powder to the guns. Here is the carriage right here.

TH: Right.

LR: There is the bag of powder and projectile right there and another bag of powder on the other side. Now he comes up with that. Well, he is showing here with the ramrod against the projectile. Now he usually would hit that so hard that that projectile would keep going and go up here to the chamber and then they wouldn't have to use this ramrod. And then one man was # so and so and this bag of powder and that ramrod would ram it home behind the projectile and then the second one would push the powder back in and push it in and close this breech. You were ready to fire. And then the man here who had the lanyard would hook it on this and this fella would say fire. That could all be done by electricity but…

TH: When you say by electricity, what do you mean? Was there a motor?

LR: Oh yeah. There was cable running in there and you could press a certain button and go this way or that way. I believe the gun pointer had some of them and others operated like this gun could be traversed here by electricity and everything. And over here they had a (inaudible) on that side. I don't see it in the picture but it was hung up on that other side of the gun over there facing this way facing the range drum, range setter and his assistant and at the primary station somebody assigned to light. Light range, yards or whatever message you wanted to send. This little box up here, you get that ink up there and you write that same thing. You write that same thing that range that the gun keeper would read it there. I don't know why they did. They all had telephone headsets but I don't know why they, I suppose if one thing broke down.

TH: You know, it is interesting when we were over at Granger the other day you noticed that niche, that niche.

LR: Yeah.

TH: And here in the pictures that niche isn't there. I guess that was added on later. I guess that was for communications like telephones and everything. But when you were there it wasn't there.

LR: Well, what is there right now.

TH: Well, right in the pictures there is nothing and that is the way you remember it. You remember that niche wasn't…

LR: Nothing in there.

TH: It was just a wall and put in later.

LR: I don't remember if it wasn't there but I don't remember seeing it there.

TH: One question I put to you was the color, what color did you paint the gun barrel? Did the soldiers do all the maintenance too?

LR: Yeah. We kept it well greased with cosmoline we called it. And inside we would take a swab and all that cosmoline and grease clear up in there so it wouldn't rust. And then we would have to clean it out when we would go to fire. And we would have to clean it good after it was fired. And put the cosmoline back so it wouldn't rust inside. Now these men here they don't look to be in fatigue clothes or what they are in but that is what they are supposed to be.

TH: It looks like garrison clothes.

LR: Maybe they just came for the picture.

TH: Picture, exactly.

LR: I don't supposed…it was a greasy job around there.

TH: Yeah.

LR: They, here they are on the battery. How many we got here? 1,2, 3, there's that carriage again with the projectile and powders.

TH: Powders.

LR: Three here, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. That's 14 just like we counted a while ago. Well, that takes into this carriage this carriage crew this ammunition crew. That takes them in because they are handling this. So, I guess 14 for this ammunition crew to man the whole gun and that's not counting those down in the cellar getting the shots.

TH: Now many do you think, Lander, how many do you think were downstairs. How many soldiers?

LR: Oh there were, some of them were going to the ammunition room downstairs and stay until they were needed you know. And some of them would stand around up here out of the way. And then there was 21 men that were required for the range section, the primary station which was up on top of the parapet of the old Battery Potter. The secondary station was about a mile down the road south, south of the gun and it took 21 men to run. Two men down the secondary station, an observer and a reader and a

position finder. You could see Coney Island and see people swimming in those powerful position finders. See people swimming at Coney Island and had what you call it data finder in Coney Island and (inaudible) and get a reading on that. The azimuth they called it where they measured horizontal angles. And sometimes they used a gunner's question. And they would answer the question. What is the azimuth? You have got a azimuth instrument. What is the azimuth of this that and the other? What is the azimuth of that flagpole? See. I can't measure until you give me a datum point. So, he would have to that's an actual azimuth on something and you could measure it on that south points. South points in these directions of these angles. There is one right there. One of those circles. There is one of the plotting board. That is a half circle like this a table cut in half.

TH: Right.

LR: And right on the straight side here you got right down by the primary station, pivoted and you got another arm here for the gun pivoted between the primary station and down here secondary station. Now when the TI (Time Interval) bell rings this fella takes a reading and that fella takes a reading and the assistant plotter at that plotting board, the folks sitting over there with the headset on he gets a reading and sets it there for the primary station and he sets it over there for the secondary station. The intersection, then the chief plotter brings up the gun arm which is another graduated straight edge up to that intersection and reads the range off the angle and a whole lot of stuff like height of tide and meteorological station. Somebody had to go down there and send the velocity of the wind, the direction of the wind, (inaudible) of the atmosphere and all those things had to be taken into consideration and worked out on these hand worked computers like the range computer up on the wall here, the projection computer down here and a couple of other gadgets. When he come, when he got, the second time the TI bell went he would have, let's see, there was 15 seconds he had that range corrected in the plotters room and then he would say keep going. (inaudible) This arm here would represent the secondary station and that arm would represent the line of site. The secondary station took the target at the same time the primary station over here took it on line of sight and the guns were somewhere in the middle which all represented those stations. One inch would equal three hundred yards on the ground. If you had a harbor chart and put it in there in the proper place and start tracking the target of say a ship. They used to come in Ambrose Channel they called it. And there would be every 15 seconds there would be a little, make a dot when the bell rings, make a dot here and that's the way. I would follow that channel all the way off the board. Right on that map. But he would get, he would work these reference numbers on these computers and tell you how much the deflection was and you also had to correct for that. There was a rapid growth of motion of the projectile if done right. They go pretty swift and that makes the projectile tend to swerve to the right a little bit. That has to be corrected for with these computers. And that set all and travel with the targets and maybe when that gun is ready to fire that might be the ship and you might be plotting over there. (laughs) but never the less you hit the target.

TH: You are telling me a really funny story about how effective the fire really was, the towed target when Colonel Harris was present at your gun battery.

LR: Yes. Yes. We had the champions here. The 113th (inaudible) They couldn't get a good single hit. They just sabotaged the thing. Instead of setting the proper reading on the plotting board there they offset something else on there. We didn't know how it could happen. He tried to check back on everything else but he couldn't figure it out at all. The captain got the smashed target with the first shot that went on his record and gave him a boost. I don't know. It was difficult then.

JS: You were saying that they had to delay the Officers' Ball because of that.

LR: Oh yeah that's what they told us. Not sure exactly. They had one target and of course, I guess it was $6500 just the frame like that the frame of maybe an 8 x 8 of timber hewn together and they had a frame on top of it of pyramidal shape and a flag on top. When we hit that target the shot smashed everything right down on the ground. The only thing they has was the frame on the water and they couldn't see anything. The colonel kept waiting for the second gun to fire because the #1 gun had fired and smashed the target at 1,000 yards or something like that. The colonel says to the captain, "What's the matter Captain? What's the matter with your #2 gun there?" And the captain asked the plotter what's the matter on the platform there and he said, "What's the matter gun plotter? Why don't you fire?" "There isn't a target there, Sir. No target visible." The captain kept looking with their field glasses. Finally they knew it was smashed and it was down and nobody could see it. The Colonel was jubilant. He put his hat up in the air and waved and said, "Alright that's all. You got no target anyway." The officers had their ball there, there annual ball after target, at the end of target practice. It took them a lot, two months almost to get that target requisitioned and all that red tape to get that signed. They couldn't hold target practice and they couldn't hold their ball until that was over that was the rule. I heard they arrested him and gave him 30 days. (laughter) I had my doubts about that. If it pleased the colonel why shouldn't it please the others?

TH: We were discussing the other day at your old battery, Battery Granger what color you used to paint the soldiers used to paint the barrel. How do you remember it Lander?

LR: As far as I can remember it, it was just that old battleship grey.

TH: Does that go for the carriage too, the carriage that held?

LR: I think so. All that metal work was painted as I remember it. I might have been just a possibility that it was green certainly green but I don't think it was. It was the color that the porch floor was painted out here.

TH: By the way were the porches here painted that way too?

LR: Yes. I remember the porches in the Post and the woodwork were all the trim, floors, windows all the woodwork.

TH: How long did you serve? All the time that you were here did you just serve at Battery Granger? That was your gun battery.

LR: Mmm hmmm.

TH: How fast was your gun crew? How fast could they load? (Tape stops. Interview begins again after pause.)

EH: We are looking at a post card photograph which is part of the museum collection. The portrait of Lander Radford at age what do you think, 17?

Lander Radford at Fort Hancock.

LR: Well, I think we got these, before we had the long trousers without the leggings before we got this. We didn't have this stand up collar. See that had clamps in there. You pull the clamps and you see the cuffs. This is the one we got following that one. It had these pockets but it had an ordinary button up to the top, blouse we called it, same as the blue at that time. And then they changed and we got this stand up collar and the leggings and the bottoms. That was taken out here in the poison ivy near the Crematory, they called it in those days. (laughter) Smedley got a bunch of us out there to take these pictures to take them home and mail them back to us down the next time he come.

TH: How much would he charge? Do you remember how much he was charging back then for the?

LR: A small amount. He didn't charge much. He was down here making a living and he had a big studio down on the Bowery.

EH: The subject of Thomas Smedley really fascinates us and we finally located his family in Queens.

Photo of Thomas Smedley, Post Photographer.

LR: Is this Smedley?

EH: This is Thomas Smedley and he was the Post Photographer around 1910.

LR: That's him. But he was older, he looked a little older when I knew him. He was getting a little gray when I knew him. That was probably taken before. There is no date on here is there?

EH: His daughter in law said it was around 1910.

LR: Ah, Smedley was older than that in 1910 because his hair was almost gray. He was about 65 or 70 or 65 at least in 1910.

EH: We have been trying to find the Smedley collection.

TH: Yeah. He took a lot of photographs out here.

EH: Have you got any clues for us as to where to…I have been writing everywhere, the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of the City of New York.

LR: Somebody I suppose just threw them away.

EH: That's what we are afraid of because they are very valuable photos.

LR: Maybe when the man died or something his heirs didn't know they were worth.

TH: Yeah '46, '47 right after World War II. Elaine has done the tracking. Tracked down his son and his son died in the '60s and we are afraid with the son's death that is probably where the photographs if they kept the collection of his work it disappeared.

MR: If by any chance have you checked the library?

EH: I have checked the New York Public Library at 42nd Street in the commercial directories.

LR: You had his old address in the Bowery, I guess.

EH: 202 Bowery is on all of them. But in the 1930s the commercial directory of New York City says see Jersey City. Do you have any idea?

LR: No, as far as I know he was still in the address in the Bowery.

JS: Did you write any of these photo magazines?

EH: No.

JS: There is an old collection of books up in Brooklyn of photographs if you try there you may run across.

LR: Smedley took that too.

EH: Yes.

LR: 56th Company on guard that time on that day. No this was pretty early pictures because they have got leggings on there.

EH: When he came to the Post did he make any sort of grand entrance with a lot of heavy photo equipment you know.

LR: No. He just carried them all in like a suitcase. He set up a little tripod and (inaudible) but he took about the best pictures to be had at that time I think.

TH: And here's when you, you probably remember this is July 1908 the Trestle Guardhouse down on the south end of the post.

Thomas Smedley image of Trestle Guardhouse, 1908.

LR: Yeah. We were talking about that yesterday. There's the old Trestle Guardhouse. On the beat there or post there was only one post and one sentry at large would go down beyond the Guardhouse. You would walk from the ocean beach over to the Sandy Hook Bay and there's the sentry box. It's about to fall over now. These, this tower was for the ordnance observation tower to see if the beach was clear when they fired were testing shots down that way. What this is, is something built since my time. That wasn't there.

TH: We have another view of it Lander. Your wife has it. It is a windmill.

LR: Oh yeah.

TH: Here's the Guardhouse.

LR: That's the trestle. I had to walk that one night because the water was, that was about one or two o'clock in the morning. The ocean was coming through there and made an island out of Sandy Hook. The road washed out and big breakers would come through there.

MR: Was that when you got your pipe?

LR: No.

TH: Ut oh.

MR: Telling stories out of school.

LR: Oh yeah you are talking about Governors Island crossing on the raft.

TH: Oh yes. Yeah. We got that story. Yeah you told me in the letter. You were supposed to get your name in the paper.

LR: I got a $10 fine out it too. There was an ex-newspaper man there and we were telling him about it. He sneaked out and called the newspapers and the next day it was in all of them, all the papers. That's that Trestle Guardhouse.

MR: Yeah.

EH: (looking at a photo) This is an exhibit about the Proving Ground but it is somewhere we don't know where.

LR: I saw that shot fired or one like it. It was out where they had this old 16-inch gun. They wanted to test the 12-inch gun. The one I saw was a 16-inch gun with a plate like that and they shot at a plate same like that. And they never had a 16-inch rifle mounted. They had it anchored down with steel cables and put up on big 10-10 wooden blocks and resting up on those and they put down the trunions on the side and anchored down there and fired oh a short distance maybe a couple of hundred yards through armor like this 1 inches thick. It shattered that plate and they had the test.

EH: We wonder where this could have been?

LR: The 12-inch gun.

EH: This was an exhibit as you can see, this described the test of 12-inch army projectiles and describes it in details.

LR: Fort Hancock, New Jersey.

EH: It specifically says and talks about it.

LR: Well, I don't know if they go through the trouble of mounting the 12-inch gun. I notice all guns were guns but I never paid any attention to what size they were. I thought it looked just like the shattered shell they sent me from the 16-inch rifle. I don't know what they did with that. Somebody said they sent it to Panama I think it seemed to me.

TH: Lander, how does the place look after all these years?

LR: Well, it looks about the same. Them buildings built in between. Trees have grown larger of course. Those trees weren't out there. I didn't see any trees around the guardhouse there. I don't know what kind of trees they are. They look like a sycamore bark and the leaves look like a poplar. What are they?

TH: Cedar, right up by the porch here are cedars.

LR: No. the biggest ones, sycamores?

TH: Oh the ones out here are sycamores.

LR: They are funny looking sycamores. (laughter) They have small leaves. I have never seen that type. The bawl and the bark is recognizable. It looks like sycamore on the bark but the leaves are small.

EH: Did you ever keep in contact with people that were with you at Fort Hancock? Did you ever keep in touch?

LR: Well, I had but most of them are gone now. As I tell you about a friend of mine that lived down here in Sea Bright. He died about 25 years ago.

EH: Who was that?

LR: Herbert Young. He lived in Sea Bright as far as I know his family still lives there.

JS: Is that the house we went to see yesterday?

LR: It's boarded up. His wife was still living and two or three daughters and I think he had a son that died but that was 73 years ago since I was there. I wanted to ask around. Maybe we could go down there this afternoon and see. I would like to know what happened to his family. He was out here and retired a year or so after that in Eatontown.

EH: Any other names come to mind?

MR: Mr. Claywill, you kept in touch with him didn't you?

LR: Who?

MR: Claywill? Wasn't his name Claywill? Yeah he was black.

LR: Oh I didn't keep in touch but he is dead now too. He is buried in Pensacola, Florida. Both of them came from the same county I did in Kentucky. Claywill, I went to school with him. He was a little older than me I went to school with his younger sister. The colonel was talking about (inaudible) There are lots of names that I could mention. One was named Ula Tweed he's dead too. He ran the restaurant in the PX there. He was the chief cook and everything else. Then he got discharged and went down to the Panama police and retired from there and went back to North Carolina and died up there. A man named Pitts he was a bugler. And his name was M-E-N-N-I-S Mennis Pitts. (laughter)

EH: What a name for a bugler.

LR: Probably named after somebody's last name you know, Mennis.

EH: Yeah, family name.

LR: His mother's name was Mennis. I thought it was funny name too. He was a good bugler. I heard he went back to Tennessee. I heard he went to work on the railroad as a brakeman and was killed. Michael J. Friday. He was the first sergeant of the 113th. I don't know what became of him. John A. Evans, that the friend of mine that I was talking about before. I don't know what became of him. He went back to Maryland. John A Evans he was also a first sergeant there. Boy, I know a lot of last names. I just can't recall their first names. Well, I think we are going.

MR: Going at some point. (laughter)

LR: We are going to go down and see if we can find out about my friend and his family. He lived in Sea Bright. His wife's father was mayor.

MR: Mr. Mulhern maybe he knows.

TH: John do you know?

MR: Do you know of a family by the name of Young? Is that the name, Young?

LR: Mmm hmm.

JM: No.

MR: But you didn't know of them at all?

JM: No.

LR: He was a sergeant way back and he didn't retire.

JM: You mentioned Warner-Swayze. Is that the name you mentioned, Warner-Swayze?

LR: Yeah. I believe that the way.

JR: Warner-Swayze is still in business.

LR: They were supposed to be two Army officers. And then I guess somebody took their name because they were really anybody could get together one of those things had some brains. Of course, you could take one of those and get your range and all from the range you had drawn on one of those position finders and it wouldn't be as accurate as this horizontal base as they called it and the primary and secondary station together but one of them you operate but you wouldn't have any corrective range you just had to feel for your range. You shot over you would have to try to correct it at the gun.

JS: They developed a machine tool for measuring the contours of the mold or toothpick with which they grind precision instruments of which the same apparatus you have the rotating table you set your magnifying glass over there the object and its projected onto the screen and you measured you could measure the distance of the two points or the gear whatever you want to make the 3rd dimension and exactly the same principle they take these blueprints and they project it up as if it was the third dimension and its one of the first tool people I don't know if it's the same company.

EH: The same name.

JS: They used it a great deal in World War II, making precision tools.

LR: Well, I guess we had better be taking off.

TH: Lander, thank you very much.

LR: Not at all and if there is something I can answer well just drop me a line.

TH: Sure will.

END OF INTERVIEW