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Pennsylvania State Police

Oral History Interview of:

Sergeant Harold Trout

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INTERVIEWER:

This is the Pennsylvania State Police, Oral Histories Project, I'm here with Retired Sergeant Harold Trout. My name is Shelly Becker. Today is September 10, 2004, and we're at the State Police Academy in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Thank you for coming here MR. TROUT, do I have your permission to record this interview with you today?

MR. TROUT:

Yes, you do.

INTERVIEWER:

All right, wonderful. Well I really appreciate you being here. Okay, we're going to start off by talking about how you got acquainted with the State Police, before you even became a State Trooper. So, what prompted you to become a State Trooper? What influenced you in those early years?

MR. TROUT:

I was working at a job in Philadelphia where we got up at 3:00 in the morning and delivered newspapers through a whole section of West Philadelphia and weather -- snow, ice, sleet it didn't matter we had to get those papers out. It was very, very important. There was a friend of mine who was born the same year as I was born, and he and I were very close together and he was driving milk truck in the same area of West Philadelphia that I was working, and he also got up at 3:00 in the morning to

deliver his milk. He and I would meet and exchange -- I would give him a newspaper and he'd give me a glass of -- or a bottle of chocolate milk and we'd sit there and talk about old times and what we can do to better ourselves. And he came up with the idea of joining the State Police. Wanted to know if I would join it with him. I said, "Sounds like a good deal." and we talked more about it and he said, "Well let's go down and get some applications and we'll submit them for the State Police." So we agreed then the next day, in the daytime, to go down to 1305 South Broad Street in Philadelphia, which was the Headquarters for the Highway Patrol. We picked up our applications, brought them home and filled them out, and I thought he sent his to Harrisburg, which was where we were supposed to. I sent mine to Harrisburg, he gave his to his brother, who was a Democratic committeeman in his area where he lived and the Democratic committeeman took Frank's application directly to the State Police -- to the Highway Patrol Headquarters and this all took place in the early part of January or February of 1935, no excuse me, 1936. By April the 1st, Frank got word to go to Harrisburg and start training in the Highway Patrol Training School at 21st and Herr Street in Harrisburg. He wanted to know if I had heard anything, and I said, "No." So in the meantime now, I'm becoming a little bit dejected because each day the mailman came, I kept looking for my mail for the Highway Patrol and it never came. So I was telling one of my customers, one day when I was collecting from her, about my wishes to join the Highway Patrol. I called it State Police, because in our language in Philadelphia you were either a city policeman or a state policeman, we didn't know that there was anything else and we figured that the Highway Patrol was the State Police for Pennsylvania. And so I told her I was joining the State Police and she said,

"Oh you mean the men that ride the horses?" And I said, "No, they ride the red motorcycles." She said, "Well that's not the State Police, that's the Highway Patrol." She said, "My nephew belongs to the State Police and he comes home on weekends here once in a while, well the next time he's in town I'll call you and you can come up and meet him." So her nephew was a fellow by the name of Chick Moody [ph] and he was stationed in Reading. And it wasn't too long, maybe a week or two, that he'd come home, and he gave me a phone call, and I went up and talked to him. And he showed me pictures of these State Police with their helmets and there campaign hats and their horses, and how it was such a noble outfit, that politics couldn't get you in, and you had to get in on your own merits. And he made it sound very inviting to me. So I asked him, "Well how do I go about joining the State Police?" And he said, "I'll get you an application." So he got me an application, sent it to me and I filled that out and sent it in. Now in the meantime, Frank got word that he was to start training on April 1, 1936. So while he was in the training school, he and -- his sister and I would drive up to Harrisburg to see him at the training school, and of course we were admiring his luck there, to be a member of the Highway Patrol. Sometime in the latter -- in the meantime Chick Moody told me that they were having a rodeo, the State Police was having a rodeo, in Allentown on July the 4th, and it was free. You could get in for free and it would be good for me to drive up and see this rodeo. So a couple friends of mine and I drove up to Allentown on July 4, 1936 to watch this rodeo. And so help me, Elmer Faber [ph] was the announcer. Elmer Faber was a Lieutenant in the State Police, and he did some radio announcing for KDKA about crime stories, pertaining to the State Police in Pittsburgh and he was quite a famous commentator. And he's

commentating for this rodeo and he gets the crowd built up with this intensity, I guess you'd call it, of the incoming State Police on their horses. And he said -- he asked the whole audience to be silent and pretty soon he says, "And now I bring you ladies and gentlemen, the Pennsylvania State Police on parade." And when he said, "On parade" the gates opened and into the field come this troop of state policemen riding their horses, about 36 of them I think in a column of four, and they rode onto the field at a fast pace and separated and started doing their drills, and it was a thrilling afternoon. They showed trick riding and when I left that day I felt I wanted to be a member of the State Police. So I go home and I go back to my job, getting up every morning at 3:00 and I'm working, working, working and watching the mail and the mail doesn't come. So one of these days -- coming -- in August, Chick Moody calls me when he's home -- his aunt was called Aunt Mary and we all got to know her as Aunt Mary and he wanted to know if I'd heard anything yet, and I said, "No" and he said, "Well I hear that they're going to take examinations -- that they're starting to give examinations for the State Police." So he said, "Why don't you go to Harrisburg, a lot of times when you go into the Headquarters there, and they see you, they know without looking at your application whether you'd make a state policeman or not." "Whether you've got a short leg, or one arm, or what they can see you." So he told me to ask for a man by the name of Sylvius Overmiller [ph]. So I drive up to Harrisburg and go into Regimental Headquarters. At that time it was on the third floor on the north wing of the Main Capital Building, and ask to see Mr. Overmiller. So he took me in his office, sat me down in a chair beside him and asked me several questions, why I wanted to be a state policeman and so on, and I answered them, and then he looked up at me and he

said, "Well can you be in Reading Saturday morning to take an examination?" This was on a Thursday, because Thursday was my day off on my other job. I said to him, "I'll be there." So he wrote a little note on the yellow note pad, gave it to me and said, "Give this to Major Adams on Saturday at the Reading State Police Barracks." So I pack up and leave, my mother went along with me. She sat out in the car while I marched into the State Police Headquarters there at Reading, to take my examination. So they sat us all down, there were several of us there, they sat us down and we took our examinations and after the examination, I was taken into an office to be interviewed by Major Lynn G. Adams. And he's sitting in a swivel chair on one side of the desk, I'm on the other side, and he's asking me all kinds of questions about what would I do if, what would I do if necessary and so on -- under certain circumstances, and I gave him the answers the best that I could, and then he turns around on his swivel chair and says to me, "What color tie am I wearing?" And I had no idea he was going to ask me that, so I just took a guess and I think I said, "Blue" or something. When he turns back, it turned out I was right. Now what he was doing there, he was measuring my -- or judging my observation qualities. So that was it. I got the interview and when I went back home, sometime in -- that was in late August -- sometime in September, early September, I get a letter from the Highway Patrol telling me to report to their training school at 21st and Herr Street in Harrisburg, to begin training. Now in the meantime, when I got that second application I gave it to my friend's brother, Harry, who was a Democratic politician and he took it to Harrisburg the same as he did to his brother, and that's how I got this preference treatment for this letter. So the letter said to start training, no ifs, ands or buts. That was to be September the 29th, I think. And

about a week later I get another letter from the State Police telling me to report on October the 1st to State Police Headquarters at the Main Capital Building on the third floor and if you pass the doctor's examination, you will begin training at Hershey. So bring along a change of underwear. So, here I had a choice. If I passed the examination, I'll be a state policeman, but I'm already told I'm going to be a highway patrolman, so I have a choice to make, and I chose the State Police. So I ignored the letter to the Highway Patrol and never reported and on October the 1st I reported at the Main Headquarters in Harrisburg. There were 30 of us that day, and they marched us up to Dr. Riecherd's [ph] office who was the State Police Doctor, and he gave us a physical examination, and sent word back whether or not we passed and the ones who passed were lined up and transported then to Hershey -- to the training school at Hershey where we were issued some clothing. Now they gave us towels, they gave us two pair of jodhpurs, riding jodhpurs, they gave us fatigue clothes and a pair of shoes, used shoes and socks, and we had to provide our own underwear. We were told we were going to have a six month training school session and they would allow us off on Wednesday nights and every other weekend, if, you didn't mess up. So my first weekend -- the first weekend there I had to stay, I didn't get the weekend off and I started to get home sick and my folks came up from Philadelphia to visit me and I was sorry to see them go back home, but I thought well I'm not going to leave here, I'm going to stick this out. So I stayed and the following weekend I was off. Our training consisted of: boxing, jujitsu, wrestling, swimming, typing, geography, criminal law, fingerprinting, english and horse back riding. Now every afternoon -- every morning we had the class -- indoor classes and the afternoons we did our riding. We started

out by riding with saddles. After about a week or two of riding with saddles, they -- well first of all, they had to show us how to saddle a horse up, how to put the bridles on him and how to fold a blanket which was very, very technical. You had to be perfect or the horse would act up which to me -- I couldn't imagine why a horse would be so particular about how a blanket was folded, but it was a case of wrinkles and so on that would annoy the horse if it wasn't saddled right. And after about two weeks they told us to bridle our horses up, but leave the saddles on the racks, we're going to ride bare back. Well, first of all to get on a horse bare back without a stirrup was hard for us green horns, but we got on somehow, I can't tell you now how we did it anymore, but I do remember riding we -- he would walk us around the corral, around a ring. Sgt. Huswar [ph] was our riding instructor who had -- he was a slob of some kind, who had spoke broken English, and he would announce the commands. So pretty soon while we're walking around he says, "Trot," which meant the horses had to trot. So we had to make our horses trot and while the horses are trotting and we're riding bare back, we're bouncing up and down and some of the fellows fell off. One fellow fell off and we -- I thought he was hurt and yet we still kept riding around. And one fellow jumped off to help the fellow that we thought was hurt and he got balled out and was told to ignore the man laying there on the ground and so the rest of us kept riding and kept riding, and riding and the more we bounced, the more we -- blisters we were working on. And when I got finished riding that day, I had blood coming through my jodhpurs, they were khaki jodhpurs, and I had blood coming through the jodhpurs -- here -- from the blisters that I had worn from bouncing up and down on that dog on horse. But in time we

learned to do it the right way and we -- and the blisters finally healed up. All right, now what?

INTERVIEWER:

What? So they were fairly tough on you in the training? Do you feel that they were...

MR. TROUT:

Yes. Then another time, about the riding the horses too, was that -- he would tell us to cross stirrups, which meant we took our right stirrup, brought it up over the neck of the horse, brought our left stirrup, put it over -- now we're riding on a saddle, a hard saddle. They used what the called modified McClellan Saddles at that time. The McClellan Saddle was designed I guess during the Civil War and the saddles that we were using were old saddles, but these were modified, which meant they were not as deep. They were sort of flattened out a little more. Now when you cross stirrups, that meant the box of -- the foot of the stirrup was made of wood and covered with leather. So now your cross stirrups and that wooden box is hitting your knee here, and when you start to trot, and your bouncing up and down on that horse, and those stirrups are bouncing up and down with you -- that was another painful ordeal which we had to -- there was no pity shown, you had to put up with it and work your own way out of it to be comfortable.

INTERVIEWER:

How long did it take you to really learn how to ride well and...

MR. TROUT:

It took us about three months before we could really ride without rubbing blisters.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT:

We rode everyday, except a raining day and snow, we didn't ride during -- you couldn't take the horses out in the rain and snow. It was all right for the men. We'd be out there working and marching around, but you couldn't take the horses out in that weather. And once in a while we would go what they called cross country, we'd go up over through the Pigeon Hills there in back of Hershey, I think there's a sanitarium up there now. But we would -- we'd ride up there and -- all kinds of terrain, over rocks and hills and through the woods, and you had to watch it that you didn't hit your head on a bough of a tree. And then when we -- we would do that on a rainy day, and when we'd come in from riding the horses, we had to unsaddle the horses and rub them down with dry straw to dry them off. And after you got the horses taken care of, then we could go in and get dried ourselves. The used to make a joke, the horse was more important than the man, because a new man could be hired for a three cent stamp, but for a horse -- it costs three hundred dollars to get a horse, so you took better care of the horse than you did of the man.

INTERVIEWER:

So how many horses did you have there at the Hershey Training School?

MR. TROUT::

We had about 40 to 50 horses at Hershey. We had an upper -- what they called an upper barn where we kept about 20 horses and then we built a lower stable while we were there that housed another 30 horses. And at the height of our rodeo seasons we had about 50 or 60 horses there.

INTERVIEWER:

And how many men were in your class then?

MR. TROUT:

There were 30 men started that same day October the 1st -- that was taken down to Hershey and as the time wore -- as the training period wore on, some of them dropped out. There were seven that dropped out before it was all over. So that when we graduated, there was 23 of us.

INTERVIEWER:

And how many men did it take to perform a rodeo? Or work with the horses with that?

MR. TROUT:

The...

INTERVIEWER:

Every single person needed to be involved in that?

MR. TROUT:

The number of men in the -- the number of men in the what we called the fancy drill team would be about 36. That would be -- we always operated in sets of four, and so you'd have nine sets of four, which made a pretty good, sizeable troop out on the field. And then there were eight or nine trick horses that were separate from these drill horses. The trick horses were a special kind of a horse, sort of a stocky horse, that

could stand a man of a 180, 190 pounds, riding all over him, doing all kinds of stunts without throwing the horse off balance. So they were a special kind of a horse, and we always trained those horses separately from the drill horses. We had a regular track that we ran, we put sawdust on that track, so that if you fell off doing the tricks you would land in sawdust, and you wouldn't -- your chances of getting hurt was minimized. We did the trick riding while the drill team was performing out in the middle of the field, in the corral -- what we call a corral. They were doing their figure eight's and there jumping through the burning hoops and various things like that.

INTERVIEWER:

So you were a trick rider?

MR. TROUT:

And I was one of the trick riders. Now the reason I -- the reason I volunteered -- that was a volunteer job. I wanted to show my buddies there I was with that I was not afraid of horses. Coming from the city, the only horses that I was ever around would be a milk horse, or a bread horse, or a trash -- the ones that hauled the trash carts and I wanted to show my buddies who were mostly from the coal regions, or from the rural areas, that I was not afraid of a horse, and I volunteered for trick riding. I weighed at that time, that I was trick riding 172 pounds. And I was lean, I could get around pretty good and I did the trick riding until 1941. I got married in 1939 and had a child, and my wife said that your days of trick riding -- you’re a man of responsibility now, your days of trick riding are over. But once you were a trick rider it was difficult to get out of that because trick riders were scarce, everybody didn't want to become a trick rider. So once you were a trick rider it was hard to get away from it and I had to really -- what I

did I made myself so miserable that they wanted to get rid of me. And I told them I didn't want to be -- I then told them I didn't want to be, and Major Martin was sort of an understanding man at that time. He knew that I had gotten married and that I wanted to drop out, so he let me drop out. So in 1941 was the last rodeos I rode in.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. Can you kind of describe some of the tricks you did on the horses?

MR. TROUT:

Well, the first thing we did that I -- really could take a picture of was standing up in the saddle. You would get your horses -- you did it as a team, your eight or nine horses, whoever was going to perform. You'd get in a line, you'd get up at one end of the runway and you'd get them to run in a gallop. And while they were in a gallop, or what we called a cantor, you maneuvered around, and you took your feet out of the stables and brought them up to a hunch, put them up on the saddle, then stood up. Now while the horse is running, for you to stand up and keep your balance was a little touchy, and you would fall off at times, but I don't remember ever getting hurt. That was one of the tricks you could take a picture of. Now another trick was -- that we had special saddles, for the trick riding -- they were not a western saddle and they were not a modified McClellan, the had a horn on the front and they had all kinds of straps on the back of the saddle -- that saddle was a flat saddle, with straps hanging down from the back, from either side and down underneath the cinch was a loop, so that you could put your one foot in that loop and hang down over the side and let the horse drag you. And your hands would be hanging down in back of you and your hands would be dragging along in the sawdust or the turf, wherever you were riding, and you were just

hanging there. Now when you came back up from that, you pulled yourself up and got a hold of one of those straps, and then got a hold of the horn. Once you got a hold of the horn, then you could take your foot out of this loop, now you had a hold -- have a hold of your horn with one hand, with the right -- usually of the right hand, you dropped down and your feet would be hitting the ground, and you're holding on the horn. But when your -- when you got to know at the time, when your feet hit the ground it would throw you up, it would throw you up over the back end of the horse, and you'd widen your legs -- straddle your legs and you'd come down and land in the saddle. Now there was another trick that you would do holding down -- where you were upside down and your foot was in a loop, which made it easy. I mean people thought it was uncanny that you could do that, but you were really holding on to either straps or the loop. But when you come up, instead of coming up into the saddle you'd come up on the horses neck, facing the rear end of the horse. Now to get around -- to get a natural seat, you took a hold of the horn again, threw your legs up over the horse's neck and back down to the side of the saddle, and do the same thing again that you did before, hit the ground with both feet at the same time, while the horse is running, and that would automatically throw your feet up and around and you spread your legs, and when you land, you land in the saddle again. So, now another trick, now I never did this trick, but, one of the other tricks was a -- on the back of the saddle were two hand holds, one on each side, the saddle was about 18 inches wide. There was a hand hold -- two hand holds here and one of the fellows would be riding right behind you, you'd be on the saddle and he'd be behind you, but he'd be holding on to these hand holds. And when -- at a given time, he would drop down over the croup of the horse,

holding onto the hands, and the horse's legs would be throwing this guy down in back of him up and down, up and down. But he was riding on the -- what they called the hocks of the horse. The rear end -- the rear legs of the horse would be throwing him up and down, but he'd be holding on with hands and then all he took -- all his strength, to pull himself back up, over the horse again. That was one of the tricks -- I never did that but a fellow by the name Roy Wilendorf [ph] did that and he later became deputy commissioner. And this one time we were doing these tricks and he fell off. And he broke -- he broke his wrist, or a broken arm, and of course everybody thought we was faking, you know, and we told him to get back on and do the trick again. So he gets back on the horse and does it again, but he fell off again, and darn if he doesn't break another arm. So here he had two broken arms, and we were making fun of him that he was trying to gold brick, you know, not to ride. But he ended up with two broken arms from that one...

INTERVIEWER:

Was that during a rodeo in front of an audience or just in practice?

MR. TROUT:

No, this was in practice.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, okay I...

MR. TROUT:

Yeah, this was in practice. Yeah, this was practice.

INTERVIEWER:

In one of our earlier conversations, you mentioned during one rodeo a fellow dressed up in a nurse costume. Can you describe that to me?

MR. TROUT:

Yeah. In the -- during the rodeo, and this happened -- in fact this happened when we saw the rodeo on the 4th of July in 1936 at Allentown. The trick team did their tricks, and what they do is they go up -- they take caddy corner on the field, because they have longer runs if they run caddy corner. They ran across from one corner, to the opposite corner, and do their trick. On the way back, one of the men on the trick team would fall off, pretend he was hurt, and the horse would be running loose. Well somebody would run out and catch the horse, and then a nurse would come in from the side line with her white cap on and the regular nurses outfit, and jump up on the horse and start riding this horse without a man. And they would go back and start doing their tricks again. But now the nurse is a member of the trick team, with this exhibition going on, and she's pretending all kinds of things, she's having trouble staying on the horse, she falls off, she jumps back on the horse again, and the people would think, boy what -- this is something for a nurse to be able to do this. It turns out that he is one of the trick riders himself, dressed as a nurse. Now the funny thing about that was, in 1937 -- that would be my first rodeo, we were having it at Greensburg, and my mother was from Johnstown, and Greensburg was in her area where she was born and raised and she had a sister living out there. And so I was so proud that I was a state policeman and a member of the trick team, that I talked them into coming to watch the rodeo. And who's going to be the fellow to fall off the horse,

but me. So I was picked to be the guy that pretends I'm hurt. Well my mother thought I was really hurt, see, but in the meantime then the nurse jumps up on the horse and starts riding -- when it's all over they realize it's just a gag. But, that was quite a gag, it got a lot of -- got a lot of good reception for it. And the fellow that did the nursing part was a fellow by the name of Larry Suputor [ph] who later became a Captain in charge of the "C" Troop in Reading, and he was quite a rider. He was one of the few fellows who could do the trick of going -- what they called going under the belly of the horse. He could get off on one side of the horse, work his way around, underneath the belly of the horse and come back on the other side, while the horse is in motion. That was a hard -- difficult trick to do, he could do it, nobody else could do it.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you ever attempt that trick yourself?

MR. TROUT:

I never tried it.

INTERVIEWER:

No...

MR. TROUT:

I never tried it.

INTERVIEWER:

...pretty dangerous.

MR. TROUT:

Didn't appeal to me.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Was your family very impressed by your new horse skills and rodeo trick riding?

MR. TROUT:

I don't know that my family, no, I can't say that they were thrilled. My mother was proud of the fact that I was a state policeman. My brothers were, yes, and my sister was. But, I think above all was the girl I married...

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm.

MR. TROUT:

...she had an uncle who was on the Philadelphia Police Department and when my wife told him that I was -- she was going marry a state policeman, he thought that was great, he thought she couldn't have done better.

INTERVIEWER:

And, so you trained for the rodeo. Was that very large of a focus in training...

MR. TROUT:

Was it a very what?

INTERVIEWER:

...a large focus of the training? Or was the training more focused on academics and state police work?

MR. TROUT:

The training was mostly focused on criminal law, on crowd control, on keeping your composure under all sorts of conditions -- and the did work on you for that. For instance, they wanted you to be able to take criticism from a mob, who were not very courteous to police departments, especially when they're there to break up a riot. And some of the things they would do, and I used to say that they picked on a man a week. We're going to work on Trout this week. So every instructor would ball you out, would criticize you, would call you a coward, they would call you yellow -- for example you'd be -- when we had to groom our horses everyday, part of grooming your horse was to clean out the hooves, clean out the nostrils -- one of the commands was eyes, nose and nostrils and clean out the hooves. What we would do is go to each hoof of the horse with a pick -- they'd give you a regular -- that was part of our equipment, a hoof pick. And you cleaned out the hooves of the horse, what would be an accumulation of manure and all kinds of crud, but we did that every morning. Now sometimes the horses would kick at you, when you would go to pick up their hoof, they would kick you -- kick at you. And so the instructors would stand around, who were watching you -- to groom the horse -- to see that you groomed it right. And if they'd see you working on the hoof of the horse, he'd call you -- you didn't clean out that horse's hoof. Well what they were trying to do is egg you on to argue back. And if you argued back, you were -- you received extra duty for that. Sometimes even dismissal if it got too bad. You know, like -- in other words, if it would come to blows -- if you'd offer -- if that fellow would be criticizing you so tremendously, or so nastily that you would say, "Alright, if you weren't in that uniform, I'd punch you in the nose," or something like that, you were out. Now I can't say I never saw it happen, because we all knew that if

you did that, you wouldn't last. And so they picked on you, they criticized you unmercifully sometimes, especially while you were grooming your horse, or if you were running. If you were running and you dropped out because you claimed you were tired, they would criticize you. They would belittle you, they would do everything to make you get mad and talk back to them. And that was all part of this business of when you're at a crowd -- at a hostile crowd and they're calling you all kinds of names, how can you keep your composure. So that was a big part of our training.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm. So in order to complete all this training properly, obviously there was some kind of requirements for the men, when they're entering into the training. Can you talk about the types of maybe height or weight requirements that were needed during that time?

MR. TROUT:

We had our -- our minimum height was 5 foot 10. Later on they came out with a maximum height, but I don't know what -- I think the maximum height might have been 6 foot 3, and the weight was 152 pounds. Now, when I was -- first filled out my application, I weighed 152 pounds, but, I was told by a doctor I had to get my tonsils out. When I got my tonsils out, I dropped down to 148 pounds, so that --the day that I

reported, on October 1, 1936, I only weighed 148 pounds. And yet the requirement was 152. But the first six months I was there I went up to 170 pounds.

INTERVIEWER:

Wow. So they fed you well?

MR. TROUT:

They fed me well, everyday at regular hours, seven in the morning, twelve at noon and five at night. And they fed you good.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm.

MR. TROUT:

You had to have good teeth, you had to have good eyesight. The reason for the maximum height I was told was that if you're in a group of four or five men, and one stood out, a head taller than anybody else it would not -- make a good appearance.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT:

A shining example of today is -- they reduce that height and now -- and they also allow women. And I know there is one particular women, I see her picture every once in a while, she must only be about 5 foot tall. And yet to -- to see that women in a State Police uniform, it doesn't look good, to me...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, yeah.

MR. TROUT:

...because she looks to small. Now, why 5 foot 10? I think the saying was, a big man is less apt to get in a fight. In other words, if you're going to make an arrest, if you're a big fellow, it takes an awful big fellow to resist -- to try to even stand up against you, so they used to say the bigger the man, the less he tried -- he did fighting. You just wouldn't get in a fight.

INTERVIEWER:

There was an intimidation factor there?

MR. TROUT:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. So did you have a graduation ceremony after six months of the training?

MR. TROUT:

We had a graduation ceremony. I don't remember, I'm pretty sure it wasn't exactly six months after, it might have been seven months, because, during the six months that we were in training, some of us went down to -- it was in the spring of '37, we went down to Louisville, Kentucky, to do police duty down there, at the height of their flood, where they had a lot of looting going on down there. And they sent a detail of Pennsylvania State Police, New Jersey State Police, Philadelphia Police, and some American Legion people from New England down to take the part of the police department in Louisville, Kentucky to prevent this looting. So that -- there were about

eight of us out of our class that went down there, which meant we didn't have any training. There was also a strike down in Lebanon, that took us down in Lebanon for about a week of strike duty, which we didn't have training. So that instead of a six month training, they kept us there another month, until the end of July. And we had a ceremony. One the things that we did for our graduation ceremony -- we had what they called a silent manual. That silent manual was performed at every rodeo. The silent manual was -- consisted of 20 or 30 men, lined up in a row, in uniform with rifles, and they would start playing music. We practiced with a record, but at the actual ceremony we did it at the tune of -- at the sound of a band, who played this same song -- and you got to count to yourself one, two, three, four, one and at the end of every four you went through a different manual of arms -- right shoulder arms, order arms, left shoulder arms, port arms and went through the regular -- at every four without any commands being given. That's why they called it a silent. We wore white gloves. We had dark oxford gray uniforms and so the white gloves, and the manual of arms, with every hand going at the same time, you know, was a very impressive deal. We did that at our graduation ceremony. And we had a boxing -- a couple of boxing matches at the graduation. We had pistol shooting on the range at our graduation. That's how it -- that -- I don't -- I can't remember.

INTERVIEWER:

Well...

MR. TROUT:

Your friends and relatives were invited.

INTERVIEWER:

...right.

MR. TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

In 1929 there was a mandate for each cadet to memorize and recite the Call of Honor at the graduation

ceremony...

MR. TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...were you -- did you need to do that? And are you still able to even recite the Call of Honor?

MR. TROUT:

Oh, I could try it but I might -- at every -- we still do it at our reunions. I am a Pennsylvania State Policeman, a soldier of the law, to me is entrusted the honor of the force. I will serve honestly and faithfully and if need be, lay down my life before me as -- lay down my life as others have done before me, rather than swerve from the path of duty. I will obey the law -- that's it.

INTERVIEWER:

That's excellent that...

MR. TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...that's wonderful.

MR. TROUT:

Yes. I will obey the law, without any consideration of class, color, creed or condition. Oh and that's how it ends up, and if need be, lay down my life as others have done before me, rather than swerve from the path of duty. That's pretty much the whole thing.

INTERVIEWER:

That's wonderful. Thank you -- thank you was great. So after the graduation ceremony, you know, what did you do next? What came next?

MR. TROUT:

We were assigned -- the first day we went into the training school we were all assigned to a particular troop. Now, at the time I joined the State Police, the normal compliment of the State Police force was 300 men. The normal compliment for the Highway Patrol was 500. Lynn G. Adams was a great Superintendent. He was a member of the Governor's Cabinet. He was appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate. However, Lynn G. Adams was never really confirmed by the Senate, but then the Governor had a right to appoint him as Superintendent of the State Police, after the Senate adjourns. The reason they -- Senate wouldn't -- to confirm Lynn G. Adams was he was -- he was a very strict man and made the -- they called him a strike breaker because he would send his State Police out to the different strikes and the labor people said, "To break the strike," which was not so. He sent the State Police

out to keep order. But the Senate wouldn't confirm him. Anyhow, the reason he kept being re-appointed was he would have budget money left over. He never spent all of his budget. And the reason he didn't spend all of his budget was, he was always under manned. So while he was -- he was allowed to have 300 men, he usually only had 250. Now in order to replace, because of people retiring, people getting hurt, people getting sick and not being able to work, so they had to take in this new class every six months to form -- to take place of the people that were leaving. And so, each troop was comprised of -- there were five troops, "A", "B", "C", "D", and "E" Troop. Each troop had 60 men, five times 60 would be 300. But each troop did not have the 60 men because of these retirements, and so on. And so, our class of 30 -- there were five men -- there were six men assigned to each troop. And that was the first day we went in we -- I knew the day that I went in that I was going to be assigned to the Harrisburg Troop. In those days that would not assign you to a troop within your home district. They would try to put you in a troop adjoining your district. Being from Philadelphia I was assigned to Harrisburg. I could've been assigned to Reading, but I was not. I was assigned to the Harrisburg Troop. And there was Bozack [ph], Eely [ph], Myers, Shoalcoff [ph], and Trout. Us five were assigned to Troop "E" in Harrisburg. And at the end of our training period -- was in the summertime -- was April, and we still had all these rodeos to put on during the summer. Being in the rodeo, being a trick rider, I was kept at Hershey to train for the rodeos, and perform our rodeos. And so that I was not assigned -- I did not return to my troop until the rodeos were over, which was usually in October. And so I got sent to my troop -- by the time I got sent to my troop, they had moved from their original location, which was 18th and

Herr, to the new -- the Highway Patrol Training School at 21st and Herr, which they made the Troop Headquarters for Troop "E", Harrisburg after the merger. The merger took place in the summer of 1937, after we graduated from the State Police Training School in April of '37. So that when I went to my troop -- the first time I went to my troop was at the 21st and Herr street, where I was assigned to various duties there. Some of which were, well I'd had a lot of the Governor's details at the mansion. We had a stable duty to perform -- we had to -- that up to perform -- we got that two weeks at a time. The first week would be from four to twelve, and the second week would be from midnight to 8:00 in the morning. And that -- we had about eight horses at Hershey -- at Harrisburg. We had to take care of those horses on our -- during our stable duty, clean their stalls and see that they fed and brought in out of the corral every afternoon at 4:00 into their barn -- into the stable.

INTERVIEWER:

Now were those rodeo horses or ceremonial...

MR. TROUT:

Those, no, they were not rodeo -- they were horses to be used for the troop in case of a parade, in case of a -- well one of the duties I had to perform, the first day of hunting season, the Harrisburg State Hospital was right nearby. And their grounds went up over into the Susquehanna Township and they would assign two state policemen to ride their horses up over the grounds during the first day of hunting, to keep the hunters from the grounds, and that was at the state hospital. And so they use the horses like that, and also, we used it for Evelynn Willhelm [ph] and Major Adam's daughter used to ride, and the fellow on stable guard would have to get the horses

ready for them to come down and ride every Saturday. But they used them mostly -- they were there mostly for the convenience of the troop, not rodeo horses.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm. So did you need to go out on patrol daily or weekly?

MR. TROUT:

Well, the only time -- see when we graduated as State Police, we were assigned to criminal work. We were not assigned to what they called motor patrol. The Highway Patrol did the patrolling of the highways. The only time we would be assigned to that would be at Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, Christmas, special holidays where it would look good for the newspapers to say, "All available state policemen would be on duty this weekend." And then what they would do is assign a criminal man, a state policeman, and a highway patrolman in one car and we would patrol that way. That's about the only time we really -- we every really did any patrol work. Now there was another time -- there was another time when the class that followed us, there were 50 in that class, and there were about six or seven of them that got assigned to Harrisburg. And I remember when they came, they would team us up, the fellows that had been there for a year now, us old timers, with the new class and send us out on what they called a midnight patrol. And we were sent out to patrol a whole county, no special places to go, just ride around and ride around, make yourselves seen by the rural people to let them know that the police are in the area -- if you see anybody -- a starer, you got out and talked to them. We were supposed to stop any cars we saw, take down information as to who was driving the car -- they had in those days, they still do what they call a knock -- arrears plate number. We were supposed to make a note

of the operator's plate number -- of the person we stopped, in case during the night something happened, we would have some place to go to know who was out at that time of the night, and where they were seen, see. And we did that for about -- we would do that for weeks at a time. We would send out two or -- sometimes three in a car. And just patrol all over -- the whole -- in those days Troop "E" took in Cumberland County -- all of Cumberland County, all of Dauphin County, all of Franklin County -- we had a sub-station in Franklin County, Chambersburg. We had a sub-station in Gettysburg, but these patrols were run out of Harrisburg and go down into the territory where these sub-stations were. Because a sub-station would only maybe have four or five men on it. And they would not have the manpower to send out all night long, to do nothing but check suspicious people.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. Were there any incidents in particular that you can remember that happened while you were out...

MR. TROUT:

No. Nothing that I -- the only incident I can remember was we got lost -- we ended up in Hagerstown, Maryland. I remember that. And in those days you weren't supposed to leave the state without permission. You still don't. No, nothing drastic ever happened that I can remember.

INTERVIEWER:

So in 1937 when you were first starting out at Troop "E", Harrisburg -- and I believe in June of that year there were -- the steel strike was going on in Johnstown...

MR. TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you have any role in that? Did you go up...

MR. TROUT:

Yes -- now can I be excused.

INTERVIEWER:

Absolutely.

MR. TROUT:

All right, I'll talk about it when I come back.

[TAPE 2]

INTERVIEWER:

All right. This is tape #2 with the Pennsylvania State Police oral histories project. I'm Shelly

Becker. I'm here with retired Sergeant Harold Trout. And when we left off, **MR. TROUT:**, we were talking about -- we were getting into the Johnstown riot -- or the Johnstown strikes in 1937, but we're going to backtrack a little bit and go back to when you were still in a training school.

MR. TROUT::

All right.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

We had an event that happened there that was quite amusing to everybody but one person, and that event was we -- the bell would ring at 7:00 in the morning to arouse us out of our beds, and at 7:30, breakfast was served. And in order to get into the dining room, you came down to the hallway on the first floor near the classroom, and right off the classroom and at the head of the stairs where you went down to the gymnasium or the showers there was a door leading into the dining room. Now the dining room was sort of an annex built to the old training school. To get into the dining room, you went down one step. One step down and to the right was a table set aside strictly for commissioned officers to eat at. To your left were eight or ten tables holding four people with the students. So when the 7:30 bell rang to come in and eat breakfast, the fellows started coming down and going into the dining room. As they took that one step down, they see this person sitting at the table of the commissioned officers, which was very, very seldom ever occupied at breakfast. Here, there's a gentleman sitting there with two -- well, a gentleman sitting there, a stranger to all of us, none of knew who he was. We knew he was a commissioned officer. But as we stepped down and looked at him, we laughed or we smiled. Now, there were 30 of us, and as each man came in and stepped into the -- down that one step, they would look at him and they'd smile. And he would -- and they'd say, "Good morning," to him, too. And they -- he would look up, and he saw each man as they came in, looking at him, and laughing. So he wondered why they were laughing. After breakfast, he goes downstairs to the showers and looks in the mirror and here his two eyes are blackened. What he had been doing before he -- before the bell rang for 7:30

breakfast was looking in one of these stereoscopes where you look through a picture and you saw 3-D pictures.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

In the old days, it was quite a thing for rec. rooms. And he had picked that up, but in the meantime, somebody, maybe Hayes [ph], would put blackening on that -- on the felt around that so that when he picked that up and looked at it, he got that blackening on...

INTERVIEWER:

Yes.

MR. TROUT::

...him. And he got so provoked at all these guys laughing at him that he demanded from Captain Martin for disciplinary action and the captain wouldn't do it. The captain felt that was part of the amusement that the fellows have at the training school that would keep them from maybe getting homesick. And so the captain wouldn't do it. And that -- he later -- that was a lieutenant cook who was on his way from Greensburg [ph] to Bethlehem to us -- to take over the command of the Bethlehem troop up there at that time.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

So you had some fun...

MR. TROUT::

Oh, we had some fun.

INTERVIEWER:

...and entertainment?

MR. TROUT::

And the water-spilling incidents were always fun. We had a large watering trough there for the horses, which would be like a bathtub. And they were up about 4 feet high. And if one of the fellows did something that was considered wrong or misdemeaning or belittling the force or something, into the watering trough he would be thrown and -- clothes and all. And many a time, fellows got dunked in the watering trough. Fortunately, I never got there.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you ever have any jokes played on you?

MR. TROUT::

Not that I know of.

INTERVIEWER:

No?

MR. TROUT::

The -- I guess one thing I can say, when I got -- finally got to the troop, my work was mostly in civilian clothes, although we were issued uniforms regularly. We were issued our uniforms regularly. And my uniform would be hanging in my closet in my room at the barracks, and because I very seldom ever wore it, if any of my friends or people in the barracks would run out of shoelaces, well, they'd come over and take my shoelaces and use them. The same way with my ammunition and my Sam Browne [ph] belt. If their's weren't as shiny as mine, they'd come over and take mine and put it in their belt for their inspection so that when I'd come back finally some day to put my uniform on, I'd be having to look up for ammunition and also for shoelaces.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But that's about the only -- I got to live with that. I expected that almost every time, because I'd be gone, maybe, for 6 to 8 months at a time without ever coming back to put my uniform on.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. Okay. This photograph that we have here, I was hoping that you...

MR. TROUT::

That was taken graduation day, and we were all in -- shined up with our brand-new, pressed uniforms. And at the time that message -- the picture was taken, it looks like we had to come in eyes right. The eyes right was when you lined up, in order for everybody to be equal with another, when you had eyes right, your eyes are up on the fellow next to you, and that way, you ended up -- we all eyed on the man at the first one. He was the pivot. And you can see, some of the fellows are turned right, which means that the -- and as you -- no, that would be counting off. As you counted off, your eyes were right, and you'd count off one -- and as you gave your number, you turned your head to the front, looking at the first sergeant there.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

So some of the heads you'll see are turned right, and the other ones down at that far end of the line are still at the count-off stage.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. And where are you in that photograph?

MR. TROUT::

And there were -- 23 people graduated that day...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...and without a magnifying glass -- I can show you where I am. I'm one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. I'm eight down. And number seven is that fellow Showcauff [ph] that I was telling you about, who had the -- in the barn with Sergeant Hoodswar [ph] where we're saying, "Yeah, yeah, yeah."

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And that was Showcauff. And he was from Reading. And I'm right next to him.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Now I'm in the middle of the line there, and we were all supposed to be 5'10" or more, and you can see that the whole gang of us there are pretty tall fellows.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. Do you know what happened to some of these men after graduation?

MR. TROUT::

Well, I know where a good many of them went, what troops they went to.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

There were -- let's see. There were 23 of us. There were about five sent to each troop, and I know

Packer [ph] went to Greensburg. Kelly [ph] went to Greensburg. Johnson [ph] went to Greensburg. That would be three. Joe Fischer [ph] was supposed to go to Greensburg, but he ended up staying at Hershey there at the training school. He was quite a carpenter, and they -- he could come in handy doing a lot of repair work around the barracks there. And then I remember Cooper [ph] went to -- or Claire [ph] went to Butler. Sam Luther [ph] went to Greensburg. Showcauff went to the Fingerprint Bureau in Harrisburg. He was assigned a troopee, but they ended -- he ended up at the Fingerprint Bureau. Stansfield [ph] went to Wyoming. Bud Fischer [ph] went to Reading. Callahan [ph] went to Williamsport.

INTERVIEWER:

And did you keep in touch with them after they...

MR. TROUT::

No, I haven't kept in touch with them. Wayne

Myers [ph] lives down in York now. I see -- I used to see him every year at a picnic that we both attended, and he's still living down in York. He's one of the few still living. There's five of us still living. There's Bob Claire, who is now living in Williamsburg, Virginia. Sam Luther is living out in Johnstown. Bill Johnson is out in Arizona. And Myers in York. And me, that's five. That's -- we're the only ones left in that whole class of 23.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

We started out at 30. And another interesting story that I can tell, I don't know if I'll use the name or not, but it's cute. In the training school, a lie detector was just a getting to be used as a tool for interrogating suspects. And as a way of demonstrating how the lie detector works, they brought the lie detector and the operator the training school and asked for volunteers to go on the lie detector. Well, to ask for volunteers in a group of men like that, especially if they've been in the military, you don't volunteer for anything. And so nobody would volunteer. They were afraid of some of the questions that this guy might ask if you're being put on a lie detector, pertaining to maybe sexual orientation. So nobody would volunteer. Finally, one fellow decided he'd volunteer. And so they put him up and they put him -- the wires on his chest and wrists and everything and started interrogating. Now the lie detector worked like this. You give me the names of five females, one name of which is your mother's name. So the question he starts out -- and after the routine questions about name, address, and age, they'll say, "Was Helen your mother?" And -- oh, and you're supposed to answer no to

every question I ask you concerning these names. You're supposed to say, "No." So is Helen your mother's name?" "No." "Is Peggy your mother's name?" "No." "Is Loretta your mother's name?" "No." You did that for five names. You -- when the end of the interrogation came, it showed to the interrogator that Loretta was your mother's name, because when you said, "No," to Loretta, you lied, and so that would tell on the machine that you were lying, see. So he would say, "Well, it looks like your mother's name was Loretta." "You're right." Now one of the questions he asked was, "Have you had sexual relations with any of these people?" And you said, "No. No. No." When he came to a certain name -- wait a minute. No, it showed no. It showed no to everybody. That was it. And it showed that he was telling the truth to that, see. But about 3 weeks later, he comes back on Monday morning and packs up all his belongings and is resigning from the training school, and the reason was he had to get married. And I knew his name. I remember the name well. And of course, we all thought that was comical because he's -- in the lie detector test, it showed he was telling the truth. He had no sexual relations. Now, he has to get married, see. So at the reunion here, I don't know if it was last year or the year before, a fellow and his wife comes in, and I'm there giving the tickets out, because I collected the money for the banquet and all, and I had the membership cards for the following year. This guy comes up and he introduces me -- to me as his name, see. And I looked up at him, and I said, "You know. I know that name." I said, "There was a fellow in my class by that name. He lived down around McConnellsburg." He said, "Well, that's where I live." And I started to laugh. You know. And I said I can tell you a story about your -- I said, "Was your dad's name" -- he was named Guy or something like that. "Was" -- he

said, “Yeah, that was my dad.” And I said, “I can tell you a funny story about that, but I don’t know if I should.” And I said, “Tell me.” I said, “You won’t get mad?” So I told him the story about Bard [ph], who -- I said, “Oh, the Bard that I knew left the training -- left the State Police training school and became a game commissioner.” He said, “Well, that was my dad.” And I told him this story about him on the lie detector, and I said, “I don’t think it’s a nasty story, because he told the truth. He did not have any sexual relations but then 3 weeks later, he” -- so he said, “Well, I’m probably the reason he left the force, then,” because he told me his age, and he was born in 1937. So -- you know, I’m on tape. I forgot about that. And I wasn’t going to mention the guy’s name, but...

INTERVIEWER:

Well...

MR. TROUT::

...I thought that was a cute story.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

Anyhow, what else now?

INTERVIEWER:

Well, after you graduated, shortly thereafter, there was the merger for the Pennsylvania State Police and the Highway Patrol, so how did people feel about that? How did you feel about that? How did the other troopers feel --

MR. TROUT::

Well, the State Police, not the Highway Patrol -- I don't know how the Highway Patrol felt, because I wasn't amongst them...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...but the State Police -- the old State Police, felt that they were brought down from the image that they had, the infallible image that they had, was now being degraded because of association with highway patrolmen who got in their job because of politics or who they knew and not what they knew. And -- so they would -- the old State Police begrudged the idea that they were being associated with the Highway Patrol. As a result, there was a lot of friction. They didn't speak to one another. They would not cooperate with one another. They were hesitant to go out on a job together with one another for fear that one might turn and run where another might not turn and run. And so there was a lot of ill feeling about that. And it ended up in several arguments, several fights, misunderstandings. And for a long time, they tried not to give a highway patrolman supervision over a state policeman with more time or with more experience. Rank-wise, that was different, but for time and their experience, a man whom the State pays for 3 years was considered, amongst the state policemen, to be a better qualified

policeman than a highway patrolman because of the training and the -- it was sort of a thing that the Marine Corps is -- when -- the first day that they go into training, they're taught that the Marine Corps is the best military outfit in the nation. It's bred in them. They're -- and they're taught that, and we were taught the same about the State Police, that we were the best there was. And we didn't feel that way about the highway patrolmen.

INTERVIEWER:

Overall, do you think that the merger was a good thing, that it was a good idea?

MR. TROUT::

Well, I -- that's difficult for me to answer. I can say it -- I -- my first thought is it was a good idea. And why? Because we got more manpower, we got more money, we got more benefits. The State Police were noted for not wanting to spend money. Their furniture was at [inaudible] at the substations. The State wouldn't supply them with decent furnishings for their office. And -- but as a -- and the Highway Patrol was a division of the Department of Revenue, and then -- and money was no -- seemed to be no object for them. If they wanted something, they got it. And as a result of the merger, the State Police came in with the same benefits. I remember Captain Martin, who was our commander at the training school, spoke in favor of it. He hoped that it would -- he was the only old state policeman that I heard say that he hoped the merger would go through. This was going through the legislature while we were students at the training school in January, February, March, April, May, June of 1936. This was all going through the legislature at that time. And he said on several occasions he hoped

they went through. He was a captain at the time. As soon as it went through, he became a major.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And so we thought, “Well, he was speaking on -- for his own -- he knew he was going to be a major.” All of the captains in the State Police at the time were made majors. We had Major -- Captain Martin became a major. Captain Henry [ph] was made a major. Not -- we had a Captain Keller [ph]. No, we had a Lieutenant Keller. Major Henry was the captain on the Highway Patrol, and he was made the major in charge of my troop in Harrisburg. Captain Clarke [ph] up in Wyoming was made a major. Captain Griffith [ph] down in Reading was made a major. Now, let’s see. Griffith, Clarke, Mach, Henry, and Martin. I think that’s about it. Those captains all became majors right after the merger, but they started taking on new men. One of the first things they did was they took in a class of 50. Now, we used to take in a class of 30. The first class after the merger was composed of 50 men. And then 3 months after -- that was September 1 they came in. Three months later, or January 1, they took in 250. There -- they were authorized to train 500, but they didn’t have the facilities to house 500 at one time, so they took in 250 men and housed them at the Myerstown old Albright College [ph] down at Myerstown, and that is known as the first Myerstown class. Three months later, they took in another 250 men. That was considered the second Myerstown class. That was in 1937. The fellows that got their 3-month training first were sent out to troops to ride patrol, highway patrol, with other highway --

older highway patrolmen. Out of that first 250, they selected a handful, maybe 10 or 15 men, to send to Hershey Training School for further training to become criminal men. The second Myerstown class, I don't know that they did that with for criminal men. The second Myerstown class I think was comprised mostly of people who were going to patrol the highways or do traffic work, traffic-related work. Traffic-related work considered -- giving exit drivers' examinations was considered inspecting garages for inspection stickers to see that there was no [inaudible] amongst the garages. And what else did they do? They had a boat. The Department of Revenue had a boat down on the Delaware River that had charge of inspecting boats for revenue taxations, for cigarettes and so on. And that was manned by State -- by Highway Patrol. That fellow in charge of that, which I told them at lunchtime here, was Corporal Francis Xavier Kelly [ph], and he was in charge of that boat for a long time. And he was a -- quite a character, quite an amusing fellow to be around. He told a lot of funny stories about the boat, but he ran that boat.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Now, at that time, they were still driving the motorcycles, is that correct? Driving the motorcycles?

MR. TROUT::

At the time -- all right. The second -- this first class that came in after us -- when we went through the training school, we did not ride a motorcycle. We rode horses. We were trained on the horses. Everything was horse-oriented. When the 50 men came in after us on September the 1st, they were immediately assigned to motorcycles and were trained to ride motorcycles.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And that was their duty then after that when they went out on the road to -- they rode their motorcycles. Now, after the merger, there were so many accidents on -- with the motorcycles, not because of the merger, but the motorcycle was considered a dangerous machine, and so the movement was to put them in automobiles.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And that's when they came up with this white car. Well, they called them "ghost cars" at the time.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT::

And the old State Police used to make fun of them. They'd call them "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves". One was Dopey, one was something else, you know. And they would come down and watch. They would drive down to the training school and watch us ride our horses, training for the rodeos when somebody would look up and say, "There's Snow White and Dopey."

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And that was their feeling about the Highway Patrol.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

I don't know what the Highway Patrol said about the old State Police, because I wasn't around to hear them.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. All right.

MR. TROUT::

And I'm sure that they had stories to tell about us, too, you know.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

They weren't -- we might not have appreciated.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about your first assignment that you had, your first, say, criminal investigation that you were involved in?

MR. TROUT::

Well, it's a -- the first one I can't really tell you, but I do remember one of the first assignments I was on, a long assignment, was when the Republicans took over the state legislature. We had a Republican governor. Governor Earl [ph] was our governor when I went in the force in 1936. He was a Democrat. When he went out of office, the Republicans started some kind of a campaign to have some prominent politicians connected with the Democrats arrested. And so they arrested Governor Earl for malfeasance -- misfeasance and nonfeasance in office. How I remember that, I don't know. Also, they arrested a fellow by the name of Brown Miller [ph]. Brown Miller was connected with the Highway Department. I can't think of another man. There were three of them. A fellow by the name of Bayshore [ph], and I think he was in the Department of Welfare. They were all Democrats, and the Republicans were out to try to arrest them and show that they were crooked. Carl Shelly [ph] was the District Attorney of Dauphin County, and he was the Prosecuting Attorney. Carl Shelly asked the State Police to conduct an investigation of the backgrounds of all the jurors that was going to be on this trial for these politicians. And so Corporal Caspovich [ph]

was in charge of the investigation, and I was his assistant, and so the two of us -- and it took a long time. It took about, oh, 6 months, maybe 8 months, for us to investigate thoroughly the backgrounds of all these jurors to find out their backgrounds, what they were -- what their beliefs were politically and so on, that we would -- that we could be assured that these men would receive a fair trial. That is the first one I remember of any length.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Then, after that, they set up the Liquor Control Board. The Liquor Laws were repealed in 1932 when Governor -- when President Roosevelt became the President. They repealed that 18th Amendment. And then the state set up a Liquor Control Board. And the head of the Liquor Control Board was a man by the name of Maurice Gelder, I believe, G-e-l-d-e-r. He never drank a drop of alcohol in his life and was totally against it, religiously and morally and everything else, which means he would make a good man to head up the Liquor Control Board. But there was a rumor or it was felt that the liquor salesmen would come to Harrisburg and meet with the purchasers for the Liquor Control Board and favor them with presents or favors, money maybe, to push a certain brand of liquor, which they were interested in. And so, again, I guess it was Carl Shelly, that asked us -- no, this was the governor. The governor asked us to -- maybe through Gelder, asked the State Police to set up some kind of a surveillance that when these liquor men -- liquor salesmen came to Harrisburg, could we follow them around, see who...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...they met up with, try to listen in on any conversations that they might have. And so, as a result of that, my job was to be available at the Penn Harris Hotel. And when the -- when one of the liquor salesmen would register, the clerk at the hotel was authorized to provide the room next to this salesman for me. And then I would go up and set up anything I needed to listen in on any conversations that they might have. I'm not proud of that assignment, and today, it might not be as easy as it was then, but then I had no trouble, nor did we ever arrest anybody, either find anything out. But at least it made somebody feel sure that everything was on the up and up during their realm of responsibility.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT::

That took a -- that job took a long time, because I remember my first sergeant telling me one day, "Are you still messing around on that detail? Are you still milking that detail?" And I said, "All I'm doing is what I'm told. You assigned me to it." I said, "I'm just doing what I'm told." So that took a long time. That was the second big assignment. And from then, it was just one after another, Philadelphia and the Joint State Government Commission.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. And what was your rank at that time?

MR. TROUT::

My rank?

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Private first class.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. So...

MR. TROUT::

I never got a promotion for doing any of my investigating work.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

My first promotion came after I went in the communications division on an 8-hour-a-day job.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. All right. Okay. Well, without getting too far ahead, I still wanted to talk a little bit about when you were still at Troop E and -- in 1937 during the Johnstown steel strike. So this photograph is from that time. If you could talk a little bit about the Johnstown steel strike and what you...

MR. TROUT::

Well, at the time that they called the State Police out there, you know, the State Police were not authorized to go into any county to do duty -- strike duty, labor disturbances or riots without the permission of the county sheriff. The reason was the sheriff of each county was elected by the people. The sheriff represented the people of that county. And the State Police were representatives of the whole state, appointed by the governor through the superintendent of the State Police. Each state policeman was appointed. He wasn't elected by any election. And so the sheriff was in charge of conducting the peace and tranquility during this strike.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But the workers were so upset about the labor relations at that time that they began upsetting cars, setting them on fire, throwing bricks through workers' windows, workers who insisted on working instead of going on strike, and even hurting, harming -- committing bodily harm on them. And so the sheriff requested, through the governor, to send a detail of State Police out...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...to Johnstown to control the -- any disturbance that might occur out there. How many of us went out there, I don't remember, but at the time, there were only 250 of us in the whole state. And on this picture, I see Frank Kelly and myself, so there were two rookies on that, and we were both rookies. There must have been about 15, maybe,

or 20 rookies sent out there on that detail. Two of us are on this picture. The other ones were assigned to other gates. This is a -- this was a special gate into the mill. I don't know whether that was the rolling -- what they called their rolling mill or what they called that, but this was a gate where the workers went in and out. And all we had to do was be there, and we had no trouble. These fellows here, they were to take pictures of any riots for any disturbance, but there was none. Just our presence there did it. Now this is where the women, like I was telling you at lunchtime -- the women would come down here and parade in front of us. Their husbands were on strike on a picket line, and they would come down there to talk, maybe bring a sandwich for their husband or something, and at the same time, they came by us and make disgusting gestures to us to try to get us mad. And you can see, I don't think any of us got mad. And certainly Hayes doesn't get mad.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And I was a rookie, and of course, I was standing pretty erect. I was trying to show how I was trained.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Al Weir [ph], he was a -- I can remember what they did. He was a prizefighter in his day before he got on the State Police. Tony Mazzo [ph] was a prizefighter. Corporal Scupp [ph] was a -- he was a saddler [ph] down at the C Troop in Reading. And Steve

Banks [ph] was from Butler. I remember he -- well, he was from Butler. Malloy [ph] was from Butler. And Tony Mazzo was from Butler. So there was quite a few Butler men there represented. Hayes, I think he was from Greensburg, and Weir was from Greensburg.

INTERVIEWER:

So did -- you lived in Johnstown during that...

MR. TROUT::

I beg your pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

You lived there during that time in Johnstown? You stayed at a barracks there?

INTERVIEWER:

We stayed -- when we first went out there, we stayed at the Evansburg substation, which was on Route 22 before you get into Evansburg.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

It was on the side of a hill, and the trucks going up that hill -- in those days, the trucks went very slow, they were very noisy, and they had to shift gears. And it was in the summertime. It was in the summer of ’37. And we were sleeping at the substation, trying to sleep, with the windows open and these trucks going up that hill, and we weren’t getting any sleep. So we had to travel from the Evansburg substation into Johnstown to do our strike duty at the turn of each shift, and they were working three shifts a day. So we had to be there at 8:00 in the morning, 3:00 in the afternoon, 8:00 at night. And between times, we would come back to Evansburg and try to get a couple naps. After about 3 weeks of that, they finally got us put up in a hotel, two hotels. One was the Hindler

Hotel [ph], which was where I stayed, which was right across the street from the -- a big department store. I can’t think of the name right now. And Fort Stanwicks [ph] was a hotel there, a big hotel there. They were about eight or nine stories high. Some of the fellows stayed at the Fort Stanwicks. We stayed at the Hindler Hotel. And then we ate breakfast right around this -- the corner from the Hindler Hotel in a restaurant where they fed us then.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And we stayed there, then, until the end of the strike. Now before the strike was over, this went on maybe June, July, August. Our rodeos were starting to train for rodeos usually in July. We usually had a rodeo on July 4.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

MR. TROUT::

But they were running out of time to run a -- put on a rodeo for Labor Day, and so they sent any of us back who could ride the horses to Hershey to train for the rodeo. And I was a trick rider, so I was called off of this detail...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT::

...and sent back to Hershey to train for the rodeo before the strike was over.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Now during that strike is when the merger took effect.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

When we went out there, we were still the State Police...

INTERVIEWER:

All right.

MR. TROUT::

...but during our tenure at -- there, they merged, and as a result of that merger, one of the lieutenants who was on the Highway Patrol came down and was put in charge of some of us, and he was a little skinny man, maybe about 5’2”. You see, the Highway Patrol had no size limit.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

He was about 5’2” and very thin. He looked like a runt. And he was the man that was supposed to be in charge of us now at the strike, which it caused a lot of ill feelings. He was the lieutenant, and everybody respected him. And he was a nice lieutenant. He was a nice man. He was not a -- he was not the kind of a man who would -- lorded over anybody. His name was Lieutenant Hoover, who later turned out to be -- this Phil Connie [ph] that we all knew, Phil Connie worked with Lieutenant Hoover. Lieutenant Hoover was a gentleman...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...and a good man to send down there for us, because everybody liked him.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But he was still a highway patrolman...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

...and we didn’t think that he was equal to the task.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Now after the strike, I went back to the -- to train for the rodeo, and that's when we had the rodeo at Greensburg, which was out in the same area.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And we had the rodeo at Greensburg, and I -- oh, we had one at South Park, Pittsburgh that year, Allegheny -- with the Allegheny National -- Allegheny County Fair that year. And I can't remember where else we had it, but that -- see, the rodeos were conducted every 4 years and each year in a different area. We had four areas where there was a troop. The Greensburg was Troop A. The -- Wyoming was Troop B. Reading was Troop C. Butler was Troop D. And Harrisburg was Troop E. We had a rodeo interspersed every year. Every year, it would be at a different location so that in 1936, we had it in what they call the Reading area, which was at Allentown. That's when the -- that's the rodeo I went to see on July the 4th. It was at Allentown.

[TAPE 3]

INTERVIEWER:

All right. So this is the Pennsylvania State Police Oral Histories project. We're back. My name is Shelly Becker [ph]. I'm with retired Sergeant Harold Trout; and this is the third tape in our series. So **MR. TROUT:**, we left off last time -- we had just started getting into your general assignments and the things that you were doing after you had gone through training; after graduation. And you were really just getting into the meat of working with the State Police. So I'd like to start today by -- if you could give me an

idea of what a typical day would be like for you on the State Police, if there even was a typical day. Can you kind of run through what a normal day for you would be?

MR. TROUT:

I would say there was no such thing as a typical day, which is one of the things that made this job such an interesting job. Each morning you would wake up, your -- first thing you did after breakfast was to have roll call. After roll call, we would come back to the barracks, and receive assignments for whatever complaints came in during the day; whether it'd be some farmer thinking somebody had been stealing his chickens, whether somebody had broken into their home and stolen the women's jewelry, anything that might have happened during the night or during the past 24 hours. These complaints would be held until the next morning, and then the officer in charge would assign these different details to the various men so that we never really knew -- for instance, the message would be received during the night, and -- this is comical -- the man -- the Sergeant answering the telephone always asked the person who was calling to make this complaint. This was a woman who gave her name as Stoops [ph], and the Sergeant spelled her name on his notebook by the side of his bed S, as in Samuel, T as in Thomas, O, O, P, as in Paul, S, as in Samuel. Now, when the Sergeant wrote this down he misunderstood the complainer. Instead of writing S, as in Samuel, he wrote F, as in Frank, P, as in Paul, O, O, P, F, as in Frank. Now, he gives us -- two of us -- we always worked in two's -- this complaint with the name Mini -- Mini was her first name -- and we were trying to pronounce the name. And he told us -- in those days, nobody had an address. It was an RD number. So we would go to the Post Office and try to find out where Mini Fpoopf lived. And they had no idea what we

were talking about. Finally, we mentioned about she owned trucks. Then they knew some lady by the name of Stoops that lived down by Biggerville [ph] that had trucks, and told us that that's probably who he meant. Turned out that's who it was, so that -- to us, that was comical. I was trying to pronounce that name as it was written during the night. But those things happened during the night in those days; especially the telephone weren't like they are today. And so then we would go out, and somebody was stealing tires from her trucks, and that was her complaint, so we had to go out and investigate that. And that was -- now, the next day we might -- the Highway Department might have been missing a wheelbarrow along one of their work projects. And the Highway Department was supposed to report to the State Police anytime any of their equipment was missing, they reported it as stolen. And then the State Police would go out and try to find this equipment; whether it be a wheelbarrow, or a shovel, or whatever they use for their construction on the roads. That would be -- another complaint might be a person's canoe is stolen, so we'd go looking for a canoe. Then there would be a detail. This particular detail, they had a raft that was built by -- out of logs up above Loch Haven, and sailed down the Susquehanna River as a memorial of the old rafting days when people -- when the loggers would tie these logs together, float them down the Delaware River -- usually to Harrisburg -- where they were sawed up in sawmills and made into lumber. Well, this last raft was -- came down, and there was quite a few people on there -- especially a lot of boy scouts. And it was during the high water in March when the raft became uncontrollable and hit a bridge up above Munce -- which is near Williamsport -- and overturned -- upset. And all these people; photographers, newsmen, boy scouts, and celebrators, went into the river and were

drowned. Quite a few of them drowned. Well, I got sent up there. Two of us got sent up there to look for these bodies, and also to be on the scene if a body was found, to see that it was handled with respect and that there would be no looting from the bodies. So that was our job. And we spent about a week up there looking for these bodies. Now, that would be a whole week away, you see, from the barracks. During the time we were away, there were other jobs coming in where the people were being detailed to, but if you were -- received an assignment like that, you'd be gone. Another time, they had a man being tried for murder up in Loch Haven who they heard through the rumors -- through the grapevine -- that his friends were coming down to the courtroom and free him during his trial. And so they sent me up. Now, when I think back, what would I do by myself; because usually we worked in two's? But I was sent up there by myself to sit in the courtroom in uniform to respond if there's any effort made to free this man. And that would be -- that was a whole -- that was two weeks, while the whole trial was being held. So you see, there was no -- there was really no normal day. You never knew what you were going to be going into, and that's one of the things that made the job such an interesting job.

INTERVIEWER:

All right, so you mentioned just a minute ago that you were called up to this -- with these children, and people drowned in the river, and that you were gone for an entire week. Was that often that you were gone away from the office for a long extended period of time?

MR. TROUT:

Well, it happened quite often, yes. I'm trying to think of another -- well, during that week that I stayed up there, I stayed in a hotel in Munce. When we went to the Bethlehem strike down in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, we stayed down there for two weeks, slept in a -- we slept down there. We slept in with the horses. And of course, the Johnstown strike was -- that was about eight or nine weeks we were out there. Louisville flood -- we were down there for about three weeks in Louisville. And then, when you come back, you get assigned to another job. And, well, when I was working with -- on that grand jury investigation for Dave Lawrence [ph] and Governor Earle, that was a job you were assigned -- you worked at it until you were finished. You were finished at the time when the district attorney would say: That's all we have to do. And so every day, we would report to the District Attorney's Office, find out what people he wanted investigated that day, and we would go out and do it. And that was a job that lasted maybe for -- it was, oh, as I think back, maybe two or three weeks. It was the same thing every day.

INTERVIEWER:

How was that for your family, to be gone for weeks on end?

MR. TROUT:

Well, my particular wife didn't seem to mind it, but there were other wives that did. We had a very good friend who resigned from the State Police, because his wife did not want to be alone at night. She couldn't stand him being away at night. And so he finally resigned from the State. He only served four years and quit. And my wife didn't seem to ever mind it. And some of the men were transferred quite a bit. I was never transferred too much. But once I started being transferred, my wife used to make a

joke out of it. She said she'd rather move than clean house. So I had an unusual wife who -- anything that I wanted to do, that was all right with her.

INTERVIEWER:

She was very supportive of your career?

MR. TROUT:

Yeah. So to me, it was not a problem; but I know that in some cases it was a problem, even to the point where they even separated.

INTERVIEWER:

So what was your salary at the time, when you were just starting out?

MR. TROUT:

When I was in the training school, we were getting $90 a month. When you -- that -- when we graduated from the training school, we were automatically made what they called Private First Class -- PFC's -- no; Private Second Class. And you were Private Second Class for one year when your salary went up to $100 a month. At the end of that one year, you became a Private First Class, and your salary went up to $120 -- $110 a month. We got a $10 raise for the first six years we were on the force. Our top pay after six years on the force amounted to $116.66 a year. Wait a minute.

INTERVIEWER:

A week?

MR. TROUT:

Wait a minute. $116 a month.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT:

It was considered to be $1,100 and some a year is what it was. It came to $116 a month is what it was. And that was the reason why they would not allow you to be married until you reached that top pay; because their feeling was that you could not support a wife on less than $116 a month.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT::

Now, for each rank you got -- if you got promoted to Corporal, you got another $10 a month. And of course, if you got promoted to Sergeant, you got another $10.

INTERVIEWER:

And that was in addition to benefits?

MR. TROUT:

It was what?

INTERVIEWER:

In addition to benefits?

MR. TROUT:

Yes; but in those days we did not have health benefits. I remember when they first started Blue Cross we had to pay for it ourselves. And I enlisted in the Blue Cross. Some of the men did not. And -- but I always felt that the Blue Cross was -- if you never had to use it, you were still better off; because, I mean, you never got sick. But when you first get married, you're going to have children. And I remember my first child was born, and we did not have Blue Cross. It cost me $50 for delivery, plus

something like $50 at the Harrisburg Hospital. But then along came the State and -- as a benefit -- and paid both your Blue Cross coverage, and your family's Blue Cross coverage. But when we were getting $116 there were no benefits. You got your vacation. You got 15 days a year vacation. That doesn't sound right.

INTERVIEWER:

Sick leave?

MR. TROUT:

15 -- that doesn't sound right. It might have been 30 days a year vacation. You got the same amount of sick leave -- 30 days sick leave, but you had to be sick. And even to the point where if you claimed you were sick, they would send somebody around to check you at your house to find out if you were sick or not. They'd even come to the hospital to see -- verify that you were in the hospital. Not just a record -- they'd come up to your room. But then that changed later on. It became more civil. And I remember when my second child was born; when the doctor found out that we had Blue Shield and Blue Cross, he was very happy. Most of his people did not have that. And so he charged $50 for delivery. When he found out we were covered with Blue Shield and Blue Cross, they paid $65 and that made him treat my wife jokingly a little differently than those other people. But he thought that was great that he was going to get $65 for the delivery of my second child. Dental care -- no; they never had dental care, and I still don't have dental care with the State. Some of the front men do. I never had it. I wasn't on the job at the time that the State assumed responsibility for that, but the State did assume responsibility to pay my Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and they still do, since I'm retired.

INTERVIEWER:

Good.

MR. TROUT:

But they do not cover your wife. If you die before you wife, your wife is no longer covered. As of today, that's the way it is; which I don't feel, you know, isn't fair, but that's the contract they made.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you feel that you could support your family on that salary that you had starting out?

MR. TROUT:

At that time, we had trouble. For example -- which I might come to later -- we got paid once a month; usually around the first of the month. Before the first of the month, it was a common thing amongst us newlyweds to be broke. And so we would combine our resources. Maybe two or three couples would all chip in, buy the spaghetti, make the spaghetti sauce, furnish the drinks, and meet at one house and eat maybe the last couple of days of the month before we got paid. Now, we never had a vacuum cleaner after I got married. We used one of those Bissel sweepers. We -- I think we paid $1.50 for it. Along came a man selling vacuum cleaners door to door. And my wife had him come in and give a free run -- you know, trial run, and she liked it. And he showed us how, if we could pay $5 a month, we could have a vacuum cleaner. Well, $5 a month out of our pay was a big cut, and -- but we decided we'd try it. And every month I went up to the Penbrook Bank [ph] and paid them my $5 on that vacuum cleaner. It was a Kirby vacuum cleaner. 20 years -- and they told us they had a lifetime guarantee on it, but you forget those lifetime guarantees. About 25 years later

now, we're still using that same vacuum cleaner. But the bag tore, the chord was becoming frayed, and it was aluminum, and the aluminum is looking dull and grey. And we found out that there was -- in Harrisburg, there was a Kirby dealer. We took the Kirby out and asked them if they could put a new bag on for us, and they said: Yes. Then they put on a new cord, because they noticed the cord was bad, so they put a new cord on. And they said for another -- for $10 -- that machine had a lifetime guarantee, but for $10 they could restore it look like new. And so when we went out to pick it up, it had a brand new bag, brand new cord, and they polished all the aluminum on it. It looked like a brand new machine. Now they tell me those Kirbys are selling for $1,000. We paid $100 for that Kirby around 1940, and believe it or not, I still have that Kirby. I had it before I broke up housekeeping. I used it in the basement to clean up my wood shavings from my dirt that I made in the basement; cobwebs and so on. I used it, and along came a Kirby salesman one time door to door selling -- that was when they were selling for $1,000 -- and I told him we had a Kirby. He wanted to see it. He couldn't believe the Kirby that I showed him. Yeah, it was quite a machine. No, we had trouble living on that. Now, to get back to that meeting about -- on September -- on December 7, 1941, half of us were off duty every weekend -- every other weekend. That happened to be my weekend off, plus two friends of mine. And we had arranged to meet at my house on Sunday, December 7th for Spaghetti. So we were out there eating spaghetti, or getting ready to eat, when we got the phone call -- there were three of us and their wives. We got the phone call to come to the barracks right away; report for duty in uniform. So I got my uniform on and we went over. And here it was -- they were detailing as many men as they could grab a hold of. They called

them in from their time off, and they sent two of us up to Clarks Valley Dam up in Clarks Valley, which was the Harrisburg water supply. They sent two men up to the east side of the Rockville Bridge, and two men over on the other side of the river at Marysville to guard the Rockville Bridge. They sent two down on the Walnut Street Bridge in Harrisburg, and the Market Street Bridge. And that was our job there for about a week. We had those details. We varied each day, until we were relieved about a week later by Army personnel. I don't -- can't tell you whether they were regular Army -- probably not. Probably National Guardsmen, but the State Police were available right away, and we were used right away until relieved by the National Guard.

INTERVIEWER:

And how did that -- the incident and the war just starting -- did you feel like that affected your career or the State Police in general throughout the entire time of the war?

MR. TROUT:

I don't know that I know what you really mean by that question.

INTERVIEWER:

As far as -- did you notice a difference with many men at that point then, leaving to go to war or if that's...

MR. TROUT:

Well, yes; quite a few of them volunteered right away, as soon as Pearl Harbor. They volunteered right away. My wife didn't want me to leave because we had that new baby, and so I did not volunteer. And then they were volunteering so much that Lindsay Adams [ph], who was our commissioner at the time, put out an order

forbidding any of the men to volunteer -- to enlist in the Services; even to the point where if they did, they were classified on the records as deserters. But that was changed then later on. They said that they got an automatic deferment from the Draft Board if you requested it to become automatically deferred, because of you being a member of the Pennsylvania State Police. After a short while -- that business of deserted only lasted maybe six months, until that was changed. And I think there must have been an outcry of it, because it looked down on a man's record, so they stopped classifying them as deserters. Now with me, when we mentioned this before -- there were three of us were requested. We volunteered for this job. We heard this job was going to be over in Iran to set up a security base for the air base over there, and there were three of us that volunteered. They only wanted Pennsylvania State Policemen. And they made an announcement that the word leaked back to the State Police any three fellows who wanted to go could go. And so three of us volunteered, and we were chosen and went. And so I asked my wife about it. She said: Well, you'll never be satisfied if you don't do something. So she said: Go, and I'll be here when you come back. So we went, and I was gone for a year and a half.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell us anything about that detail over there, or is that classified?

MR. TROUT:

Oh, no. There was really nothing more to say. We had quite an airfield over there. The airfield was used for these ferrying planes. They were going over to the China Burma India Theater. And our base was -- after they flew over from the United States to England -- and then from England -- our base was the next stop before flying over

what they called the hump, which was the Himalayan Mountains in Northern Italy. And so we had a security force there of native Iranians in addition to a troop of Indian Gurkha Soldiers over -- were members of the British Army is what they were -- who were very well disciplined, and we had interpreters. And they were under our command over there. But all we did was set up a security force, and it worked. We -- until -- the idea was until we leave by the Army Air Corp, who really is who we were working under was General Hap Arnold of the Air Corp. And as soon as they got enough Army people to come over and take over our duties, they did; which was about a year and a half after we got there.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum, and were you getting paid State Police Salary at the time?

MR. TROUT:

We got paid a salary. I got paid $50 a month over there, and a certain amount of money was sent to a bank in Philadelphia, where my wife had set up residence while I was gone. And the bank -- and the money was sent there in her name, which she could use while I was gone, but I was allowed $50 a month. Turns out the $50 was more than needed, because there was nothing to spend money on over there.

INTERVIEWER:

All right, so the people that you went with, or the person that you went with to Iran, you worked very closely with him in the United States as well, or just there?

MR. TROUT:

Say that again.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you work closely with that person that you went to Iran with? Did you work closely with him in the United States?

MR. TROUT:

Yes. Tom Collin [ph] was the one fellow, and Les Jackson [ph] was the other fellow. In fact, Les Jackson was the one fellow who was at my house for dinner on December 7th and Tom Collin was a single man, and he had been working for -- he was a bodyguard for Governor Duff, and so that we lived together at the barracks, but he worked for Governor Duff. And of course, I was working outside on other jobs. So we did not work together, but we knew one another very well.

INTERVIEWER:

You mentioned earlier that you would normally go out on two-man patrols, or you would go out with another person. Was it always the same person, or did you go out...

MR. TROUT::

No.

INTERVIEWER:

...with different people?

MR. TROUT:

No. You never knew who you were going to be teamed up with normally. Now, if I would be assigned to that detail -- checking the jurors for that Dave Lawrence trial, I worked with Corporal Caspervich [ph] every day -- every day with him, until we finished that job. When I got sent down to Philadelphia on those jobs, I would go down with one man. We lived together. We worked together. I picked him up on Monday

morning at his home. We drove to Philadelphia and lived together down there, and come back Friday night, dropped him off at his house. And that was always the same person. On details like that, when you were teamed up with another man, you stayed with him until your -- until the job was completed. Now you come back, that job -- say that job on the magistrate -- you'd come back from that job, you'd tell your First Sergeant that you were back for duty again. And then a week later, you might be called again down to the Detective Bureau. That's who sent these details out. And then you'd be teamed up with another person and -- on a certain job; maybe the water meter job down in Philadelphia. And as long as you were teamed up with them -- the last -- well, I won't say the last one -- but one of the ones toward the end was -- I was teamed up with a fellow by the name of Frank McCartney [ph]. Frank McCartney resigned from the -- another man whose wife -- he had three or four children. His wife didn't want him away from home so much. He wasn't making enough money, and his wife worked for Governor Dave Lawrence, who was at that time Secretary of the Common Wealth. Well, Frank McCartney and I were down in Doylestown in a hotel room where we stayed while we were working down there, and he said: Tomorrow morning, Bob -- he had always called me Bob -- I'm going to turn in. I said: What do you mean, turn in? He said: I'm quitting. He said: Agnes wants me home, and I'm not making enough money, and they're not doing anything about it, and I'm quitting. And so he said: Do you think you can handle this yourself? I said: I'll do the best I can, Frank. He later became the commissioner of the State Police. He left the State Police then, got a job with the Treasury Department maybe -- no, he got a job with the Coal and Iron Police up in Monchunk -- or they call it now Jim Thorpe. I think it was

the Delaware and Lakawanna Coal Company -- he got a job there, in charge of their police. And then Dave Lawrence ran for governor and became governor. And through his connections with his wife, he became appointed as commissioner of the State Police. Yes, so those jobs are -- they would last for a long time, and I just -- you lose track of the time you were on them. They -- I started those jobs in 1947, and was working on them until 1951, when I decided I would try to get an inside job because of my new addition to my family.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell me a little bit about these different scandals and things that were going on in Philadelphia and your involvement with them? You mentioned the Magistrate was one, the Water Bureau another.

MR. TROUT:

Yes -- let's see how I start that now. With the Water Bureau, that only lasted maybe three weeks. Maybe that's why I hardly remember that one. But I do remember -- I think it was called the Elicker --

E-l-i-c-k-e-r Company down along the waterfront in Philadelphia, where they had water meters outside of their building, and they made -- I think they refined sugar, or made alcohol, or something like that. Anyhow, the water meter readers for the city of Philadelphia were supposed to be accepting graft to allow this company to bypass the meter, use the water without it being registered on the meter. And our job was to find out if there was any truth to that, and who were the people doing that; which we did. However I can't tell you who we arrested. And that's one of the things I can't -- I just can't explain why I don't remember making any arrests. However; any of those

Philadelphia investigations that we were on, we made very few arrests. Whether it was through politics or not, I don't know. But we would work out the people who were guilty. We would bring them to trial, but many times -- and I'm thinking of this one fellow -- name is Henry Seinfranti [ph] -- south Philadelphia, who investigated Workman's Compensation cases. Henry Seinfranti would get these checks, who were entitled to be delivered to a man who lost his hand at work, and get the man to okay the check and turn it back over to Seinfranti. And then Seinfranti would take it to the Atlantic City race tracks and cash them, and use the money. I can remember going to the banks, and having the banks pull out their microfilm of these various checks that were cashed on certain days, and we would go through the microfilm until we'd come across a check with Henry Seinfranti's name on it, take it back to the Treasury Department, and run it down that way. And we -- and he was as guilty as anybody, but -- and we arrested him, but he never served any time. In fact, I think he's still a big shot in Philadelphia politics. Another case would be the Building and Loan scandal, where people employed by the state in the Building and Loan part of the Treasury -- the Banking Department in the Building and Loan Division -- these men would sell these assets of people's homes who were -- they lost them during the depression. The assets were there, and these state employees would sell them to their friends for a minimum amount of money, and then be reimbursed by their friend who bought it, if they were able to collect these assets. The way that was brought to light was the Philadelphia Inquirer got rumors of it, and sent out their reporters to find out if there was any truth to it or not, and found out there was truth to it. And then they sent word up to Harrisburg, and Governor Duff was the governor at that time, who said he was

going to send the State Police down to look into this. And he -- when he sent us down, he said: It doesn't matter if politics -- whether it's republican or democrat. He said: I want you to bring them all to justice. And that was one thing I remember about Governor Duff. Philadelphia, at that time, was being run by republicans. And of course, Duff was a republican, and so he didn't care where the ball bounced. He wanted justice, and so he did -- but, again, we made no arrests. And one man we wanted to arrest disappeared, and we were never able to find him. He changed his name and the last we heard, he was on a ranch out in the west someplace under an assumed name. And he lived in Yellowstone. I remember that, and his wife lived in Yellowstone, and died in Yellowstone. That's about what I remember about those. It's funny, that was 1947 -- '48 -- '49 -- '50. I got finished with one of them and I'd come back and they had an investigation under the -- it was called the Joint State Government Commission, where they were investigating people who were claiming welfare and did not deserve it. And that took me all over the central part of the state, from Maryland to Williamsport, to Altoona, to Lancaster. I had that whole area. And that lasted for a couple months, on my own. Usually they sent two of us, but this was on my own.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you prefer to work by yourself or with someone else?

MR. TROUT::

Beg your pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

Did you prefer to work alone, or work with someone else?

MR. TROUT:

Well, I always enjoyed working with someone, if it was -- if that someone was a compatible person. I can tell you a story. I don't know if I should or not, but the fellow's dead. But on this Banking Commission job -- this is just to show you the difference in people -- and I'm a redneck, too, but -- I'll say -- I mean, I'm not putting any blame off of me, but in this Banking Commission, on the men who were investigating this Banking -- this Building and Loan business, there was a -- the Deputy Secretary of Banking -- I think his name was Horace Eshbraugh [ph]. He had his right hand man by the name of Brenneman -- Walter Brenneman [ph]. They had a Banking Examiner by the name of Jim -- I can't remember the name -- Jim Lomax [ph] was one of them. We worked with Jim Lomax and this other -- Jim Briarton [ph] I think his name was. And then we would bring back what we found during the day to a meeting which was being held in the old Pennsylvania Railroad Building at 19th and Arch in Philadelphia. We had a big room up there, a big table, and we sat around that table. There was a Deputy Attorney General there, Walter Brenneman, Horace Eshbraugh, and some other attorneys. At lunch time we would break, and we would go down to the street and go up to 19th and Arch to the Witherspoon Hotel for lunch -- a very nice hotel. And this was in the spring time. I had worn a top coat, and my buddy wore a top coat, and when we went to lunch, it was real warm out. None of the other men -- the lawyers and Jim Lomax and them -- none of them wore top coats. And I didn't want to wear my top coat, so I left mine back at the office where we were. When we got done off the elevator and started up 19th Street toward the hotel, my buddy looks at me, he says: Where's your top coat? Now he had his on. He said: Where's your top

coat? I said: Back at the office. He said: Go get it. I said: I don't want to wear it, it's too warm, Bill. He said: I said go get it. Now, he's my senior man, see? So what do I do? I go back and get my top coat. But I'm telling you that story to show you he was not the easiest fellow to work with. He was very egotistical. And he was the only one wearing a top coat, and he didn't want to be the only one wearing a top coat, so he made me go back and get mine. I've told that story several times. The poor guy just died, too, not long ago. He lived to be 92 years old. But he and I worked a good bit -- in fact, when we were working Philadelphia, we worked for a long time, to the point where we changed our residence. We lived in a -- at first, we didn't want to -- we were forbidden to go near the barracks. We were supposed to be -- what do you call it -- incognito, I guess. We were not supposed to go to the barracks under any circumstances. So we lived in these hotels, and the first one was called The Hamilton Court, and then we set up a deal across the street at the Hotel Pennsylvania, where we could get a room by the month. And the state paid for it by the month; however, we would leave every Friday afternoon and come home. And it got to the point where -- my hometown was Philadelphia, and I had a lot of relatives down there, and my wife the same way. So it got to the point where my wife could get on a train and come down to Philadelphia and meet me, and we could stay in our room Saturday and Sunday, and then she'd go back Sunday night, and then I'd go up and get Bill and bring Bill back -- my buddy back to work Monday morning. So that was on a monthly basis, and we were there quite awhile down there in Philadelphia on that job quite awhile.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Yeah -- several years. So right around 1951 is when you decided...

MR. TROUT:

1951 -- my second child was born in January of ’51 and right around Christmas time in 1950, I started inquiries about how I could get an inside job.

INTERVIEWER:

And how did that happen? Like, who did you -- you just needed to apply to get the inside job?

MR. TROUT:

I went to -- I heard that there was a man going to retire who worked at Regimen Headquarters [ph] in the -- I call it the reception room. His job was to operate the teletype and send out teletype messages from headquarters to the field, and he was retiring. And I heard about that job and if I could have any influence, that’s the job I wanted; because it’s the only job I knew that was an eight hour job, see, inside. And so I went to my Major, who was -- at that time was Keller -- Major Charlie Keller [ph] and told him that Shuckingrass [ph] was going to retire, I heard, and if he did, could you arrange for me to be transferred into his job? That would mean that I’d be transferred out of my troop. My troop headquarters at that time was Troop A in Harrisburg, and that would mean I’d have to be changed out of my troop into the Communications Division. So he did. He arranged for it. And that’s all it took, was just my inquiry to Major Keller. And told him why, and I had been on the job by that time since about ’51 -- about 15 years, and so I didn’t think I was asking for anything unusual. So I got that job, and then that job went from the -- I was -- my Captain at

that time was a Captain Wagner, who was in charge of communications -- radios and teletypes and so on. And he had an understudy -- a fellow -- man by the name of Bomboy [ph], and I knew Bomboy well. He came on the force about the same time as I did, except he did not go through the training school. He was hired as a civilian in the Radio Department. He was a good radio man. Well, when Captain Wagner retired, Bomboy wanted his job, so he went down to -- Wilhelm [ph] was the Commissioner at the time -- and spoke with Wilhelm, and he was given Wagner's job. Then Bomboy needed a right hand man, and so he had a couple fellows before he came to me, but he wasn't satisfied with them, I guess. And then he asked me if I'd consider coming up to work for him, and I did. Now in the meantime, I had been promoted to corporal, and that's the first promotion I've had since I was on the force, so I had been a Corporal there for a year or two. So he asked me if I'd come up, and he told me -- see, I got promoted a sergeant, so I later became a sergeant. That's the only way I got to be a Sergeant, was through inside. All my work and efforts on the outside prove nothing. Although I enjoyed every day of my work, I -- except the day I had to get a top coat put on.

INTERVIEWER:

Why do you think it was so difficult to get promoted when you were doing so much important investigative work in Philadelphia?

MR. TROUT:

I don't know, except you see, when I was working in the Detective Division when I got these jobs down in Philadelphia. And I think maybe one of the reasons I got those jobs was because that was my hometown, and I knew the city well. And to be teamed

up with a person who came maybe from Pittsburgh, or Erie, or Greensburg, who did not know the city, it was easier for us to get around, because of my knowledge of the city. And I believe when I look back that might have been the main thing why I got those jobs down there, but I was always working with a member of the Detective Division, and I reported to the Detective Division all the time. And I really had in mind becoming a detective. But I later -- I never made it. And I later found out that -- sorry to say, you -- it took for somebody to speak for you to get that promotion. Now, the other promotions to corporal and sergeant, they were rare. The Detective Division only had about eight men assigned to it. And the only way you could get the -- then they started to expand that Detective Division. There was eight or nine, and then they made another fellow a detective while I was there. And then I found out they made -- and then they made another fellow, and they -- the reason he got to be a plain clothes man was he claimed he was allergic to the uniform. So he couldn't wear a uniform, so they allowed him to wear civilian clothes, and later on he became a detective. So, but as I -- when I look back, I think a lot of it was who you know, and I didn't know the right person. The only person I knew right was the guy that got me into that communications job at the Capital.

INTERVIEWER:

So would you say that there were politics involved in moving up inside?

MR. TROUT:

That was my opinion. I could never prove it, but that was my opinion. If you -- I always said if you listened long enough and you're patient, it'll come out in the end. And I was satisfied when I retired that I didn't know the right people.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Good. Now, getting back to some of the things that you did while you were on the job -- before when we spoke, you mentioned that the only time you had gotten your name in the newspaper was the time that you had responded to an operator's call. Can you tell us that story for the record?

MR. TROUT:

Well, I was on the telephone that night at Gettysburg. We always had -- somebody had what they call telephone duty. It started at 4:00 in the afternoon, and then it worked until you went to bed at night at 10:00. And those days we stayed at the substation. And you weren't allowed to close the office until 10:00, and then you went upstairs and went to bed. And I got this call from the operator, who told me that she had overheard somebody calling for help. And in those days the telephones were a rural telephone, and she knew about where that phone call was coming from. And so one of the men was with me was on reserve, Tony Martin. I got Tony and I -- and we went down to this -- where the operator said to look. And we -- as I remember, it was a big old house where the lights were on in the living room, and there was a porch. And we guessed that that was the place to go. So I go up and try the front door, and the front door opened. And inside was this -- a man, as I remember -- a man and a younger man, and they were on the floor groggy. And so we called the ambulance down from Andy Warner Hospital, and they sent the ambulance down and took these the people. Here they were overcome with heater gas, or coal gas, and according to that article, I believe that they a dog too. The dog had died, and these men were pretty groggy. And I could smell it. As soon as I went in I could smell the coal gas.

And so we go them up to the hospital, and they were brought around and survived. And of course, the paper wrote it up as though the State Police did a great thing, and I couldn't see where -- all we did was respond to the -- that telephone operator, who was really on the ball, was able to tell us about where to go. When I think back, the reason we stopped at that house, it was a big old house. It might have been a lodging house. They've used it for lodging, as -- I just don't remember. And but the lights were on, and that's why we chose that place to go and look, and it turned out to be the right one.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT:

But when you work in a small town like that, those newspapers were looking for anything to write about. And I remember -- I think the person that wrote that was a woman, and she called herself a cover reporter. And she almost followed us around no matter where we went, hoping to get a story of some kind to write for the Gettysburg Times. And I remember one time I got a letter from somebody up in New York City, and it said something like this: Your name was in the New York Times or in a local New York paper, and if you wish a copy of this, we'll send it to you for a dollar or something like that. Well, this was when you're new, and you don't -- your name isn't in the paper much. So I sent it off, and here what it was, a little article -- it was just a very small article. And there was a girl 12 years old in -- outside of Gettysburg, who gave birth to a baby, and that was news. It was news in the -- it was in the Gettysburg paper. But the New York papers picked it up somehow, too, and put it in a

paper up there, see? So I paid them a dollar for this, and I already knew about it. I didn't know what to expect, to tell you the truth. But here it was about that poor girl that was only 12 years old and had a baby. Now, I think these days that's a common thing now. But in those days, that was something to write about.

INTERVIEWER:

What was your involvement with the girl? Did you help her?

MR. TROUT:

No, there was a case of fornication and bastardy, where the district attorney sent me up to investigate this and find out who the father was, and so on. And that's how I got involved. And then the girl having -- giving birth -- we had to get her to a place to give birth to the baby. And yeah, I remember that case very well. I don't know who the boy was, but see, the district attorney would -- he would get complaints. And then if he felt -- and we really -- when I say we -- the State Police in almost every county worked more or less for the district attorney. Whatever the district attorney wanted, he'd call the barracks and ask for help. And some -- he'd get help from the State Police. Down in McSherrystown, there was a man in McSherrystown who had three daughters, and he was having relations with his two older daughters. And as they grew up and left home, left their younger sister there with her father, these two older daughters went to the priest and told the priest that they were fearful of their little sister with their father. And the priest came to the district attorney and asked for some investigation to find out what's going on; but don't tell the State Police, or something like that. And I remember the district attorney was a staunch catholic. I remember that. And his motto was -- or his feeling was, it didn't matter whether the priest asked for it or not. This is not right,

and he wanted somebody to do something about it. So he sent me down to investigate it. And we did then arrest that father for incest. But the reason I tell that story is how the district attorney, knowing or being requested to keep it quiet, felt it was his duty to stop this going on, especially since the two older sisters had experienced all this, too. So that was one case that I remember. That was also Gettysburg. They used to say that you really didn't know police work until you served a couple years on the substation, and I could the reason they say that. When you work at Regimental Headquarters, we got a lot of special duty assignments. For instance, when I first came on, it was a common thing -- an annual thing -- for people in the Treasury Department -- workers in the Treasury Department -- to gather in the old Treasury Department where they had a great big vault, to pull out their stocks and bonds where they had coupons attached to it. The coupons were as good as money. You could -- if you only had that one coupon you could take it to a bank and cash it in for the money. And so their job annually would be to clip with scissors -- cut these coupons off and cash them in for money. While they were doing that, they sent two of us State Policemen down armed with rifles. And again, I say I don't know what I would have done if somebody would have come in and held that place up, because they don't tell you what to do, you know? They just sent us down there and said -- so we sat on top of the safe projected out into the room -- the big room there -- and we sat on top of the safe with our rifles -- 30-06 rifles. We were -- dear rifles -- they were powerful rifles -- and we were supposed to protect these guys down there. Nothing ever happened, but we were -- that was a detail we had, and we had it for about a week. For every day you know that they were in there counting these -- clipping these coupons, we were

there. And then another -- well, whenever they would have joint sessions of legislature meet, where the governor makes his appearance, they always had state policeman lined up and down on the side. And that was a detail where all you did was stand in uniform at attention the whole time you were there. And then another time, it was after -- and I don't know what election it was -- it was a presidential election where the Electoral College was meeting. And they met in one of the same senate chambers down there in the old building, and two of us were sent down there in uniform to stand around while the Electoral College met and cast their votes for the president. They still do that. Whether they send State Police down or not, I don't know; but they -- the Electoral College still meets for Pennsylvania -- for all states. Yeah, that -- they were the things that you were assigned to that, it's not a normal day, but yet it helped make the job on the State Police a very, very interesting job.

INTERVIEWER:

How do you think that they went about choosing you for each individual detail that you went on? Why would they choose you, say, over another person for that particular detail?

MR. TROUT:

Well you see, you were detailed by the officer in charge. And when you were at Troop Headquarters, it was the First Sergeant that picked his men for certain jobs. And I never knew -- you never knew why they picked you. You never knew. You just -- you were called, you were -- we always -- we had our rooms upstairs. They had a loudspeaker system, and after roll call, you came back to the barracks and got washed up and got into civilian clothes, or stood around waiting. And then you'd get a call over

the speaker: Trout and Jackson, First Sergeant's Office in civilian clothes. Or, if it was a uniform detail -- which was very rare -- they'd say: Report to the First Sergeant's Office in full uniform immediately. That's the way they told us on December 7th -- immediately report to the First Sergeant's Office in uniform. And then you would report to the First Sergeant's Office, and he would -- if it was a criminal complaint, he would give you their -- each complaint that was received was written up on a sheet of paper. And he would -- by the man receiving the complaint -- with the name, address, and so on. And then the First Sergeant would give you this complaint, and he'd say: You and Jackson go out on this. Now, once you went out, it didn't matter when you'd come back. You went out and you did the job. If you didn't come back for lunch, then you were allowed to eat in a restaurant outside. And if you ate in a restaurant outside for lunch, they allowed you 50 cents. If you were out over supper, they allowed you 75 cents. So if you paid 75 cents for -- if you paid $1 for a meal, they would only allow you 75 cents, so we tried to keep our meals that we bought under the 75 cents. Now, once you were on what they call subsistence where you got that $40 a month, whether you ate at the barracks or not, you no longer could put in a slip for your meals. You were expected to pay for them yourself. But you never knew whey they would pick you. I think this is interesting: You come on the force, you're an eager beaver, you want to do the best job you know how. You want to get promoted, and so when you go out on the job, you did everything you could to bring it to a successful conclusion. And when you did, you'd come back feeling -- your chest is sticking out, you know? But after you come back, the next Saturday when the First Sergeant would make up these details for the following week, we always had a detail called the stable guard.

We had six or eight horses over at the stables which we had to feed and clean up and take care of. And you got that detail for a week at a time; 4-12 the first week, and 12-8 the following week. So you come back -- all right...

INTERVIEWER:

We actually -- are we out of tape?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

We will be soon.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

MR. TROUT:

You'd come back from that job feeling that you did a good job, now you're going to get a pat on the back. Well, instead of getting a pat on the back, you got assigned as stable guard. And that was one way they kept you from becoming too doggone chipper on what you think you're doing. So you think you do a good job, you get Stable Guard. And it worked. It worked.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay, I think that's where we're going to stop for now.

[TAPE 4]

INTERVIEWER:

So, we're back. This is the Pennsylvania State Police Oral Histories Project. My name is Shelly Becker. I'm here with Retired Sergeant Harold Trout and this is tape four in our series. So**,** MR. TROUT, I'd still be interested in hearing more stories about your

times on the State Police and different things that happened, and people that you came in contact with. Do you have anything else that you'd like to share?

MR. TROUT:

I'd like to talk about the first rodeo that I saw which was on July 4, 1036 in Allentown. And what I remember about that was, Major Lynn G. Adams was the Commissioner at that time, of the State Police, and at that rodeo he was riding in the back seat of a touring car with the top down. They came into the stadium and made a circle on the track and in the back seat with Major Adams, was a man who they announced over the speaker that he had been wounded in -- during a bank robbery where he'd come on the scene and had a gun battle with the bank robber. This state policeman, who was with Major Adams, was hit in the spine which causes -- he became paralyzed from his waist down and -- the rest of his life. And they were dedicating this rodeo to Corporal Broom [ph], that was the man who was paralyzed. And after I come on the force, which was that -- later on in October, Corporal Broom, who had been stationed at Shamokin when he was in this gun battle, was -- Shamokin was a sub-station to our Troop "E", which was Harrisburg Troop, and he was transferred from Shamokin down to the training school at Hershey, and became in charge of our mess. He was our mess's steward down there. He prepared our meals, did all the buying of the food, and so on. And they made use of Corporal Broom, as long as he lived, as far as I remember. Corporal Broom was still there operating when I finally went to my troop then. That was one story, Corporal -- and the way he got around at the training school, as I remember was very difficult, but he used two canes, and he could maneuver from his bedroom, down through the classroom and down through the kitchen, and so on

with his two canes. Another story is, before I came on the force, there was a case out in the western part of the state, and for some reason or other, McConnellsburg seems to come into my memory, where two state policemen, there names were Sanut [ph] and Gunderman [ph], who were questioning a suspect -- the newspapers in those days called it third degree, but as I remember now it was -- they were just questioning him. While they were questioning him about a crime that he had committed, he tried to escape. And these two state policemen went after him, caught him, and brought him back, and continued their interrogation, but, the criminal died suddenly, in their hands. And the state, who was a Democratic state at that time, Governor Earl [ph] was the Governor, and Margiotti [ph] was the Attorney General, and Margiotti insisted on handling this case himself, prosecuting these two state policemen. And so the name Margiotti became a little bit, an unfavorable one -- name among the State Police, because of his wishes to prosecute these two state policemen. At the end of the trial, they were both found guilty as I remember, and one it seems to me went to jail for a short time, and the other fellow got, maybe got a little bit of leniency, but anyhow, I remember Gunderman, as a result of this fan fair, resigned -- either resigned -- no, I guess he was dismissed from the force, and he became an alcoholic and a bum. And he used to -- he hung out in Shippensburg a good bit. I ran into people when I was stationed in Chambersburg who used to talk about Gunderman, in fact, I think Gunderman applied for the Chief of Police job in Shippensburg, but did not get it. He then wound up being a bum in around Harrisburg. And the story goes that he would go up to Attorney General Margiotti's office, to bum money. And his people -- Margiotti's people were told, that when Gunderman comes soliciting, or come in bumming for

money, give him some. He would take the money and go down and buy his whiskey or his wine, and end up underneath the Market Street Bridge, which was what they used to call -- for all the sneaky pete's used to go down there and bum around. Gunderman finally died then, as an alcoholic, and never amounted to anything. I can't tell you what I ever hear about Sanut after that. But during the trials of these two men, the claimed that they were using jujitsu, and to demonstrate to the jurors, at his trial, they -- the defense brought in a jujitsu from the academy to demonstrate to another state -- an active state policeman, how these jujitsu holds were handled. And during the demonstration of this one time, they broke this man's arm. His name was Sergeant Pierce [ph] -- Sergeant Harold Pierce who offered his services to be demonstrated -- jujitsu demonstrator. And that was comical amongst the fellows, about him being -- breaking an arm in a demonstration. But there was -- they were both men were found guilty, but of course there was always a question about whether they were really doing their job, or were they being over-zealous in their job and being to rough in handling this man. I don't know if I -- did I tell you about the -- about the summer and winter uniform? Do you want to talk about that?

INTERVIEWER:

Go ahead, continue...

MR. TROUT:

The question was raised about your summer and winter uniform, and the winter -- the summer and winter uniform was the same, with the exception of our hats, our head gear. On May the 1st it was automatic, you wore your campaign hat. You wore the --

which was felt, and in those days we did not have a straw campaign hat. They were the felt stetson hats, we wore them all from May 1st, until September 30th. On October 1st, automatically we'd switch to wearing our helmets. And we wore the helmets all winter long until March 31st -- no, April 30th. Unless, if we were assigned to a strike or riot, of some kind, where there was -- where there was roughness going on, I can't think of the word now, where you might need the helmet, we automatically wore the helmet. We were told to wear the helmet when we were sent out to the detail, we were always told to wear your helmets, if it was apt to be in the summertime. And as I remember, that picture of the Johnstown Strike, where we were standing in front of the gate, we all had -- wore our helmets. That was in the summer of 1937.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm. There was another instance where you were at a strike in East Pittsburgh? And there was a reason that you were called away from that strike. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

MR. TROUT:

Well, the -- I was a trick rider for the rodeos. Anybody who was connected with the rodeo had to start training for the rodeos. The rodeos were always held anywhere from July 4th until after Labor Day, up until the 1st of October. So that they had to start training for the rodeos, to get these horses, and get your -- if you were a trick rider, to get your tricks down pat. They would start training in May or June of that summer. Now at the Pittsburgh -- at the East Pittsburgh Strike, we were out there for quite a while, maybe four or five weeks, when they wanted to get this detail, this rodeo detail started, and so they called all of us back in who were going to ride in the rodeo

that year, to start training. Which we did, and that was why they called us off of the strike. Only those who were involved with the rodeo, and me being a trick rider, I was one of them.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm. But also connected to that instance, you had mentioned something about -- that they had found the body of a girl...

MR. TROUT:

Oh, that was a different strike.

INTERVIEWER:

...(inaudible)

MR. TROUT:

Let's see, that was -- yeah, I was on a detail out there, and it might have been the Westinghouse Strike -- it might have been the Westinghouse Strike where they found the body of a girl along side the Sunshine Trail which was about four or five miles out -- going east from Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, which was in Franklin County. I had been stationed at Chambersburg before I went on this detail -- out that the strike -- as a criminal man, and they did not know who the girl was. They assumed that she was a Pennsylvania girl and that she was murdered in Pennsylvania and so it would be a Pennsylvania case. And so they called me in off of the strike to accompany Detective Hartman [ph] on this investigation of this girl. It turned out her name -- we identified her as a Betty Kennedy, who was a resident of Hagerstown, Maryland and in the course of our investigation we found out she had been a prostitute down there, where she was -- the taxicab drivers at the square in Hagerstown would use certain girls, and

Betty Kennedy was one of them, for -- at that time there was an Army camp up at the -- Camp Ritchie --that was Camp Ritchie was in Maryland, but it was right over the state line from Pennsylvania. And where this girl's body was found was right near Camp Ritchie. So when we found out that Betty Kennedy was a tool of these taxi drivers we figured that she was a -- that a soldier came down and asked one of these cab drivers for a girl and they ended up getting Betty Kennedy and -- resulted in Betty's death. Now, we worked on that case quite a while. We worked mostly with -- in conjunction with the Hagerstown Police force. At that time the sheriffs of the Maryland counties were very active in criminal investigations also. And I say also, because, Pennsylvania sheriff's were mostly paper servers. They did not get involved with crime, they did not get involved with police work of any kind. But in Maryland they did and so worked with the Sheriff of that county, which was Washington County, Maryland and the Detective Division of the Hagerstown Police. So -- and there were two of us. There was Sparky Hartman from the State Police and I was sent down from the Chambersburg Sub-station to work on this case. We never did solve who killed her, however, we in the course of the investigation, we found out that the present Chief of Police of Hagerstown had a no good son, and the no good son was a cab driver. And we were connecting this son of the Chief of Police with Betty Kennedy's troubles, to the point where when we found Betty Kennedy's body, we had pictures taken of her body upon which there were ridges -- ridges showed up on her body, which looked like ridges from a floor mat. We compared those ridges with the floor mat of the various taxi cabs down in Hagerstown, trying to hook this up -- never were able to make positive identification and as a result, we never brought this man to trial, mostly because we

were bypassed or steered away from it, because of his being the son of this Chief of Police.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. So when you would arrive on a crime scene, such as with this girl, what was the first thing you would do if you arrived on the crime scene?

MR. TROUT:

Well, somebody asked me this here, not too long ago. Today, they spread yellow tape all around a certain scene. In those days we did not. The body -- we called the -- and undertaker, he delivered the body to his morgue, what he calls a morgue, where there was a postmortem examination made of the girl. And the crime scene, I went back the next day, that same afternoon, which was in the summertime -- a hot afternoon, and well all through the woods, it was in a wooded area. I had to drive right along side the road. And I ended up with one of the worse doses of ivy poison that I think anybody ever had, because I was perspiring and looking for clues all through this -- where we found the body, and at the same time brushing the perspiration from my face. So I -- the only thing I found was a good dose of ivy poison that time. That's about it. Now, we also had, I mean we all, and I wasn't the only one that did the looking, we all looked around for -- we found her dress -- we found a dress that had been taken off of her. She was found in a slip -- and shoes, I guess we found shoes. How we identified her, I sort of forget. Maybe by pictures because she was a notorious girl down around the square. Now, we would -- the fellow I worked with, we would make our headquarters -- after we exhausted every effort we made in Hagerstown, we would go to the Waynesboro Police Department and rumors were phoned in to the Waynesboro Police

Department. And I remember one rumor was that -- it came from a real reliable source, and she gave her name and address, and I went to talk with her and asked her where she got her rumor from, and she said, "The milkman" and I went and found the milkman, and I found out where the milkman got his information, and he told me from another one of his customers. And after about -- going to four different places, I guess I realized it was all a rumor, nothing was found. But that's the way I think it was at that time, and I think it's still that way. People will call in for a missing persons with information and they'll say, "Well, a reliable source told me," -- when you go and check that reliable source it usually comes from somebody else. So, that was very much the way it was with Betty Kennedy's case.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. I think journalist probably have that same problem, with checking their sources...

MR. TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

So, it sounds like you worked fairly closely, often times, with city police or a borough police. Can you describe those relationships that the State Police had with (inaudible)?

MR. TROUT:

Well, at that time it was a considered -- courtesy. That if a crime occurred in a city, you first contacted the head of that police force, to tell them what was up. For

instance, when we went to Philadelphia, we were ordered in by the Governor of Pennsylvania. But, in order to get cooperation from the Philadelphia Police, which we probably would've needed later on anyhow, as a courtesy we would go and tell the Chief of Police, we have this to do, we have the authority, we're telling you as a matter of courtesy, will you cooperate with us? That's the way we did it. Now, the FBI, along the same way -- the FBI was supposed to do the same thing. When the FBI was assigned to a case around Chambersburg by rights, they should've come to the State Police Barracks at Chambersburg with the same idea, we are in here to investigate a federal crime, we would like you to know about it and we would like your cooperation if necessary. I'm getting off the subject here, but, as a result of that, in those days, that was 1936, '37 and '38. If a case was solved by a police department, not necessarily the State Police, but any police department, in conjunction with a FBI man, the publicity that would hit the newspapers would be that the FBI did it, and give no credit to the local police, see. So we were told to go to the local police, tell them we're there, and if anything hits the newspapers, be sure you give the local police the proper credit for helping, see. And so, let's take the Waynesboro Police -- in this Betty Kennedy case -- Waynesboro was the town closest to where her body was found, but she was found in the county, which gives it a State Police job. But, we didn't know where the girl was from, she could've been from Waynesboro, so we immediately contacted the Chief of Police of Waynesboro. Now, when we finally found out that she was -- could've come from Hagerstown, then we went down to Hagerstown, but of course by this time, this is in the newspapers about this body being found up in -- along the Sunshine Trail. And so they -- was no surprise that we'd come down and talk with

them -- and they did, they gave us two or three men, who worked with us diligently. The Sheriff, for instance, the Sheriff of Washington County, Maryland and I, we had a tip where a sailor was involved -- had been seen with this girl. And we could identify him. He was stationed at the Patuxent River Naval Base, which was way down -- which was way down below Washington, DC -- south of Washington, DC, but in Maryland. And he and I went down, we looked up this fellow, questioned him, found out that he was not our man and came back. But when I left -- we left from Hagerstown, driving, and when I left Hagerstown I left my buddy at the Hagerstown Police Department, and he told me, I'll wait here for you, when you come back, meet me here. Well we -- it took us so long to go down to Patuxent River and back, it was midnight before we got back. Now in those days there was a Greyhound Bus, or it was called a Blue Ridge Bus -- left Hagerstown at midnight and went to Chambersburg. And so I -- the Sheriff and I agreed that I would get on this bus -- he took me right to the bus terminal, got me on the bus and I went to Chambersburg. And I go to bed, in Chambersburg, in my bed, I had a bed up there. At about 2:00 in the morning the phone rings, and here's my buddy down in Hagerstown Police Department, still waiting for me. And I learned there, when you say you're going to meet somebody, you meet them there, regardless of what happens in between. Yeah, I'll never forget that. And there Sparky was, loyal Sparky, waiting for me until 2:00 in the morning to come back from down there in -- south of Washington, DC. So now, you asked about our relationship with police departments? We tried to keep, and we did, we kept on good terms with all police departments -- Harrisburg, Gettysburg, Chambersburg, any little town that had a police department, we kept in good terms

with them -- used them a lot, because, they knew more about their borough then I knew from State -- if -- for example, we had a constable down in Chambersburg who worked out of the -- he worked out of the Justice of the Peace's office -- constable. They are elected in Pennsylvania. This old constable was an old fellow then, 1937, who became friendly with the State Police because when the State Police at Chambersburg would be sent out on a detail someplace without their horses, somebody would have to remain behind and take care of the horses. And often times, they would send every available state policemen out on a detail, and leave the horses there, and this old constable would come up and feed the horses and take care of the horses, while the State Police were gone. So by the time I get there now, all these old time state policemen that he's familiar -- in fact he knew Sergeant McCarthy [ph] who was -- got killed down there in a gun battle outside of Chambersburg -- he knew Sergeant McCarthy, personally and worked with him. And so now, when I would get a case to work on where up -- would go up Path Valley, that was a place outside of Chambersburg, near Fort Loudon. It was up in the woods -- up in the mountains, and I would -- the first person I would contact would be Walter Clip [ph], the constable. I'd tell him the name, and invariably he would know exactly where to go to find this fellow, or a neighbor of his, that we go and asked where he was. So, we used Walter Clip a good bit, almost as much as our own State Police. I never went out on a case by myself down there with Walter Clip. He was that familiar with the whole county and in fact, we were going after a fellow one time in a bar room and Walter and I went in, and as soon as this man saw us, he knew we were coming for him so he ran out the back door. And when I saw him getting up to go out the back door, I went out the front door,

the way we'd come in, I figured, he was going to come out and around where the cars were. Instead of him coming around where I was, he went out the back door and straight out across the fields and Walter Clip, now this is a man about 50 years old by this time -- Walter Clip takes after him, follows him down through the fields, and accidentally ran into a clothesline -- a wire clothesline was stretched across there, and broke a couple of ribs. But he kept on chasing this guy and finally caught him. So I come around the back -- and he didn't come around the front -- I go back looking for him, and I hear them down in the field struggling and fighting one another, and I went down and we got him them. So that's the kind of a guy Walter Clip was, a very, very faithful colleague. And another nice story about State Police was -- I was stationed at Troop "E", in Harrisburg. We had an entrance we all -- all of the men policemen used that one entrance in and out all the time. It was like a stoop, with steps on it. And this one night we had heard that Walter Clip died, so I was out there taking collections up from people that I knew, or I thought knew Walter Clip, to send him -- to send flowers down. And so this one fellow, by the name of J.J. Devine [ph], who was an old highway patrolman, and did not know Walter Clip, and I knew he didn't know Walter Clip because the highway patrolmen didn't get to work with Walter Clip, see. And J.J. Devine said to me, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm collecting flowers." "For who?" "For Walter Clip, a constable down in Chambersburg." He pulls out his wallet and gives me a dollar. I said, "You didn't know him, Jim." He said, "It doesn't matter to me, if he was a friend of yours, he was a friend of mine." And I thought that was nice of Jim Devine. And again, that's the kind of guy Jim Devine was. So, yeah, anybody that ever knew Walter Clip, knew him to be a good friend.

INTERVIEWER:

Mm, hmm. So, you mentioned that relationships were very -- actually very good with the city police in the area, but that perhaps with the FBI, the relationships weren't as good, can you describe that? And maybe why that was?

MR. TROUT:

Well, the relationship between the FBI men -- agents who were in our territory, was excellent. We had one fellow by the name of Irish Carroll [ph]. Irish Carroll was just like one of us. He'd come in and ate with us, we traveled together with him, we worked our cases -- you see, at Chambersburg there was a Letterkenny Army Depot, it was an Army Depot during the war, and any cases in -- within the Army Depot, of larceny or theft or anything was called -- they would assign the FBI to it. So the FBI would come to Letterkenny and work their case, and then come to us for any assistance that might be needed out in the county, beyond -- and so, our relationship -- any relationship that I ever had, with a FBI man was good. The only thing is, like I said before, when it came time for publicity, and I found this out now -- since all business of homeland defense and the nine eleven business, where the different agencies did not cooperate with one another -- I'm finding this out to be an order from Edgar Hoover, at those days -- for the FBI, who was just becoming popular, because of their affair with John Dillinger and Pretty Face Floyd and those fellows. Hoover wanted his men to get the publicity, to make it look like they were doing a good job. They were doing a good job, the only thing is they were getting help from local police who were not getting the credit, and so the local police didn't like that. And the State Police didn't like it, but we wouldn't let them know it. We wouldn't let them know it, we might kid about it, but --

now Carroll -- if you're going to put this in the paper, remember Trout -- Trout, Walter worked with you, don't forget me, you know, we would joke about it. But as long as -- getting along, we got along swell. We worked together good. There was never -- there was never a let down in the quality of work we performed in conjunction with the FBI. But that was there -- that was there thing, and we used to blame it on the agent himself, you know, for being a glory hound. But we had glory hounds in the State Police too, you know. I could name some, but I won't. But we had glory hounds, who, no matter what they did, they got their names in the paper. They even got their wives' names in the paper. If she became sick, you know, fighting cancer or something, they were so publicity hounds, much of -- that they would give the stories about their wives to the press, and the press would print it. To keep in good maybe with the State Police, you know, because the press depended upon the police department, in fact, there used to be, what they called a -- reporter, who did nothing but police work, follow the police around, contact him in the barracks every morning and say, what's new? And got their stories out of the police barracks like that. So, and then -- if they got in good with a state policeman and he was glory seeker, he would tell this guy, well don't -- put this in the paper, use my name -- and I didn't do that there -- with that case there, I didn't do that.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, okay.

MR. TROUT:

No, I don' know how they got my name that time. I guess they got it...

INTERVIEWER:

From the operator, perhaps.

MR. TROUT:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

So, how were your relationships with the local journalists in the area?

MR. TROUT:

How was what?

INTERVIEWER:

Your relationship with the local journalists in the area?

MR. TROUT:

It depended on the individual. The person that wrote that particular story, I remember her well. She was Triva Zigler [ph], and she was a woman, her husband had just died, and she was trying to raise a family and took a job as a -- she called herself a cub reporter for the Gettysburg Times. And she worked out of the, I won't say worked out of, but, she had good contact with the District Attorney at that time, in Gettysburg. And so, she would get information from him about different cases that we would work on, and then she would come out to the barracks and ask to be -- for the person who was working the case. We only had two criminal men at Chambersburg, me and when I first went there it was Paul Aruta [ph]. And then Paul Aruta retired and they sent a fellow by the name of Jones down. So there was only two of us that worked these criminal cases out of the Chambersburg Substation. So -- no, I'm talking about Gettysburg, now. So, she would come out and ask for one of us. And the relationship was good. We'd tell her a story -- then when we got to Chambersburg we had a -- we

had a Justice of the Peace who wrote for the Chambersburg paper on his own. And then a school teacher from Shippensburg, who wrote for the Shippensburg newspaper, who came down and talked with us a good bit. And his name was Earl Coy [ph], and Earl Coy thought so much of the State Police that he wrote a book called, The Cracker Barrel Tales, and had it published and gave me a copy of it, and I still have that as a souvenir from Earl Coy. And then when we got to Harrisburg, we had a little fellow by the name of Biaco [ph], who was the eager beaver news reporter -- well we had two, we had Monk Shover [ph], who was a reporter for the Harrisburg Telegraph, and he came into the city police station everyday, looked over the pawn shop lists and we often went to the city police station to get a copy of these pawn shop lists, where if something was stolen, a ring, or a camera, we'd be -- a lot of times it would be taken to the pawn shops. And it was law then for the pawn shops to keep a record of all these things he -- that they took in, and by whom it was brought in. And we used that pawn shop list to trace our stolen merchandise. And Monk Shover used to come in and meet us there, and then he'd -- he'd even accompany us on some of these cases. But then Monk Shover left that Harrisburg Telegraph and became a city fireman. And in those days, a lot of the Harrisburg fire departments volunteered, but Monk got a paid job -- as a paid fireman. I couldn't understand why he would leave the newspaper to become a fireman, but that was his wish. And Monk, twenty years later, maybe even longer than that, I'm up at Kline [ph] Village one day with my wife, it was during the time when gold went up in price, and we were selling all our gold, which wasn't much, but we were getting a good price for our gold and silver, and as I'm heading over toward this store, somebody yells, "Harold!" No, he said, "Harold." And I turn around

and here comes Monk and his wife down the sidewalk. I said, "I bet you can't name my last name." "You're Harold Trout," he said. And I couldn't get over after all those years, how Monk Shover remembered my name. And, now this fellow Bianco I was telling you about, he was a reporter for, I suppose The Patriot, I don't think it was the Harrisburg Telegraph, and he would listen to our radios, our car -- our radio system. In those days we had one way radio. We had several cars with a radio receiver in it, but we couldn't talk out on it. And if they wanted us, there was a man at Troop "E", he'd be operating the radio, and he was -- he'd called out and say, "Harrisburg, car one, call your barracks." So we went to the nearest telephone and called the barracks, and then they would tell us there's an accident up on Route 23 or something, and Bianco would be hearing this on -- he had a car -- a radio in his car, personal car that he could hear these calls. So when he heard Harrisburg, car one being called, right away he became alert. So he would watch for a State Police car going someplace and follow them. He wanted to get on the scene with us, where this accident was, or whatever it was, a murder, a mob fight, or something, whatever it was, he wanted to be there to report it. So what we used to do there, is -- he became an itch. He'd be there and maybe spoil something for us before we got there. So we used to play jokes on him. Now, this wouldn't be -- this wasn't for publicity, but we would fake a call like that, see. And we would even fake -- the announcer up there at Troop "E" would say, "There's an accident up at Carserary[ph]Bridge," see, and it might be down at Middletown. So Bianco would race up to the Carserary Bridge and not find an accident. And Bianco got wise to that, you know, and he started to complain about it, but, he was a good natured fellow, we had a lot of fun with him, but he was an itch. He became an itch.

And then another story I'll tell you this -- about the car radios, this is comical. In those days, it was a very strict thing, that when you made a long distance call from a State Police telephone, you had to -- first of all you weren't supposed to make a long distance call. If you did, you had to write it down, and get from the operator the time and charges of that call, and you made a list of it -- it was a regular log, so that when we got a telephone bill at the end of the month, somebody had to sit down and check all those calls. So this one night, I'm on duty again down at Chambersburg, I'm on the telephone duty. And the Sergeant in charge, he and I didn't get along together. We had run into -- we had personality troubles down in Gettysburg, and then I got transferred to Chambersburg and then he got transferred up there, following me. So anyhow, we get a complaint of something down in Greencastle, which is a long distance call from Chambersburg, it was about a 15 cent call. Now, in those days if I -- and he was -- my Sergeant was in a radio car, and I wanted to get in touch with him, to tell him about this incident, see. So I sent a teletype to Harrisburg, have Chambersburg, car 1, call the station. So they announce it over the radio, and he picks it up down around Greencastle, that he's suppose to call the station. But by the time I sent a teletype up and the fellow in Harrisburg got the message a called over the radio, and by the time he gets to a phone to call the station, I already solved my problem down in Greencastle. As I started out by saying, a long distance call was a no-no. Every effort was made to reduce the charges of running a sub-station, see. So when he called the -- when he called the barracks at Chambersburg, the operator came on and said, "Sergeant Tempke's [ph] in Greencastle and wants to know if you'll accept the call." And I said, "No." Now the reason I said no was, I didn't need him,

see, so I figured why accept the call. Well, what do I hear next is, he will accept the call operator. He will accept the call operator, this is Sergeant Tempke -- I said yes I'll accept the call. Well when he came, he gave me heck, see, well I told him -- I said, "Sarge, the reason I didn't accept -- I already solved the problem, I didn't need you -- I didn't see any need for spending the 15 cents." But that's how tight they were in those days, and he gave me holy heck. And we got a kick out of that, after that. In fact, he and I turned out to be pretty good buddies. When two of our Troopers -- state policemen were kidnapped -- they were kidnapped up in Shamokin. I won't go through the whole way they got kidnapped, but it was a case of two bank -- two hold up men, who were planning to hold up the payroll at a colliery down in Huntingdon County, called Huntingdon Broad Top Railroad. Huntingdon Broad Top Railroad was having a payroll, and they paid in cash. And these two men were from down in Maryland someplace, and they come up and they were going to hold up the payroll. Incidentally, they were stopped by a state policeman, for suspicion or something like that. And they couldn't prove their identity, that was it. They were living in a room up in Shamokin and so, the state policeman said, "All right, I'll follow you up." So the state policeman followed him up to Shamokin, they got out of their car, and were going up to the room, and the state policeman goes with them. When he gets up there, they pick up a gun, turn and put it on the state policeman, and take his gun from him. Okay, now they don't do anything to him, but he -- they let him go loose and he doesn't have a gun. So he gets to a phone and he calls his station and tells them about these two guys, and what they did to him. And so they sent out a patrol looking for these two guys, and they spot them. The spot them down below McConnellsburg, Maryland. The

Huntington Broad Top Railroad was up around Orbisonia, which is north of McConnellsburg, near Mount Union, is where it was. And so they spot this car, I can't tell you the whole story, but somehow or other, they got a hold of another state policeman and took his gun. So, now they were spotted down below Hancock, Maryland. And they send out one of those statewide things, all state policeman come -- so Tempke and I, that's the fellow I refused him phone call -- he always would team up with me when we were -- at a detail like this, see. So he said, "Come on Trout, you and I go together." So we went out there, this was on a Sunday morning, and you know, when something like that happens out -- I'm thinking about these prisoners of war over in Iraq, how they're mistreated by people, well, when we were going on looking for these two fellows that held up our two men, and took their guns, we were mad. When we get them we're going make them run so we can shoot them in the back, you know. Well, you do all these things you're going to do, to get back at these two fellows, but, here's what happened. As we're going down this little road south of McConnellsburg, looking -- in the meantime now, Colonel Mott [ph] comes out, he's running the whole thing, he's a Deputy Commissioner, and there must have been about 50 state policemen all out there, running all around. And so, Tempke and I are riding down this road, and what happens is, some guy comes up out of the woods, and he looks like "The Wreck of the Hesperus." He's all -- his hairs would be draggled, and when he sees us, he puts his hands up. Now, when a man approaches you with his hands up, what are you going to do? So we knew -- we figured he was one of the guys, see. In the meantime, we heard that they had been -- that his buddy had been apprehended, or almost apprehended, and also got in a gun battle with some State

Police. But when he comes out, this guy, he comes out with his hands up. So Tempke and I -- what we're going to do with him -- we're going to knock the daylights out of him, what could you do? You just pity him, you put him in the car, and you treat him like a long, lost brother. And that's what we did. Now we took him back to where Colonel Mock was and he -- turned him over to them, and then they were later prosecuted. But nobody got hurt. Even the fellows that had the gun battle, none of them got hurt. So, what was I going -- why did I get on that story? Okay, I'll think of something maybe.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, speaking of gun battles, did you ever get into a gun battle?

MR. TROUT:

Never.

INTERVIEWER:

Or did you ever have to draw your gun?

MR. TROUT:

I drew my gun one time, and shot it. I didn't hit anybody, I didn't intend to hit anybody, which was against general orders, too. Because we were always told, don't draw your gun, unless you're going to shoot, and if you're going to shoot, shoot to kill. That was our orders. Maybe they weren't written, I don't, I -- if somebody would dispute that, I'd say, "Well no, I never saw it written," but that's what we were taught. Don't draw your gun and if -- and never draw your gun -- and if you do draw your gun, shoot, and shoot to kill. Don't shoot to -- don't shoot to scare anybody. But, the only time I ever shot, I was chasing somebody through a cemetery, where there was all kinds of tombstones

around, and I knew I wasn't going to be able to catch him. And so, I pulled my gun out and fired the gun, told him to stop, but he didn't stop. And I didn't intend to hit him, I just shot the gun -- I guess I shot it up in the air. I never shot anybody, thank God.

INTERVIEWER:

So you never caught him?

MR. TROUT:

Again, down in -- when we in Gettysburg, and Tempke was a fellow there too. We got a teletype that a fellow had escaped from the Eastern Penitentiary. The Eastern Penitentiary at that time was in Philadelphia -- in the City of Philadelphia itself, and he had escaped and was -- he was seen getting on a bus, on a Greyhound Bus, heading for Pittsburgh. And they sent out on a teletype -- and we checked our Greyhound Station downtown, and there was a bus due in from Philadelphia at a certain time, heading for Pittsburgh. And so, Tempke gets me and he says, "Come on, he's suppose to be on that bus, let's go down and get him -- check the bus." Well we got down to the bus station in Gettysburg, Tempke told me to get on first, that monkey, I didn't realize it at the time, I didn't care really, but when I think back, he had me get on first, see. When I got on I couldn't find anybody that looked like this Andrioli [ph]. They gave me a pretty good description, big fellow and he was an italian, and I didn't see anybody, I can -- so he wasn't on that bus. But later on that night, we find out that he was caught down before he got to Lancaster even, by another state policeman and shot his way out. And got -- in fact he got killed -- Andrioli got killed, and that fellow that shot and killed him later became a Commissioner. Yeah, his name was Rocko Yurella [ph], and he's the fellow that finally did catch Andrioli, but Tempke and I never

did. But there was -- just the idea that Tempke and I didn't get along, personally, but when it came time to team up with somebody, Tempke always seemed to want to team up with me, for some reason or another. Yeah, great life. I enjoyed my job, I might sound enthused now, but I was. I enjoyed my job, very much so. I would recommend anybody to become a state policeman.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you -- and we're kind of talking about times when perhaps the job was dangerous. Did you ever feel like your life was in danger?

MR. TROUT:

Yes, I did. That one night, it was only one time. We were at a motel -- it's Walter Clip and I, were at a motel and looking for a woman's husband, I think -- as I remember. And we were sneaking around, and the woman -- there was a woman in there that heard us sneaking around, I could've -- well it might've been one of these tourist cabins, rather than a motel, because it was an individual, small place, where -- just room for a bed and a bathroom, and there was a front porch on it. And we were sneaking around, for some reason or another, and we disturbed this woman. And she came out, and she was hysterical, and she had a shotgun in her hand. And she goes, "Oh, oh, oh, oh!" And Walter Clip's over here, and I'm over here, and Walter Clip starts talking to her, "Put that gun down, woman." "Put that gun down, woman." And finally she settled down and did put the gun down. But I thought for sure that night she was going to let it go, but she never did. But she was hysterical, oh, oh, oh, and it was really our fault, because we were sneaking around there. I think we were trying to catch her husband -- her husband wasn't even there. She was by herself.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you question her after that?

MR. TROUT:

No, we didn't do anything. Because first of all, we knew we were wrong. And if we could get out of there without any trouble, I think we were both satisfied. No, we talked her out -- Walter Clip did it -- talked her out of using the gun, and she went back into her little cabin, I think they were called tourist cabins in those days. And we got out of there. I don't remember if I ever got her husband that night, or not, either. That's the only time I ever really remember being scared on my job. I had another woman tell me one time with -- which what I thought was -- as saying I'll never forget, because when she said it, I didn't know what she meant. And I was looking for somebody, and I found the person and this woman told me, "They always told me, all you have to do to a state policeman is to give him a hair pin, and he will find the woman." It was a compliment. All you do -- all you need for a state policeman for a clue is a hair pin. Well, think about it, you need more than a hair pin. But that was what she said she always heard, and I thought that was a compliment.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, absolutely.

MR. TROUT:

Yup.

INTERVIEWER:

So, my next question, if don't feel comfortable answering, than you can decline to answer, but, between 1937 and 1964, which were generally the dates that you were in

the State Police, between those dates, there were 23 Troopers who were killed in the line of duty. So what I'm wondering is, how did you feel when you heard that these Troopers were killed, and do you remember any in particular that affected you?

MR. TROUT:

I remember I was pallbearer for two of those fellows who were killed. At the time you hear they're killed -- it didn't affect me at all. Now, these days, when a fellow Trooper or a fellow policeman gets killed, they go to psychiatrists, they go for counseling, and to me it's a big joke. I never went to counseling. I was never with anybody that was actually shot. But I was on the force at the time, when they were shot and killed. And like I said, I was pallbearer -- I was pallbearer for a -- by the name of -- for a fellow by the name of Fesler [ph], who was shot and killed up in Lykens, right while I was in the training school. And the reason I was picked for pallbearer -- you know, again, I don't know why, except we always -- you were not only a pallbearer, but then you were on the firing squad at the grave. And so, they would train us down there to -- to go through this firing squad so that we'd all fire our rifles at the same time. And, it was sound like one shot, you know. So, Papi Fesler was buried out of New Bloomfield, I believe, and I was on the -- a pallbearer. And then, who was the other fellow killed? Well, there was a man killed while I was on the force, who was killed by a -- he was investigating an accident out on 22, when a truck came down and run off the road and ran into him and killed him outright. He ate supper with us that night, and went out on patrol after supper and got killed that night. So, that was a little hard, and we all suffered a little bit, but weren't counseled. We weren't -- they didn't bring in doctors, and had us -- give us any sermons or anything. It was just one of those things you

accept. I'm trying to think who else was killed. I was pallbearer twice. Oh, the other fellow's name was Soule, but I don't know how he died, he might have just died a natural death. And he was from up in Perry County, too. He name was s-o-u-l-e, it think is the way you spelled his name. And I remember being a pallbearer there, and the firing squad. No, as I think back, there were a couple of fellows that died, a good friend of mine died, but -- from a heart attack. But, it's one of those things that sure you're saddened by it, but we didn't get any, nor did we expect any, special treatment. Now I remember one fellow, Joe Sosinger [ph], was staking out a Blue Pig Restaurant. And the fellow came that night and rob -- and broke in and had a gun, and pulled a gun on Joe Sosinger, and Joe Sosinger in turn pulled his gun out and shot and killed this man. Now I remember when that happened, they took Joe Sosinger off of duty, and had him stay home for a couple of days, I remember that. But it didn't bother Joe any, I don't think. Joe was an old -- he had been on about five years before I was, and we called him an old timer. And an ex-fighter -- an ex-prize fighter, so -- and also a very good pianist, believe it or not. And he used to be the bodyguard for the Governor, downtown, on Front Street. And in his spare time, he'd go out there and play the piano. He dumbfounded everybody, because he good play the piano. Being an ex-fighter and a state policeman. No, as I think back I can't remember anything where -- anything like -- that would really bother us. Or bother me, and I can't say I'm any different from anybody else. We all -- a lot of us, it seemed -- to congregate together, we were more or less tied the same way, with our family ties and our -- and the way we felt, the way we worked, the way we got along together, we seemed to, you know, there's always a couple of people that get along good together and there's always

somebody that can't get along with someone. But, we would congregate and meet, with the fellows that we could get along with. Even to the point where we'd bring our wives and have Sunday dinners together, when we ran out of money. Yeah, they were -- and when you think back -- now this might be getting a little sentimental, but when you get married, first of all, we had to get permission to get married, we couldn't get -- we just couldn't go out and get married. And I proposed to my wife, and talked her into marrying me on a certain date in January of 1939. We picked the date to be married on January the 16th. So I put in for my vacation to begin January 15th, which was the day before. And it was turned down. It was turned down because the farm show was that week, and nobody -- no state policeman could get off duty during farm show week. So I had to call my wife, or my girlfriend, and tell her we can't get married. And she said, "Why?" And she's from Philadelphia, she never heard of the farm show. And I said, "Because the farm show's this week." So we made it the following Monday. We got married the following Monday, which was the 23rd of January. And, so you get married, and your making $90 a month, and you have a baby come along, you have to buy diapers and new clothes for the baby, and new clothes for your wife, and it was tough getting along. But she put up with it. So then you go along until your time to retire, now your going to retire on a pension, and knowing what she went through, she didn't have a washing machine to wash diapers with, she did it all by hand, and she had it tough, being a state policeman's wife. So now you're retired and you think, now she's going to take it easy and she doesn't last as long as you do. So it makes you sort of feel bad. But, she put up with it and seemed to like it. We were married 57 years. So she must have liked something.

INTERVIEWER:

She must have liked you...

MR. TROUT:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

...kind.

MR. TROUT:

Well, she put up with a lot. With being married to -- for example, and she made this remark one time. She bought many a wedding present, or many a shower present, but she never went to many weddings. Why? Because if a wedding was scheduled for a certain day, I'd be called out to go on a raid someplace. All of the sudden, you know? They only gave you about a half an hour notice. You'd come on in the barracks -- you're needed for, or be in Harrisburg by 7:00 tonight, you're going on a raid. So you tell your wife, I can't be home tonight, I'm going up to Harrisburg on a raid, and that happened quite often. Quite often. And you come to Harrisburg, you stand around and wait, and then your told where you're going to raid is up in Mount Carmel. So you go to Mount Carmel with another policeman, or a Liquor Control Agent, and you get to Mount Carmel, to the place you're supposed to raid and it's -- no slot machines in there, somebody tipped them off. So, your wife's at home, waiting for you to come home, and -- that was common. It wasn't a rarity, it was common. Yeah, and again, in Harrisburg, when we would -- you talk about the relationship with Harrisburg Police, we would meet at Harrisburg, there, at the State Police Training School -- or barracks, where we were. We had tin sheds, where we parked our cars. And the night before

the raid -- or the night of the raid, all the Liquor Control Board Agents who were going to be active in this raid, plus the State Police, plus the City Police -- because it was a body house, the City Police would be involved. We would all meet out there, get our orders, get our instructions, and leave, and told what time we were going to hit these different houses. And, you stood right beside a city policeman. He might have been a traffic policeman downtown during the day, but during this raid, he's in civilian clothes, see. Same way with the liquor agents. You worked side by side and you went with them, and never any trouble, never any trouble. Never any trouble, not even in to the point of publicity. Because, first of all, we, or I, never had charge of the publicity. I would not be the one to give the newspaper -- it would be the head of the raid, who would give all the publicity about the raids. And, so as a result, our relationship with the local police was always good, same way with the Liquor Control Agents, never any problems, that I know of.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. I think that's where we're going to stop.

MR. TROUT:

Is that it then?

INTERVIEWER:

Well not it, it. I mean, that's it for right now.

MR. TROUT:

Oh.

INTERVIEWER:

I would like to meet with you again, if that's okay. I think that we have a -- we still have quite a bit more to talk about.

MR. TROUT:

Okay, I'm willing to talk.

INTERVIEWER:

Wonderful. I'm willing to listen.

MR. TROUT:

I'm willing to talk. And I think of different things too, you know, as we go by...

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, absolutely, I mean...

[TAPE 5]

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. We are on tape 6 of the Pennsylvania State Police Oral History Project. My name is Shelly

Becker. I'm here with retired sergeant, Harold Trout. And the -- today's date is October 13. We're at the State Police Academy in Hershey, Pennsylvania. So we left off tape 5 talking a little bit about uniforms. Now, we've dabbled on the subject of uniforms throughout the entire interview. I'd really like to focus on uniforms right now. Can you, in detail, describe, first of all, how the uniform would change over time, what your uniform was like when you first came on the State Police and how it changed until you retired in 1966?

MR. TROUT::

All right. The uniform that I first wore consisted of a blouse with a choke collar, they called it. On that choke collar was an emblem. On the right side of the collar was an emblem telling what troop you were in and your number. Mine was E Troop, number 44. That was my collar armor. And it consisted of a whistle, which we wore in our left breast pocket with a chain connected to a buttonhole, the -- a Sam Browne belt, which consisted of a shoulder strap, and a belt around the middle with a -- consisting of rounds of ammunition, and a holster for our .38-caliber Colt revolver. The campaign hat was a -- went unchanged, but one thing about the campaign hat, which I'd like to bring out, is the top of the campaign hat was flat. I bring that out because the Marine Corps had a campaign hat, which was pointed at the top. And I can remember a new recruit, rookie, coming on the force, and he shaped his campaign hat to have a point at the top. And one of his Saturday morning inspections where we always had to lay our hats on the pillow of our bed was a reprimand that this rookie received, because he had -- he has -- he had been training his campaign hat to have a point at the top. And the captain, who was giving it to him, was Captain Annick [ph] who said, "This is not a Marine Corps. This is the State Police." And he said, "The flat -- the top of the campaign hat is round. It's flat. It's got no point to it at all." And I had never noticed that myself until it was brought out there that the campaign -- we had a regular rack, a wooden rack made out of plywood, which we kept. They called it a press, a hat press. We kept that -- our campaign hats in that press to keep the rims from curling up like a potato chip, we'll say, and especially when it rained and got -- and they got wet, they had a tendency to curl. But if you'd put them in your hat press as soon as you came in from duty, you -- the next time you wore your hat, it was -- the brim was flat like it

should be. The -- that was the winter hat, which we kept -- which we wore from -- the summer cap, which we wore from May the 1st until October -- September the 30th. And then on October the 1st, we changed to our helmets, which was similar to the London bobbie [ph]. And we wore the helmet until the end of March the following year. And we automatically changed. We did not receive any orders to change them. We just automatically changed from what -- the so-called winter uniform to the summer uniform. The breeches were the same winter and summer, same weight, and they were baggy around the -- from the calf up to your hips, and from the knee down, they were tight and laced at the bottom. And after you laced the -- your breeches at the -- on the calf, then you would put on a pair of puttees. The puttees were made of leather, and they came in sizes. They -- the sizes would fit your leg. And then a high-top shoe was worn with those puttees. They were worn winter and summer. And the -- for inside wear, we were allowed to remove the blouse and wear a shirt, a black shirt with nickel or zinc buttons down the front and, of course, your emblem of the State -- Pennsylvania State Police on the left-hand -- on the left shoulder. And that was a -- and that was worn with your breeches in the office -- in the inside barracks. And then we had, also, what they call a barracks cap, which was a -- had a peak on the front of it and a little emblem at the top, a wreath emblem with your -- also with your E Troop and your number 44 on that. That was considered a barracks cap. You only wore that in the stables and around the barracks, never out in public. They also issued you what we call a fatigue uniform, which we kept in a locker in the barn or in the stable, which we wore when we were handling the horses, cleaning them up in the morning, and bedding them down at night. We wore these so-called fatigue clothes, or any other

fatigue work that you had assigned to you, which was many times during the course of an investment. You had a lot of fatigue details. Cleaning windows in the barn, believe it or not. We had to -- every so often, we had to go out and clean all the windows in the barn, which seemed so fruitless, but it served a purpose discipline-wise for any -- if for nothing else. Then, after the merger, the -- they did away with the choke collar blouse and issued what we called coats with rolled collars and a shirt -- and a different colored shirt, a gray shirt, with a black tie. And they issued those shirts two times a year. They issued two ties twice a year, I will say, maybe three times a year, three ties every 6 months. They issued our shoes every year, two pairs a year, and six pairs of socks a year. And we supplied our own -- furnished our own underwear. After the merger, then they sent a -- they appointed a special committee, a civilian committee, to make a survey of all the men on the force as to what they preferred over plain trousers or the -- or to remove the puttees. And apparently the -- most men complained about the goatees -- or the puttees, and then they started issuing long trousers for outside wear and did away with the puttees entirely, which was much nicer for summer wear. And along came, instead of a campaign hat, which was made of felt, they issued a straw hat. Now, one thing about the campaign hats and the helmets, they all had a chinstrap, and it was uniform -- to wear your chinstrap under your chin, which is why it was called a chinstrap. But then after they started -- they did away with the campaign hat made of felt, they issued a straw hat, and this was not during my time, but the orders were changed that you could wear that strap down in the back of your head. And I think the uniform lost some of its effectiveness by that chinstrap down around the back of your head, which was similar to the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps

permitted that. That change of uniform took place, as I remember, some time around 1940 or ’41 where they removed the puttees. The campaign hat -- or the London bobbie type hat, the helmet, was not issued after the merger. The only time they issued those helmets was to a detail that was assigned to strike duty or riot duty, and then it was only a temporary assignment. Other than the men who had originally been issued a helmet, they were able to keep their helmets until the time they left the service of the organization or either -- or by military service or by resignation, at which time you turned in your London bobbie hat, and it was destroyed, never to be issued again. With the rolled collar and the shirts, then later on, and I can’t tell you the time that that took effect, but then you were allowed to shed your coat you -- in the summertime where you wore -- only wore your shirt, your trousers, and your Sam Browne belt. And that -- even then, I don’t -- I left in 1966, and at that time, I was doing without the coat. I remember 1963 I was assigned to a Boy Scout Jamboree down at Valley Forge, and we were not wearing our coats at that time. That was 1963. So it must have been before 1963 that they did away with the coat in the summertime. And as we got older, as we -- as the time went on, I’ll admit, the uniforms became more comfortable, however, I can never say, truthfully, that I was uncomfortable in the old uniform, even with the choke collar. It’s something you got used to, I suppose, and you took it as a matter of fact. You didn’t think there was anything better to be available. I can remember coming in off of summer detail in uniform where I had my puttees where my -- the bottom of my breeches and my woolen socks would be soaking wet from perspiration, making it difficult to get the socks off even. But even while you were wearing them, you didn’t realize you were uncomfortable. You knew

that they were wet. You knew they were -- you knew you were perspiring, but you didn't realize any discomfort, as I remember.

INTERVIEWER:

I've heard from others that the Sam Browne belt, especially, made the uniform very stiff and rigid and it was difficult. If you needed to sit down or really move, that -- it was difficult to do so with the Sam Browne belt. Was that...

MR. TROUT::

I would agree to that, to a certain extent. For instance, the holster -- when you sat down, the holster had a pivot on it, and if you did not swing your holster up with the revolver in it and sat down, your -- the holster -- the revolver would hit the chair or whatever bench you were sitting on and push your whole Sam Browne up out of whack. Yes, that would be uncomfortable. We got the -- when we went to sit down, we just got -- made it -- that got to be a habit. You just swung your revolver or your holster up of the -- pivot off the bench. But as far as the belt, yes, the big -- we had a big belt buckle, which after eating a heavy meal, that buckle would be in your way when you'd sit down. But again, it was part of your uniform, and I was -- particularly was proud of the uniform, and I put up with those things. It was unheard of to remove your Sam Browne to sit down and eat. You could remove your hat to sit down and eat, but you never removed your Sam Browne. And I can remember removing my hat in a restaurant and looking up and seeing one of the waitresses parading around the restaurant with my hat on. She had taken it off of the hat rack and was having fun with it, which was embarrassing to me. Of course, I asked her to give it back to me and kept it upon my side, then, while I was in that restaurant. But those things happen. I

can remember down in Louisville, Kentucky in the gymnasium that we were quartered in during a flood there in 1937. One of the nurses that was a Red Cross nurse, who was helping us there, took one of our helmets of -- we -- our uniform at that flood duty was a -- in the wintertime, it was in the spring, and our winter uniform was worn with the helmets. And one of the Red Cross nurses was parading around with one of our men's helmets on. And again, you call it youth, I guess, or whatever. I guess girls are youthful sometimes and devilish, and that's what they were doing. But if one of our commanding officers would have seen it, the person whose hat that girl was wearing would've been reprimanded for making it available to be used that way. It was, more or less, a religious item, I guess you'd call it. It was a -- something you -- it was a part of your uniform, and you were supposed to be proud of every bit of your uniform, which we were.

INTERVIEWER:

How did you care for your uniform? How did you wash it and care for it?

MR. TROUT::

I beg your pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

How did you wash and care for your uniform?

MR. TROUT::

We sent our breeches and our blouses, coats, to the dry cleaner, and when we did away with the coats and we were wearing shirts, your wife or the cleaner, the laundry, did your shirts. And there was a certain crease in the back, which had to be put in after your shirt was laundered. That crease was supposed to be replaced by an iron.

And my wife always did mine. I very seldom sent mine to the cleaner, although sometimes in the summertime, I would come in. It would be soaking wet from perspiration. I would send it to a cleaner to be cleaned with the mechanic -- with cleaning solvents. The shoes you shined yourself. The puttees you shined yourself for -- we had inspection every Saturday morning, and all of your leather equipment had to be shined and in top-notch condition. But again, we had -- especially at our troop, we had a young fellow who admired the State Police, a kid in school, and he would come down on Fridays and shine all of our equipment for a price, that way he was making money. And he would shine all of our shoes and our puttees and our Sam Browne's and so on. And when that happened, we would remove our ammunition from the Sam Browne. I believe we had, let's see, five -- we had two rows of shells, five in each row, maybe six in each row. Maybe six, I guess. So we had 12 rounds of ammunition in our Sam Browne at all times. When we came in off of duty, the first thing we did was unload our revolver and we -- and put -- I would put my revolver in a woolen sock and put the sock and revolver in one of my bureau drawers, leave the holster empty. And the reason for putting it in the sock was to -- it -- your moisture from your hands on a revolver would tend -- have a tendency to rust that revolver, and so you put it in a sock. It kept -- we kept it oiled and put it in the sock, and then we didn't handle it again until we went out on duty in uniform. It was a general order to remove your old shells from your revolver immediately upon coming into your quarters after duty. And that was a safety issue.

INTERVIEWER:

What other types of weaponry were you issued besides the revolver?

MR. TROUT::

That was the only weapon we were ever issued. Now, when I first went on, we had what they called a .38 Special Colt, and somewhere along the line, after the war maybe, they issued us a .38 Colt revolver on a .45-caliber frame, which meant it was a heavier frame than the original. The .38 -- the first .38 that I was issued must have been in use for about 20 years before me. And then a couple years after 1936, they came out with this new Colt on a .45 frame, which made it easier to fire, less recoil, and of course, heavier to carry, but it was a much finer weapon. It was a -- to me, it was the finest weapon the State Police ever issued to any of its men. And then along came these -- the State Troopers Association and some kind of a movement went on for different weapons. Now, when we were issued our .38 revolvers, the man in charge of our ballistics was a man by the name of Funk, John Funk, F-u-n-k, I think his name was. He was a big German fellow. And he was absolutely opposed to an automatic weapon. And his reason was automatic weapons have -- unless they were in tip-top condition would misfire sometimes. A revolver, like the .38 revolvers that we were issued, would never misfire. The -- each time you fired one, it would automatically move your barrel to your next shot. It would never jam. But he claimed that automatic weapons would have a tendency to jam and were used the by the Army, and from that use, he knew that they jammed, and it cost many, many lives, because of the weapon jamming. So as long as John Funk and those men were around, we were -- never even listened to an argument about issuing us automatic weapons. But then later on, after I left the force, they were issued automatic weapons.

They're supposed to be much more powerful, much more effective in case of a shootout with anyone. But I never felt safer than I did with my .38 Special revolver.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Did you carry a baton or a blackjack?

MR. TROUT::

We were issued blackjacks, yes. We were issued blackjacks. We were issued batons. We were told how to use -- we trained with -- using the batons, somewhat. We were told never to strike anybody on the head with either a blackjack or a baton, always hit them across the shoulder or the back where severe damage couldn't be done to their physical -- and it wouldn't show where they were hit. And the batons were made of white pine and it broke very easily. It was a common sight after riot duty or a strike duty to come in with a broken baton and to have to have a new baton issued to you. They always took extra batons. That was part of the horse truck. They always had extra batons in the horse truck in case you broke your baton at a riot. The blackjacks were issued once in your lifetime, and as I remember, I never used my blackjack. Never.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you describe what exactly the blackjack is?

MR. TROUT::

The blackjack was a piece of lead that was a -- it was made of leather and usually woven strands of leather and like a bag with a spring from the lead itself, which was down at the bottom of this leather bag to the top of the blackjack. There was a spring so that when you swung your blackjack, the spring gave, and you had more leverage.

This -- the purpose of the spring was to give the leverage to that weight that -- in the lead. And the blackjack was a serious weapon, I would say, much more serious than a baton. I can only ever remember being present where a blackjack was used, and it was not a pleasant sight to see. After our escapade with that man, we had to take him down to the Harrisburg Hospital. It was just one of those instances, very -- the only one in my lifetime that we had that. And the reason for using the blackjack was we had followed this man from a holdup. He held up a bar room, and we followed him -- his trail to an apartment in Harrisburg. And we went into the apartment. He lived on the second floor with his wife. And we went into the living room. There was a -- the second-floor apartment consisted of the front bedroom, which was now a living room. The middle bedroom was now being used as a laundry room by his wife, and she was in the laundry room ironing her laundry. And then in the back was another bedroom and the bathroom. And we went in to get this fellow, and he admitted that he had held this -- up the bar room, and he wanted to give himself up, but only if we allowed him to have a cigarette before we took him into custody, because he knew he was going to jail. And so -- I didn't smoke, but the fellow I worked with did smoke. He took out is cigarettes and gave the man a cigarette and a match. And the man went out into the kitchen to smoke a cigarette. When it came time that we wanted to leave, he was standing in the kitchen with a flat iron in each of his hands and said, "I'm not going, and you're not going to make me." And he was ready to use those flat irons on each of us. And that's when my buddy pulled the blackjack out. And we grabbed his arms, took the flat irons from him, and he fought all the way down the stairs until we got him into the car. He fought violently, and that's when the blackjack was used. And after

we got him in the car, we figured the best thing to do was take him down to the Harrisburg Hospital for first aid treatment, which he received, and nothing serious happened to him. And then a funny thing about it, later. Later on, I'm in Harrisburg in civilian clothes. We were in civilian clothes when this happened, too. But I'm in Harrisburg down at the square, and I'm with my wife. And some bum comes up and he's asking for a handout. And he looks at me, and he says, "Oh, you're the law." And he turned around and ran. So he recognized me as the fellow that had arrested him before for this holdup. And he remembered me. I didn't remember him.

INTERVIEWER:

And you had mentioned before that you didn't really wear your uniform very often, that you were more often wearing civilian clothing. So can you tell us kind of how often you did wear the uniform? Was it once a month?

MR. TROUT::

No, no. It was not -- it was no regular deal. For instance, every 4th of July, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years they would put in the newspaper that every available state policeman is going to be out on the road patrolling to preserve law and order on the highways. In order to put every state policeman out on the highways, we got in uniform. We were teamed up with a -- what we would call a highwayman, a patrolman, whose regular duty every day was highway work, knew the traffic laws from A to Z. And we only accompanied him to back up and to relieve him from driving during the course of that holiday traffic. That was one time we wore our uniforms. Another time was every once in a while, we would get -- we would call -- what we called a midnight patrol where you would go out on patrol at

11:00 at night and patrol until 7:00 in the morning out in the rural areas of your county, wherever you were assigned. And we were supposed to stop five cars a day, at night, out on each patrol, and record their numbers. In case anything happened in that area during that night, we would have something to go back on as to who was out at that time of the night and where we spotted them. We received those assignments for 2 weeks at a time. One week would be from, you know -- one week at a time. One week at a time you'd go from Sunday night until the following Saturday. And then when you'd come in off duty, when you worked on midnight patrol, you could go to bed. Or, if you were married and living at home, you could go home and go to bed. If you were single, you had to go to bed at the barracks and stay there. That was the midnight patrol. Also, duty -- any duty at the Farm Show was always done in uniform, whether it would be inside -- now the criminal -- most criminal men used to receive what we call the inside assignments, and that was watching for pickpockets or for fights, for unruly people within in the confines of the Farm Show. The traffic men would -- their duties would be assigned to parking automobiles and moving traffic out onto Cameron Street or McClay Street, keeping traffic moving as rapidly as possible. That Farm Show, it was -- that duty was for a week at a time. Now, if you had a riot at a penitentiary, you were assigned a uniform. You never went in civilian clothes. That was always uniform work. Right now, I can't think of any other, but it was never routine. Now, even holidays, for instance, you were allowed to have either Christmas off or New Years off. You could not have both days off. If you were off New Years, of course, you were off. You didn't do any patrolling. If you were not off New Years, then you might patrol with one of the traffic men. And the same way with Christmas. If you

were marked for being off Christmas, you were off. And if you were not assigned -- if you were not off, you were usually assigned to patrolling with a -- and accompanied with a traffic man just to be seen on the highways by the people. And experience said that when a State Police car was seen on the highway, people automatically slowed down. And so that was the theory behind it. And the more cars we had out with policemen in it, we felt, the slower the people might travel. And I might add this while I can, the policemen, the average state policeman would rather have not arrested anybody, because when they arrested somebody for a violation of the law, there was a lot of reports involved, a lot of reports. If they could travel a tour of duty and never arrest anybody, they would have no reports to make out. And so their logic was if people would only obey the law and not make us arrest anybody, we'd be the happiest people. But some people got the idea that State Police tried to arrest people. Well, they did get the reputation, because they used to hide. But in the words of McCartney [ph], our -- one of our commissioners, the AAA and the automobile -- the trucking industry used to say, "State Police hiding were sneaky people." And McCartney's reply was, "They are sneaky people catching -- trying to catch sneaky people," because if the sneaky people saw the state policemen, they'd slow down. But if they didn't see the state policemen, they'd speed out and -- so that was his famous words, and I admire him for saying that. They were sneaky people trying to catch sneaky people. So that's about my experience for uniform. There must have been other times, but any time where -- well, riots or strike duty, we always wore our uniform in strike duty. In fact, you weren't even allowed to take civilian clothes on strike duty. You were in uniform all of the time. Or any place -- any kind of a riot: coalmine riot,

coal strikes, steel mill strikes. The jamborees with the Boy Scouts. Now, 1963, in Gettysburg, there had -- they had an anniversary of the Civil War veterans, where they had some actual veterans of the Civil War present at the Gettysburg battlefield for that celebration, and there were maybe 500 state policemen sent down there to do duty, all in uniform. All in uniform. That was the 100th anniversary of the Civil War -- of the Battle of Gettysburg is what it was, 1863. 1963 is when the celebration was. And then they had a Boy Scout Jamboree down there one time. And they also had a Boy Scout Jamboree down at Valley Forge. And that was in -- that was in 1963, too. It might not have been -- but in those duties, you wore your uniform.

INTERVIEWER:

Since you didn't wear the uniform very often, I wouldn't imagine that it would wear out very fast.

MR. TROUT::

No, I -- my uniform, when I turned it in, was practically a brand-new uniform. I think I turned in a pair of long trousers that -- I don't think I ever wore them, because you had two pairs. And I was the kind I would keep one pair for good, and one pair I'd wear. And the pair I kept for good, I never wore. And then when I turned it in, it was brand new. And even the first uniform that I put on, I think, was a used uniform, but it was in excellent condition until they got -- until I got one measured for myself. We -- they issued us a big raincoat, and I remember the first raincoat that I had issued to me had inscribed inside on the lining "Captain Carlson". Captain Carlson had been a captain on the State Police and retired before I got on, and I was using his hand-me-down raincoat until I got a new one issued to me. And they did issue new raincoats. Those raincoats were made of rubber, and when they issued a new raincoat, they made -- it was a nylon raincoat, and a good, hard rain would come right through. Didn't really -- it didn't really keep us dry, but I remember wearing Captain Carlson's raincoat down in Louisville in a torrential rainstorm, and I was out in -- directing traffic at this intersection in all that rain and never got wet. Never got wet. But I perspired, because there -- under the rubber, you were -- your body didn't breathe. I can remember my uniform would be hanging in my closet with my shoes. I'd come in off of a special duty in Philadelphia and maybe have to stand at inspection for a Saturday morning, something special they were carrying on. And I'd go to get my uniform and I'd have no laces in my shoes, because somewhere along the line, somebody needed a shoelace and knew that I wouldn't be needing mine for a while and came and helped themselves. And the same way with my rounds of ammunition. They would remove

them and take them and avoid polishing their own and use mine for inspection. The hat, I never had any trouble with my hat. I never had any trouble with my blouse, for that matter. It was only with my shoelaces and my ammunition that I had trouble with. Now, they -- once in a while, they would call a -- they would call what they would call an emergency drill where they would bring in men from all substations to troop headquarters in uniform and go through regular drills. And this was right after the war, or during the war, I guess, where they called it civil defense training, and they would bring us all in and train us as a big unit, maybe 50 or 60 men at a time. And at that time, we had to get uniformed. And that's when I would come in on a Saturday morning to put my uniform on and find out I had no shoelaces, because I came in from Shippensburg, which is where I was living. And I would come back for my special duty on Friday with a message there that I had to be -- report at the troop headquarters on Saturday morning at 10:00. So they're the kind of things that you ran into and made it an untypical day. You were lucky to get 4 or 5 hours notice, many times, before you got called on these special details. Yeah. You'd have engagements made to go somewhere with your wife, and a phone call would come to your substation saying we need four men up here at 7:00 today. Well, it's up to the doncom [ph] in charge to find four men, and if you were one of them, if you picked the phone up and answered the phone, you were caught and you had to go up there and cancel what you had in mind with your wife and put that off until another day. But your wives got used to that.

INTERVIEWER:

Your wife was okay with that?

MR. TROUT::

Yeah. Yeah, my wife never -- I don't remember her ever complaining. She would complain, like, for instance about these weddings she was invited to. She said, "I bought many a wedding presents but attended very few weddings," because by the time we got to go to the wedding, I'd be out on special duty someplace and unable to go. But in the meantime, she had already bought the wedding presents. But she said it as a matter of a joke, not complaining, really. But some wives did object. Some wives -- I remember I had a good friend whose wife objected to being alone at night. And she objected so strenuously that he finally resigned from the force and went into something else. And in later years -- I kept up with him. In later years, he never really -- he wasn't the kind of a fellow to complain, himself. But you could tell that he admitted making a mistake by leaving the force. For instance, he didn't have the pension. He did not have the hospitalization insurance that we had. And he missed out on a lot of interesting work. But he had a happy marriage.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. You know, there's that phrase that says, "You're married to your career." You know. And I think that maybe you have to find that balance between being married to your career and also being married to your significant other. Do you think you were able to find that balance?

MR. TROUT::

Well, I think I did. You see, when -- we had to get permission to get married. If -- you had to be single to come on the force to begin with. And you were not allowed to be married until you were on so many years. And then when you decided you had a sufficient number of years that you could be married, you could not go out and get married until you submitted a letter of request to the Commissioner, requesting permission to be married, and if so, I will be marrying such and such an individual, give her name, address, and so on. The last paragraph went something like this: "If this permission is granted, it will, in no way, interfere with the duties -- with my duties as a Pennsylvania State Police Officer." So you made that promise when you -- when they -- if they approved of your marriage. I never really heard of a marriage being disapproved, nor do I think they ever investigated the girls that you -- whose name you had to give. I think it was just a formality that -- they might have given that girl's name what they called a name check in their files. Did they ever have her listed as a prostitute or as a criminal of any kind? But I don't think they ever turned down anybody. I knew one fellow that was -- that married a girl who -- one of his buddies said that this girl was a prostitute down in Harrisburg. And the fellow that he told that to got so mad at him that they became bitter enemies. And he married this girl anyhow, and she turned out to be one of the best wives that anybody -- that I never knew anybody could have. Unfortunately, she didn't live long. She only lived maybe a year or two after he married her, but they sure -- she was a sure a wonderful woman and a wonderful wife to him, even though one of his buddies supposedly told him that she had been a prostitute down in Harrisburg. So when he asked for permission to

marry her, he got the permission to marry her, but the fact that she had been a prostitute never entered into the record.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

MR. TROUT::

So you had to promise that it would no way interfere with your duties, and it never did. I always carried out my duties, went where I was assigned, never complained. On the other hand, in those days, if you did complain, it got you nowhere. And if anything, it got you on what they called the black list. You're -- if you were a complainer, you got the unwanted details, wherever they were, for instance, the Farm Show, turnpike duty. That turnpike duty used to be one of the worst duties a man could be assigned to, and if you fouled up along the way someplace, you know, by your wife complaining because my husband's working too hard, you got sent out on the turnpike to work. That was sort of a place they sent unwanted people. You know. What do you call them? Screw-ups. Yeah, that turnpike detail was one of the most unwanted details there was.

INTERVIEWER:

Why was that?

MR. TROUT::

Because all you were supposed to do, you had an area to patrol. You rode back and forth on that area. You weren't allowed to leave it. You couldn't go off that patrol for any reason. If you went into a restaurant, a Howard Johnson Restaurant, and spent too long in there, somebody would be spying on you and report you. And so you had -

- all you had to do was -- to keep on a good times -- tidings with people, was to ride up and down that turnpike, and if you didn't see anybody doing anything wrong, it was very, very boring job. And you got sleepy. If you pulled off and stopped your car -- it got to a point there were you weren't allowed to stop your car and get out. You had to stay in -- wait a minute. You weren't allowed to stop your car and stay in your car. If you stopped your car on a -- on the turnpike, you had to get out of your car and stand by the front of your car, because the fellows would stop and, in no time, they'd fall asleep. And then what's worse to see but a state policeman asleep in a car along the turnpike. So they sent out an order. If you stopped your car for any reason, you had to get out and stand in front of it. That's hard to think in this day and age that that would happen, but it happened. And that was the general order. That was just not a verbal order. That was a general order in print. And yet, you could have some mighty wicked details on the turnpike. I remember that truck drivers were being murdered. A truck driver would pull off to the side at one of these pull-offs along the turnpike and sleep. And there was a man who would prey on these fellows asleep, come up, and shoot them in the head, kill them, and then take their watches or any jewelry from them or any money from them. And I can remember, in my teletype days, getting a teletype from out around Bedford that this truck driver was still alive, but he was shot when they caught him -- when they come up at him, meaning that the fellow that did the shooting wasn't too far off. And I think, in all, there must have been about eight or ten truck drivers murdered during that -- by that same man. And they finally caught him out in Ohio, because they -- he pawned a watch that he had stolen from one of the truck drivers at a pawn shop in Ohio, and that's what finally led to the police to be able to

arrest him. And he was brought back and tried. And I think it was Bedford County where he was tried. We had another man who just recently died, and he stopped a car along the turnpike, and -- that was his detail. And the -- they had a gun battle. And this fellow, Pents [ph], who just died down in Lancaster, shot and killed the fellow. I say that because in those days, it was unusual for a state policeman to get involved in a gun battle. The criminals seemed to realize or think that if they got in a gun battle with a state trooper, that eventually he was going to be caught. There would be no way of getting away with it, and so they refrained from that. Although, once in a while, there was a shoot-out. And Pents was involved in this one. And that was a long time ago. He just died this past month, a natural death. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, if we can kind of get back to the weapons, I'm interested to know what kind of training you received to use the weapons and how often you had to continually go back to training. Was it once a year or...

MR. TROUT::

We had what we called the semi-annual shoots. The training we took was -- started in training school, actually. And they showed us how to use the weapon. They called it dry firing. You would pull the trigger and fire it without any ammunition in it. We were instructed to do that at every free minute we had in our rooms, to hold that gun up and dry fire and aim it at something. And -- with both right and left hand. It -- up until a time, we're now going to be -- we're in the training school now. Now, they're going to test us to see how good we can shoot. And so they will give -- issue the ammunition, take us out onto the range and have targets up, and then we would fire with our right

hand and with our left hand, both -- what they called slow fire and rapid fire. Slow fire was fire at will. Whenever you felt like firing, you shot it. And you would shot -- you would shoot ten shots at will, whenever you felt like it with your right hand and you've got your target marked. Then you would come back, after you got your target marked. You'd come back and do the same thing with your left hand and fire at will. Then, after you got done that, then they would have what they call rapid fire. Now, rapid fire, you were supposed to shoot your -- each weapon contained six shells. You were to -- you were timed. You were supposed to shoot your -- all six shots within so many seconds, and I can't tell you how many seconds that is anymore, and that -- maybe it was 5 seconds. Maybe it was 10 seconds. With your right hand. And then the same thing with your left hand, what they called rapid fire. And then, after you got done shooting your six shells -- you didn't shoot ten of those. You just shot the six. Now, that was -- now, you had to qualify, and when I say you had to qualify, you had to make the score of anything over 85, we'll say. Now, remember, when you're shooting at a target, you're shooting at a target about 18 inches square, which would be the size of any normal person's chest, maybe, so that if you hit the target ten times, you're hitting that person ten times, if you're a good shooter, so that the -- so you had to qualify. And you're -- the qualifying mark, I'll tell you, was 85 or maybe 90. If you did less than that, you didn't pass. However, I don't know of anybody not passing in our training school. Now, you got sent to your troop, and every 6 months, you had to go out and qualify. If you did not qualify with your shooting in your troop, then, to qualify, they supplied the information -- the ammunition. If you failed to qualify, then you had to buy your own ammunition and practice until the -- you were able to qualify. Once you felt you could

qualify, they would check -- they would arrange for some Saturday morning with a sergeant in charge to go out and show that you can qualify with your shooting. And we had that every 6 months as long as we were on the force. Your qualifications every 6 months.

INTERVIEWER:

Would you say that you were a good shot?

MR. TROUT::

Oh, I never had to pay for my ammunition. No, I never had to pay my -- I never had to buy ammunition.

INTERVIEWER:

Was there a competition among the other men that...

MR. TROUT::

Yes, there was a lot of competition, because we had a pistol team, and you -- and some of the fellows, who, if they were exceptionally good shots, would try to get on the pistol team. Why? Because they liked shooting, they liked going to these shoots with the other police departments out in Camp Perry [ph], Ohio. They would have maybe eight or nine or ten different State Police organizations all competing against one another with revolver shooting. And they liked that kind of -- and they got special privileges. For instance, our deputy commissioner, Jake Mach [ph], when he was in A Troop in Greensburg, he specialized. I say he specialized. He gave his good shooters special privileges so that in order to become a favorite of Jake Mach, you became a good shooter, if you were able to, and get on his pistol team. And he took great pride in his pistol teams. And if his pistol team would come back from a match, they used to

have the matches of interstate police, and then the best of the interstate police would be picked to go to Camp Perry and vie against other departments. And Jake Mach was a particular son of a gun with his shooters. And I can remember Sergeant Kunko [ph] was a very good shooter out there. That's the only one I can remember. We had a fellow here in Harrisburg on our -- he was a very good shooter. We had a fellow by the name of Tony

Narrone [ph] who was a very good shooter, all on the pistol team. We had a clerk down at the training school by the name of Burtner [ph], who was our pistol instructor. We had two pistol instructors down there: Burtner, who was a regular state policeman assigned to clerical duty at the training school, formerly attached to a state trooper in Reading; and Sergeant

Strange [ph], who we were told was a former revenue agent for the Federal Government down in Virginia and Tennessee. And he talked that southern accent. And he was our pistol instructor. Him and Burtner. And I'd say they were good instructors. They were very, very -- they accentuated this dry firing. Stand in front of a mirror and point the gun at the mirror and dry fire, because every minute you can get of free time, you can not get too much practice to keep a steady hand, both right and left hand. And we had to shoot as good with our right hand as well -- with our left hand as good as we did with our right, which didn't turn out to be a problem. The best mark that I ever made was the first day I ever shot. Now, the reason for that is, I say, I was practicing so much that I did everything I was told to do, and especially the first day, because I wanted to do good the first day. And I never shot as good as I did that first day. I think I had -- oh, I don't know what. But I had -- out of -- you're supposed to get

-- 100 was a perfect mark: ten bulls-eyes. I had about 95, and maybe even better than that. And -- but I never made as good a mark since as I did that first day we had in the training school of live ammunition.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you ever have any desire to be on the pistol team?

MR. TROUT::

No, never. Never.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

I never -- first of all, I didn't like to clean my gun. And after every time you fired your gun, you had to clean it. And what you did, you had to ream it out with a solvent with a rod, with a cleaning rod and a little patch of cloth. And then after you got done cleaning it with -- from your -- from the soot that was involved in there, then you had to give it a final treatment of oil, inside the barrel and outside, and then wrap it up in a sock and put it in a drawer. And if I could keep that in the drawer for -- until the next 6 months, I was satisfied. No, I never -- I was never one to go out on the range and shoot my gun.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

I never cared for it at all. That was not my -- I couldn't see any fun in it at all, but some guys do. Some of these pistol men used to load their ammunition. They just craved it.

They made their ammunition, filled it with powder, gunpowder, had their own formula as to what kind of gunpowder to use and made a regular science, you know.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Yeah. We had another man, this Tony Narrone. We had a flagpole out in front of our stables with a round, copper ball on the top of it. And for practice, he'd shoot at this copper ball. And when they finally took that flagpole down, it was full of these holes that Tony Narrone had shot in it. But he enjoyed it, see. That was his -- he -- we had another fellow, that fellow I told you about down in Florida, who wrote me this letter. We'd be out on a job together, and he -- if he'd see a crow or -- out in a cornfield, he'd say, "Stop the car." And he'd shoot at the crow. But then he'd go back in and clean his gun right after. He just liked to see. He liked to see how good he could shoot. He was never on the pistol team, though, but he was -- he just enjoyed shooting at the -- at crows. And then when he'd miss, he'd tell me why he missed. He would tell me that the crow was full of feathers. The body of the crow was very small, and that was why he didn't -- that was why the crow was able to fly away. Yeah. Routine. A typical day's work. A typical day's work. Yeah. He and this -- he and I went out on a case up in Perry County one time in the spring, and we parked the car on a -- in a cornfield because of the snow in the lane. We couldn't get up to the house. We parked the car in a corn field, went up to the house, spent a couple hours talking to the people in the house, and we came out to get in the car. It was around 4:00 in the afternoon. The sun had come out and thawed the ground. And when we went to pull out of the

cornfield, we were mired in mud, and we were -- we both got our shoes, our clothing, and the car all full of mud. We used all kinds of rail posts and all kinds of things to get out of that mud. And when I wrote to him this one time, I said, “Do you remember that time we got caught in the mud?” because it took us about 4 hours to get out of that mud that day. And the people down in the farmhouse never came up to help us. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. I think that’s where we’re going to have to stop for today.

MR. TROUT::

Is that it for today?

INTERVIEWER:

Just for today, yeah.

[TAPE 6]

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. Well, welcome, again. This is retired sergeant Harold Trout. My name is Shelly Becker. This is the Pennsylvania State Police Oral History Project. We’re here on October 29 at the State Police Academy in Hershey, Pennsylvania. This is tape 7 in our series of interviews. So, **MR. TROUT:**, welcome back. I’m glad to be here again with you today.

MR. TROUT::

Thank you.

INTERVIEWER:

It's always a pleasure. In our past interviews, we've gone over a really wide variety of topics. And of course, there's lots of little loose ends that I'd like to wrap up today. Starting with that, in our last interview, we were talking a lot about uniforms, about technology, and about those types of things, things that you wore and used. In -- pertaining to that, you had mentioned earlier that there were gloves that you wore with your uniform. Can you elaborate a little bit about those gloves and what they were like and how you used them?

MR. TROUT::

They were -- I recall them, a pair of dress gloves made of leather, black color. They were not designed to keep our hands warm. They were just designed to make the -- to add to the dignity of the uniform. They were to be worn on all formal occasions: dress parades, inspections, Saturday morning inspections I'm particularly saying, inaugurations, funerals, any church service at all, where our uniform would be worn. The gloves were to be worn with that uniform. When I think back, they never issued us a glove to be worn for wintertime to keep our hands warm. While we did not do much mounted duty, there were times when we would be called for mounted duty at the strikes in the wintertime, but as I remember, we never had gloves that were issued to us for keeping our hands warm, and I can't say that I ever minded it, either. I don't remember my hands ever really getting cold.

INTERVIEWER:

The uniform, in general, it was made of wool, correct?

MR. TROUT::

Yes, it was made of wool, and the uniform, itself, was a very good uniform, well made, tailor made. In fact, we had a tailor to visit us if we would be at headquarters or on substations. The tailor would come. We always were told in advance when he'd be there, and we were to be there for measurement. And when the uniforms were delivered, they would be tried on with the tailor present, and the alterations that were necessary, he would take care of. The uniforms were good clothing, good quality clothing, comfortable clothing, even though the -- some of the men did not care for the choke collar. You got used to that. You didn't even realize that you were wearing a choke collar. The same way with the breeches that fit you around the calf of your leg. They were tight around the knees. When you bent your knees, they didn't have much give to them, but they were neat and comfortable looking on your -- when they were being worn. I still say a troop -- a whole troop of uniformed state policemen made an outstanding appearance, not just for looks but for -- you knew they meant business when you saw them coming. You knew they meant business as one unit. The rodeo where they come on the field at a rodeo mounted, there'd be maybe 32 or 36 men on horseback gallop onto the field in uniform, it made a tremendous appearance to the public. And always the public would respond with an applause and with their satisfaction of their Pennsylvania state policemen on parade, so to speak.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, when I wear wool, it's often a little bit scratchy or very warm and hot, you know. Did you experience that, that it was almost too warm or scratchy at all?

MR. TROUT::

No. Under the blouse, this was before the merger where we wore the choke collar, we would wear a tee shirt underneath. The tee shirt would keep the uniform from brushing up against your skin. And we wore that tee shirt whether it be summer or winter. Now in the wintertime, if you had a light sweater and you were going to be outdoors a good bit, some men would put a thin sweater on under their blouse, but the uniform was made in such a manner that you didn't have much room to wear anything underneath that uniform and be comfortable.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. So you felt that it kept you generally cool in the summertime and warm in the wintertime?

MR. TROUT::

Well, I won't say it kept you cool in the summertime, but it didn't make you unusually warm, either. The only thing I can remember about summertime would be around your legs, because we wore woolen socks. We wore our trousers or our breeches would be tied with laces around the calf of your leg, and then you had high-top shoes, and then you had these leather puttees on. Now that would make your legs warm, so much so that in the summertime, they would perspire, your legs would perspire, which would mean your socks would be wet when they were taken off. And the same way with -- your breeches would be wet around the -- where they were underneath the puttees, and in fact, sometimes the puttees would even be wet from the perspiration. But from the breeches -- from your waist up, you didn't seem to mind it, the heat at all, with that uniform on.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Then after the merger, they did away with the choke collar, and they issued us woolen shirts to be worn under a blouse with a rolled collar. It took several years after that uniform was issued before they would permit you to take your blouse off in the summertime and only wear a shirt and a tie. I don't remember when that took effect, but it did not take effect right away, right after the merger.

INTERVIEWER:

By saying "blouse with rolled collar", do you mean similar to something maybe like you're wearing right now?

MR. TROUT::

Yes, this is a rolled collar, a so-called rolled collar.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

MR. TROUT::

And in comparison with a choke collar that came right up and hooked -- they had a hook here where you'd pull the two pieces...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...of your collar around and hooked it, and then you had your collar ornaments on either side, no tie.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. So it sounds like you really liked the uniform a lot. It had a presence to it where you went when you were wearing it. You know, you felt like you, you know, really made a statement with your uniform. And I'm wondering, since you didn't get to wear it very often, did you wish that you could have worn it more? Did you wish that when you were doing these investigations and things, you were always in plain clothes, do you wish that maybe you could've worn your uniform a little bit more?

MR. TROUT::

I never had a desire to do uniform work, I'll put it that way. I was very happy with the criminal work in which we were doing. When we were on holidays, 4th of July, Christmas, Labor Day, Memorial Day, holidays such as that where we had -- where we

were told to get in uniform, I never minded it a bit. In fact, I was proud of my uniform. But I never cared for uniform work. Strike duty, we wore uniforms. I didn't mind that. Farm show, we wore our uniforms. I didn't mind that. However, I do -- I did prefer doing the plain-clothes work to the point where we had to buy our own civilian clothes. And our uniform was issued regularly by the state, but yet we were willing to pay for our own civilian clothes because of the joy, I guess you would say, or pleasure we got out of doing criminal work.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

When you were working in civilian clothes, people got to know you as a policeman, especially when you were on a substation. People in that town of the substation would know that you were a state policeman, even though you were wearing civilian clothes. I forget the trend (inaudible) driving on now, but when it came time to wear the uniform, on these special occasions, I never minded it. We did it and did it willingly.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Well, another part of the uniform was the puttees, and they're a hard black leather, right, with straps that you would pull tight. Now you had mentioned earlier that they were -- it seems to me, looking at them, that they would be fairly stiff and uncomfortable and hard to move your legs, but when you're riding a horse, you kind of want that. Can you explain that a little?

MR. TROUT::

The puttees were very stiff. The leather itself was about -- as I remember, about a quarter of an inch thick. They had a strap at the top that you tightened against -- around the calf of your leg. The bottom, there was a hook on it where you just hooked -- you just put the hook inside of the holder. And -- but when you were riding a horse, the horses had a tendency to squeeze up against one another, especially when you were forming columns of four. That would mean four horses would be side by side. And the inside horses numbered two and three would be squeezed by the outside horses, the ones and fours. The way they formed these columns of four, they would have you count off in fours, and so each man who counted one would -- that would be his number. He would be number one man, and then two, three, and four. And then the next man would be one again. And so when they gave you an order, “Columns of four march,” you would -- number one man riding would stand still with his horse. Two, three, and four would step out a little bit and pivot on number one man. Now, when the horses become in a lineup of four there, their tendency is to squeeze up against one another. And when they would squeeze, they didn’t know they were squeezing the legs of their riders. They were just trying to squeeze up next to the -- to their joining horse -- to the horse next to them. But what it would do would be -- would squeeze the -- our legs through the puttees, but the puttees served as a shield against the buckles and straps, maybe, and the stirrups on the riding -- on the rider next to you. It got to the point where we would accuse the rider of not controlling his horse, and it was a favorite expression to say -- we would say, “Ride your horse. Ride your

horse." In other words, you ride your horse, don't let your horse do what he wants to do. And of course, we all knew that the horses were doing it themselves. In fact, when I first started to drill at the academy -- at the training school, I always felt that the horses knew the commands better than we did, because when the officer would say, "Fours right with your horses," the horses knew exactly what to do. They didn't -- the rider didn't have any much to do with it other than to just stay on the horse. But again, when they got side by side, there was a tendency for the horses to squeeze up against one another to where the point where it would really hurt your legs, and especially your knees. If your knees got caught where -- at a place where a buckle on the saddle next to your horse would dig into your knees. But the puttees served as a shield for that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And really, when you -- even with the puttees being stiff like they were, once in a while when you were riding in an automobile, if you went to put your brake on, your -- the top of your puttee might get caught on the seat of the car. And you might not get your leg up high enough to put your foot on the pedal, which was something to watch for when you were driving. And that was the only incident about -- the only thing about the puttees about the safety of your driving was that puttee would be -- would catch -- the top of your puttee would -- when you put your leg up, the top of your puttee would catch on the seat and you couldn't get your leg up and -- or high enough to put your foot on the brake.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But they were comfortable. They -- I can't say that they were -- well, I guess you could say, too, when you came in off of duty, I guess the first things we did was to take the puttees off. But it's like everything else. You got used to it and...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Now, I was never one much for wearing a hat. I guess the first thing I would do when I'd come in would be to take your hat off. In fact, some of the men would take their hats off during their driving around in the car, which was against your general orders. If you got caught driving without your hat on by your supervisor, you would pull extra duty for that. You were never supposed to remove your hat. The same way with those helmets. The helmets were hard to -- that's not the word. But, for instance, we were going to Bethlehem -- to Lebanon on strike duty. We had a fellow by the name of Frank Kelly [ph] driving and a Lieutenant

Corelli [ph] to his -- was the passenger. Corelli and Kelly, both Irishmen, never seemed to get along too good. And we were wearing our helmets. We were going to strike duty in Lebanon. And as we got into the outskirts of Lebanon, there was a railroad crossing. And Kelly had to come to a sudden stop because of a railroad train. And when he did, Lieutenant Corelli's head when, I guess, against the windshield and

pushed his helmet down over his head, which to us, in the back seat, we thought it was comical, but Lieutenant Corelli didn't, and he really gave Kelly heck for that, coming to a sudden stop. But the helmet didn't give. The helmet went right down through -- over his head, maybe 4 or 5 inches down over his head and probably hurt Lieutenant Corelli. And Corelli was on special duty in there from Greensburg, and when -- that was -- this is while we were in the training school. And after their -- after our training was over, Kelly got transferred to Greensburg under Corelli. Kelly was one of the first casualties of the State Police, too, in World War II. He was one of the first ones killed.

INTERVIEWER:

So you kind of talked to me a little bit about maybe some rivalry that was going on between the men. Was that fairly common that men would kind of either not get along or maybe have some kind of rivalry where they were trying to outdo each other or anything like that that you experienced?

MR. TROUT::

The only rivalry that I can remember was this old rivalry between highway patrolmen and state policemen. They just didn't seem to get along. They're -- call them short-fused, I guess. I had -- whether it would be highway patrolmen, state police or not, I don't know. But we had a sergeant in charge of your time off, who had been a highway patrolman. And I found out, after working for him for a while, if I wanted a particular day off, a particular Saturday off, on a weekend -- we were allowed every other weekend off. And if I wanted a particular weekend off, I got to the point where I'd say, "I don't want next week off," and by saying, "I don't want next weekend off," I would be sure to get next weekend off, only because -- I don't know. I used to think it was just because I was a state policeman and he was a highway patrolman and he -- and I wasn't going to get what I wanted from him.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

It meant that as long as he and I were on the force together, we just never could seem to get along. And yet I told this story before, I believe, that same man, when he wanted somebody to accompany him on a mission that might be a little bit dangerous, he always seemed to have me go with him. So I might not be fair in saying that about him. I don't know. It's hard to say. He's dead and gone, and -- but when he died, we were still not friends. I mean, we still -- it was almost like a cat and a dog. We just couldn't see eye to eye.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But he had a reputation of holding grudges against State Police, not only mine, and it wasn't only my idea, it was other men's idea, too. That's the only rivalry that I can -- that I was involved in. I guess there were others, too, but...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...that's the only one that I was involved in.

INTERVIEWER:

Would you say that, across the board, Highway Patrol and State Police just did not get along but were still able to get the job done, despite personal differences?

MR. TROUT::

Oh, yes, the -- you got the job done, and you got it done good. If a highway patrolman and a state policeman were out together and the situation became tense, you knew that that man, whether it be a highway patrolman or a state policeman, you knew he was going to be right beside you. There was never a question that he was going to let you down. Never. I can remember a case where there was a highway patrolman -- well, I won't say highway patrolman, I'll say he was a traffic man, and I was called up to the top of a mountain outside of Gettysburg on a Saturday night where there was a mob fight. We got up to the bar room, and sure enough, everybody in there was fighting one another. We went in, two of us, and grabbed them and brought them out, and it was almost like an accented comedy. We had a four-door car. We put -- we opened the back doors and put them in. As fast as we would put them in the back door, they would go out the other side. It turned out, we had about 10 or 12 men we were trying to get in that back seat, and as fast as we got them in there, they would get out and run, and it was nighttime. It was dark. So what we decided to do was keep two of them and take them back to the substation and get the names from the other people, and we went back Sunday morning, then, and got the rest. But it was comical. But yet we knew, that just the two of us, that neither of us had to be afraid of losing the

battle, so to speak, because we were working together, we knew what we wanted to do, and we knew we couldn't get it all done. We did the best that we could and made the best of a bad situation.

INTERVIEWER:

In those situations, it became, rather than State Police and Highway Patrol, at that moment, you were -- it was an actual merge. You were just one.

MR. TROUT::

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

You were all...

MR. TROUT::

Yeah, you didn't -- the reason for -- the way that -- in the substation in Gettysburg, we had two criminal men, maybe six or eight traffic men so that when an occasion like this would be called in, you only had one criminal man on duty and maybe two or three traffic men on duty. So you would take either one of those -- the traffic -- the criminal man would take one of the other men with him, not realizing -- not even considering whether he was a criminal or traffic, because they were all -- we all had the same training. We were all the same people, really. The only difference was that I happened to be in the -- what they called the State Police before the merger. That was the only difference. I still had the same training. The men who came in after me had the same training. So they were every bit as good as I was. It just -- I was -- just that -- one of those quirks of fate that I was chosen to do criminal work because I was in the so-called State Police. And so, on a complaint such as that was where there

was a mob fight, it was more criminal than it was traffic related. And the fact that we had a traffic man to go with me was not because there was any traffic violations. It was just we -- I needed an assistant. But we were all one -- we knew we were trained the same. We knew we had the ability of the same -- as a -- as each other, and no, that never entered the thinking, I don't -- I'm pretty sure, of any of us that one was any better than the other one.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. You were saying that you were trained the same, but before the merger, Highway Patrol had -- you had mentioned that your friend had gone into the Highway Patrol, and he had gone through a different training and different way of going about it than you had done and...

MR. TROUT::

The Highway Patrol had a different training, yes. They were trained -- the Highway Patrol training school had the same subjects, but they were trained differently, and don't ask me how, either. I know, as a state policeman, we were told never to draw our guns, and yet, one of the first things that I can remember, and I guess I'll always remember, was I was riding with a highway patrolman on -- in uniform. We were in uniform. It was on a holiday -- it must have been a holiday, because that's why I was in uniform. And we were chasing a man down over the side of a road for some reason or other, and when we got to the bottom, this highway patrolman had his gun drawn while we were running down the side of the hill. That was not the way we were trained, as state policemen. We were trained not to drawn your gun. The idea was that he could've fallen with his revolver drawn. It could've been fired accidentally. And

he could even have fallen and lost his gun. But mine was in my holster, and I wouldn't draw it until I needed it. And of course, at that time, we didn't need it. The man was harmless. He was just trying to get away from us. But that was the difference in the training. And I don't -- and I really don't know, for sure, whether they were trained that way or not, because I wasn't a highway patrolman. I don't know what their training was, really. I do know that if that same man would've been one of my classmates, he wouldn't have had his gun drawn when we were chasing this man. I'm pretty sure of that, because we were trained not to draw your gun unless you intended to shoot. And we had no intentions to shoot that man.

INTERVIEWER:

Could it be that perhaps it was just him breaking a rule rather than him not being trained...

MR. TROUT::

Well, you see, I don't know if he was breaking the rule or not, because he was going by the way he was trained.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

So if he was trained to do it that way, he wouldn't be breaking a rule. This was right after the merger.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

This was right after the merger.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Okay. Did you happen to talk to him about the incident after it was over?

MR. TROUT::

No.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

MR. TROUT::

I never mentioned it to him at all. When you think back -- well, first of all, we were both privates. I had no authority over him. I had had no authority to say, "You did wrong."

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

You didn't -- he didn't do it the way I would have done it. That doesn't mean it was wrong.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

He did what he was, I guess, trained to do.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Okay.

MR. TROUT::

But no, I never would have told him he shouldn't have done it, because who knows? Maybe, if it would've worked out the other way, maybe he'd have been right and I'd have been wrong for not having my gun out.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Well, kind of going back, if we could backtrack just a little bit, earlier today, you had mentioned that when you wore your full uniform, one of the times that you wore it was "church service". Can you explain that to me, why you would be at a church service...

MR. TROUT::

It was what?

INTERVIEWER:

Church service. Did -- you mentioned that you would be in uniform at church service. Can you explain why that might...

MR. TROUT::

Shelly, I'm not getting what you're saying here.

INTERVIEWER:

Church service.

MR. TROUT::

Church service?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. In uniform at church service.

MR. TROUT::

Why would we...

INTERVIEWER:

Right. Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

If you were on duty Sunday and you wanted to go to church, you could go to -- you were allowed to go to church in uniform...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...sometimes. That would be a reason for being in church. Now, if you were going to a funeral where the funeral will be held in church, you would be in church. Now, when you went in church, you were not to -- supposed to -- you were not supposed to -- wait a minute. You were never supposed to remove your hat in uniform unless you were in church. If you were in a church, you were permitted to remove your hat. If you were

under arms, you were never supposed to remove your hat. That's a military thing, which the State Police abided by. However, if you were attending a church service, you could remove your hat, even though you were under arms. In other words, you had your side arms on.

INTERVIEWER:

Did the State Police encourage the troopers to go to church service on Sundays?

MR. TROUT::

Some did, Shelly, and some didn't. Now, I remember Major Martin, who was our commander at the training -- at the State Police training school. He encouraged very much so to attend church on Sunday. However, this other man, who I was telling you about, if you wanted a certain day off, you made sure that you asked -- that you told him you didn't want that day off. That man specifically ordered his men not to attend church. That was not a -- anything that his commanding -- if his commanding officer would've been approached and told that I was told by my sergeant that I was not allowed to go to church, I think I'd have been within my rights to complain. This man who he told not to go to church, several of his men, in fact, went to church anyhow, in conflict with his order about -- I don't -- they were sent out on patrol and they were not supposed to go to church. They were not supposed to leave their patrol. But instead of that, they went on -- they went to church and attended mass...

INTERVIEWER:

Did he know?

MR. TROUT::

...and didn't hide it. I mean, they made no effort to hide it by saying -- if they had been asked if they did that, they would've said yes, they went to church. But they were specifically told by this one man, "Do not go off of your patrol and attend church." And sometimes, he would even assign a patrol for that man during a church service. He was something. He was something. But Major Martin encouraged going to church. I can't think of any other commissioned officer who really encouraged you to go to church like Major Martin did. But Major Martin did.

INTERVIEWER:

Now, say that that person who was commanded not to go to church and he did go to church and then the commanding officer found out, would he discipline that person? I mean, would that kind of thing...

MR. TROUT::

I don't think he would've disciplined that -- we're talking about a sergeant now.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Corporal. He was a corporal at the time. I don't think the commanding officer, who was John D.

Kline [ph] at the time -- I don't think he would've reprimanded this man, but I believe, in due respects to Captain Kline, that he would've told him, "Use your head a little bit. Be a little more considerate. If the man wants to go to church, let him go to church." But I

don't think Captain Kline would ever have reprimanded this man. If he would've reprimanded him, we would never have known it.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Okay.

MR. TROUT::

I'm talking about a man that -- I don't think there were many like him on the force. He was an unusual man. He -- I don't think there were many like him on the force, although there were others like him. I've heard stories about people like that, but I can't -- I couldn't name it of them.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

This one man that I'm talking about now, when we were on substation, you were not allowed to go home to sleep. You had a bed and a room in your substation, and that's where you spent your night. When you were not off that night, you couldn't go home. You had to sleep at the substation. And so what did you do to pass the time away? You might go, after supper, until 10:00 at night when the substation closed, without anybody coming in or out -- without receiving any phone calls, and so what we would do is have a card game, a pinochle game. We would -- if we had enough players, we would have a -- it usually took three or four men to play pinochle. We would have an outsider who -- a person who was a civilian living in that community would come out to the substation at 10:00, and instead of going to bed, we would sit there and play pinochle. Now, this man I'm talking about, this noncom in charge was off duty, came

by the substation, looked in as he was going by on his way home with his wife and family, and saw lights on at the substation at midnight, so he wondered what was going on. He came in and saw four of us playing cards. He assigned the one of men -- one of the men, who was one of his men, I say one of "his men", a traffic man, to go out on patrol right away, in other words, break up the card game. I was a criminal man and was not really considered one of his men. And so I had nothing done to me. Of course, the card game was broke up, and the civilian went home. Now, this man that he assigned to patrol right away, at -- midnight patrol it was called, instead of going out on patrol, he went home and went to bed. He later told me that on his own, see. But that -- I'm telling you that story to show you what kind of a man he was. Really, he should've disciplined me, too, for the same reason that he was disciplining the other men, but he didn't do it that way, and I couldn't -- I can't explain why, other than -- I can't explain. I'm not going to -- even going to try it right now. But that's the kind of a person that he was. The same man that told -- the same man now -- "I don't want you to go to church on Sunday. I want you to stay on Route 30. Do your patrol. Don't go off patrol." But he also went to church in uniform.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Was playing pinochle at midnight at the substation, was that against the rules? Is that something that really you...

MR. TROUT::

No.

INTERVIEWER:

...weren't supposed to do?

MR. TROUT::

No, nothing that said you can't play -- nothing that said you had to get in 8 hours of sleep before you went on patrol, either. See, this man who was playing cards at midnight was -- he could've gone to bed or he could've been playing cards, or he could've been reading, or he could've been watching television. Of course, in those days, if you didn't have television -- but there's nothing that said that he had to go to bed. It just meant that he couldn't go home. That's all.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

He had a home there, in town, and a wife and kids, for that matter. In fact, one of his kids later became commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. And which one would that be?

MR. TROUT::

Evanko [ph].

INTERVIEWER:

Oh.

MR. TROUT::

Yeah. You know, when this was going on, little Paul Evanko was a little kid living in Gettysburg. But that's just the way this man was. And...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Now, I -- if you were off duty at night -- you got 2 nights a week off. Your night started after supper, at 6:00. You were supposed to eat supper there at the substation from 5:00 to 6:00. And at the end of your supper, you could go home, if you were off duty that night. And you got 2 nights a week off. The other nights, you stayed at the substation. And you weren't allowed to go to bed until 10:00. In case something happened, you were ready to go up until 10:00. At 10:00, we closed the substation and we went to bed with a telephone beside whoever was on duty that night to answer the telephone. He would sleep in the room where the telephone was. So we had 2 nights a week off, and you had every other weekend off. The weekend started at noontime on Saturday and lasted until roll call Monday morning. That was your weekend off. And according to the highway patrolmen, if you had a dirty motorcycle on Saturday morning for inspection, you lost your weekend. The same way in the State Police, if you had a bed that did not pass inspection a Saturday morning, you could've lost your weekend, and often did. Or if your shoes weren't shined or if you didn't shave or if you didn't have a haircut, you lost your weekend for -- we felt, for

trivial reasons. A weekend was a big thing, and to lose your weekend for a trivial thing like we felt were trivial, we felt was unreasonable, but it was part of our discipline. And as a result, we had one of the finest organizations in the world -- or in the country, I'll say, in spite of these little things.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you talk a little bit about the levels of disciplinary action? So, you know, if you didn't have your bed made correctly or your shoes weren't shined, you lost your weekend. Well, what things were more severe that you would be disciplined even more or what things were less? Can you talk about the levels of discipline?

MR. TROUT::

If you were late for roll call, that was considered a major infraction. Roll call was at 7:00 in the morning, and if you lived at home, you were to be at roll call at 7:00 in the morning that next morning. If you lived at the barracks or the substation, they rang a bell for you and got you up at a certain time and you were -- answered roll call. You asked for a -- other infractions?

INTERVIEWER:

Well, what would happen if you were late for roll call?

MR. TROUT::

Well, if you were late for roll call, you -- many times, you would lose a night off. Instead of being off tonight, they'd say, "You'll be on reserve tonight." Sometimes, they would put you on what we used to call stable guard. That was a shift for -- you had it for a whole week from 4:00 in the afternoon until midnight. You were sent over and took care of the horses. And they also had a midnight to 8:00 shift in the morning

for -- from midnight until 8:00 in the morning for the horses where you fed the horses at 4:00 in the morning. That was called stable guard, and you got that many times for being late for roll call. Or you got -- you could get stable guard for maybe any kind of a -- for instance, a man was told to -- we had what we called desk duty. That was the man who answered the phone all day long at the -- in the office. When he came on duty, he would be on duty from midnight until 8:00 in the morning. At 7:00 in the morning, he was supposed to put the flag up. If a man would come in who was not on duty but he'd come in early and this deskman would say to him, "I want you to put the flag up," he would say, "That's your job. You put the flag up." That would be an infraction of orders or breaking of orders, and he would be given extra duty, we called it, for not putting the flag up. Now, it was really the job of the deskman to see that that flag goes up. He was supposed to put it up himself. He would be called in and told, "In the future, you put the flag up. Don't tell someone else to put the flag up. That's your job." However, because the man refused the order to begin with, he had to serve his extra duty, see...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

...even though the man who told him was doing something that he shouldn't have been doing. So it's all -- I would say it's all part of military discipline is what it was. And I don't know. I -- we took it. We liked it. We -- no, I won't say we liked it. We took it, endured it, and tried to do better the next time. I never cared for that stable guard duty. That was a -- one of the most unpleasant duties that you could have, mainly

because you didn't get your nights off when you were on stable guard. You could go home during the day, if you were married and had -- and didn't live in the barracks. You could go home during the day. But then you had to leave at 4:00 to go over and take care of the stables, to take care of the horses. Midnight -- you worked from midnight until 8:00 in the morning and then went home and slept during the daytime, if you were married. If you lived at the barracks or the -- at the headquarters, you had a bed at headquarters where you did your sleeping. In addition to taking care of the horses there, they had you wash three automobiles, because your time spent with the horses was not a full-time job. That was only a feeding job and tying them in -- tying -- and watering them. And so you had time to wash three automobiles. You were supposed to wash three automobiles a night. And again, if you didn't do a good job washing the automobile, you might lose another night off later one, because this -- that would be the first thing a sergeant would do when he came over would be to check your cars to see if you did wash them and what kind of a job you did. So you made sure you washed those cars. Some of the cars we washed would be the commissioner's car. I remember our commissioner, Percy Foote [ph], had a great big Chrysler Imperial, I think it was, a huge car. And it was almost like washing three automobiles to wash that one car. And it had to be washed clean. It had to be taken care of real good, because it was the commissioner's. We had another man who worked down in York County a good bit during the days of muddy roads, and his car, when he'd come in, he would go -- be full of mud, and we had to get all that mud off of -- it was inside and out. And we had to get that cleaned up pretty good. So it's just things you remember back that, at the time, you didn't like it, you know, but when you

think back, you did it, you did the best job you could. And I remember one time at the training school, a man -- he was our ballistics man, and a big burly German fellow, by the name of Funk. And he went out in the country a good bit and brought his car in full of mud one time and asked -- there was another fellow and myself. We were restricted -- we lost our weekends. We couldn't go home this weekend, so Saturday afternoon at the training school was sort of a dull afternoon. Half of the men who were off were home. The noncoms were all out, and this man, Funk, came in and asked if we would run a hose over his car. Well, that's what we did. We just ran the hose over his car. And when it dried, it was just as muddy and messy looking as it was before we ran the hose over the car. But when he looked at it, that's not what he wanted. He wanted it washed, and we didn't wash it. So he turned us in, and we lost the next couple of weekends. We thought he was unreasonable, because we didn't know what was in his mind. When he said, "Run the hose over the car," that's all we did was we run the hose over the car. Now, when I think back, I was only 21 years old, see, I don't know what this man is thinking...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

...when he says, "Run the hose over the car." But I learned.

INTERVIEWER:

It sounds like something I would do. I would do that, too. Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

Yeah. Yeah. He was our ballistics man. He was the man who advised against using automatic weapons. He was a gun expert, and he knew that automatic revolvers -- automatic weapons had a tendency to jam, especially if they weren't cleaned properly. And so, rather than have a gun jam, he advised against having automatics issues to the state policemen. He insisted only on Colt revolvers where each time you shot, the cylinder would revolve and be ready for the next shot. And up until the time I left, that's all we had issued to us was revolvers. And I don't know whatever happened to him. He was on when I knew him, 1936, '37, and '38, and I guess he left when the merger -- right after the merger, he must have left and went somewhere else.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. Well, back to this matter of discipline. I know, from my own experience, my father was in the military, and rather than spankings and time-outs or being grounded at home, for discipline, we had to do push-ups. Like, "Drop and give me 20," kind of a thing. So that's one thing that I would imagine you would have to do, also. Was that -- did you need to do push-ups or run an extra mile or something like that?

MR. TROUT::

We did that -- we did those kind of things in training school.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

But once we got out into the field, so to speak, that kind of discipline was not issued.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

MR. TROUT::

We had smokers. Over by the stables was a -- sort of a congregation point for -- we had our roll calls over there. We would have -- if we were going on a raid, we would meet over there at the stables, and the men would be smoking cigarettes and dropping the butts whenever they felt like it. As a matter of discipline, they would round maybe six or eight of us up and send us over there to pick up cigarette butts.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

That was a form of discipline. Cutting grass for the lawn. We had a swimming pool there. We would be assigned to clean the swimming pool, maybe paint the swimming pool would be a part of our discipline if we got -- did something wrong when we needed to be corrected in some manner. They would -- we would all -- we had one fellow who was late for roll call who was assigned -- the janitor at the barracks was going on vacation. This fellow was late for roll call, so he was assigned to be the janitor for the week while the regular janitor was on vacation. And that was his extra duty. My extra duty was the stables, because we were both late the same day, and we were both -- there were three of us. We three classmates. We were sent up from Hershey -- we were sent up from the training school at Hershey to our troop, which

was Harrisburg, and one of the first weekends after we arrived at the troop, we were given our weekends off. The three of us were off the same weekend. On Monday morning, when the roll call came, there were three fellows that didn't show up. It was the three rookies: Bozack [ph], Trout, and Eely [ph]. Now, I was late, because I was coming from Philadelphia and got sleepy on the way home and stopped along the road to sleep and never woke up in time to get back in time for roll call. Bozack went up to Olyphant to visit his people, and he had an accident on his way home, and he was late for roll call. And Eely, I never found out what happened to Eely, but anyhow, I was the first of the three to show up. And when I got -- when I showed up at the troop, Sergeant Dawson [ph] yelled at me. He was madder than a hornet. He said, "Where's Bozack and Eely?" And he figured because we were three classmates that we were out painting the town red, you know. And I said, "I don't know where they are." And he thought I was lying. But he later found out that I was -- we were -- we all had gone separate ways, and it just so happened that we were -- so I got stable guard for my extra duty. Bozack got assigned to be janitor. And I forget what happened to Eely. But I think that was the last time that sergeant ever gave us -- the three of us off at the same time. Yeah. Old recollections. When you think back, they were comical, but at the time, they weren't comical.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, let's say there's a trooper who -- or private who is constantly late, can't seem to do anything right, never has any weekends off, is always being disciplined, on and on and on. When would it get to the point where they would just say, "Okay. You're out of here. You're fired. You're gone."?

MR. TROUT::

I don't remember anybody ever getting fired. I don't remember -- in fact, there was no -- none of us at the training school who were actually turned down. There were -- 30 of us started and 23 of us finished, but those seven who didn't, they quit voluntarily. Now, maybe one of them was the type you brought, who was constantly doing things wrong. We had one man like that. Yes, we had one man who was constantly doing things wrong. He was assigned to doing unpleasant duties at the training school where he got the idea. He didn't join the State Police to do this, so he voluntarily quit. In other words, they made it so miserable for you that they made you quit. I made up my mind when I went into the training school, from what I had heard about the State Police training, that I was never going to quit. If they didn't want me, they would fire me. And so I put up with an awful lot, because I had made up my mind I was never going to quit. And as a result, I made it. And I'm glad I did. But that doesn't mean that they didn't try to make me quit. I think I mentioned this before where I was grooming a horse, and I was told to clean out the hoofs. And I said, "I did clean out the hoofs." And the noncom said, "You did not." And I said, "I did." And what he was doing was egging me on to get into an argument with him. And I made up my mind then that -- I see what's going on, so I'll just admit that I didn't clean out the hoofs, although I knew, in my own mind, that I did. And I think they did those things in those days. They would take one recruit, student, and pick on him for a week and make it miserable for him, as miserable as they could, in an effort to either harden him for criticism when he gets out in the field, like at a strike where people are shouting all kinds of obscenities to him. Whether they're hardening them for this kind of action or not or just to make

you quit I don't -- I never did know, but we had seven that quit on their own. I never knew anybody who actually was fired, nor do -- I know of one person -- no. See, in those days, they wouldn't fire you. They would give you an opportunity to resign with a -- to voluntarily resign. They would call you in and say, "We are going to either court-martial you, or if you want to be -- if you want to resign, we'll accept your resignation." And so in order to avoid court-martial, you would resign. Now, courts-martial, I don't know of any court-martial. I can't think of any court-martial that I was aware of. A court-martial, in those days, I guess, if it was held, wouldn't be made public anyhow.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

I know of one man who was considered a real good state policeman, did real good work, who was called in and told, "We're going to court-martial you or you will resign," and he resigned.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

Against his will, but he resigned. But he had his time in. He didn't lose anything.

INTERVIEWER:

That may have been some politics more than anything.

MR. TROUT::

That in case -- that case was politics.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

That is a case where a deputy attorney general was not conducting himself like a state representative should've been, down in Philadelphia. This state policeman told about it and this deputy attorney general found out who it was and insisted that he be disciplined. And he was called in and told...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

MR. TROUT::

..."You're going to be court-martialed or you -- we'll accept your resignation."

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

MR. TROUT::

And he resigned.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Okay.

[TAPE 8]

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. My name is Shelly Becker. I'm here with Retired Sergeant Harold Trout at the State Police Academy in Hershey for the Oral History Project. The date is October 29, 2004, and this is tape eight in our series. So **MR. TROUT:**, we just had lunch. It was

delicious and I'm glad you're back. So I -- we still want to touch on some things that you did while you were on duty with the State Police before retirement and I'm interested in knowing a little bit about the types of administrative duties that you've had. You haven't really talked about what you would do once you solved an investigation or criminal case or, you know, what kinds of things would you do after that was over

-- after that field work was over. You would go back to the office and what kinds of administrative duties did you have once you were back at the office?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, after a detail would be finished, so-called completed, there'd be nothing else to do on that particular investigation. I would be told to report back to my troop. So I would go back Monday morning usually, tell the sergeant I'm available for regular duty now. Our job in -- this other job is -- has come to a conclusion. So then he would -- I would just be at his disposal for whatever duties he would need a man for. I would be there what you would call on regular duty, running -- for anything that -- for any reason that he would need a man to go out on a investigation of some sort or -- whether it be strike duty someplace, Farm Show duty; whatever duty he would need. I would be at his beck and call for whatever job the sergeant would have a need me -- of me for. Then that might go on for a week or two, maybe a month, when another assignment would come up. Usually these things came up -- these investigations came up in the detective division, which was right outside the door of the Commissioner. If the State Attorney General or State Department of Welfare would need State Police help, they would go to the Commissioner and tell him we need three men to run this investigation

or two men, whatever it was. Then the Commissioner would tell captain -- the captain in charge of detective bureau that we need three men and we only have two. Well, pull one man from the troop and that's when they would go back to the troop then and say is Trout still -- it depends upon where the investigation might be. So if Trout was still available, they might -- it seemed to be that they would ask for me, for some reason or other. And so if I was available -- even if I wasn't available and the -- and down at headquarters would need somebody, they would send me down and then I would get my orders from the department that was -- let's say for instance Department of Welfare who felt that people were drawing welfare checks and did not warrant the checks and they needed State Policemen to go around and check these different families in the counties, and they would tell me what they wanted. In this one particular case, they would say we do not want you to make contact with the State Police at all on any of the locations where you'll be working. Do -- keep all your lodging in private hotels and report to us once a week about what you find. And so that would be the -- we would go in -- I would go on that investigation and do whatever they wanted and try to help them whatever they were looking for. Try to get the information, bring it back and report to them with a report and then they would do whatever they had to do in their own department for whatever result I was finding. Now when that job would be over -- and sometimes those jobs lasted for a long time. They would last maybe for three, four, five months. And when that job would be over, then they would tell me that's all there is. So then I would go back to my Troop First Sergeant and tell him I'm now back for regular duty, and then he would just put me on his roster and he'd use me from day to day for whatever need they would need.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, you mentioned that you would need to give them a report, and what I really meant by administrative-type duties would be would you go back to the typewriter then and type up your report to them or would that just be a verbal report?

SERGEANT TROUT:

No, no. It would be a typewritten report.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

SERGEANT TROUT:

We -- all of our reports were typewritten...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...and we typed our own. We had nobody to do the typing for us. We typed our own reports and usually submitted them through -- in the case of the detective division Captain McElroy (ph) was the captain. So we would -- make my report up, give it to the captain and then he would do whatever. He would keep a copy for his files I guess and then send a copy to the department that I was working for.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you keep your own files of the investigations that you had done...

SERGEANT TROUT:

I never...

INTERVIEWER:

...when you...

SERGEANT TROUT:

...did.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Some men did, but I never did. I never had the -- they -- I started keeping some reports, but they became so voluminous that I couldn't see any reason for keeping them for the hereafter.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Was there a general format that you had to follow when you were writing up a report?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes. There was a -- what they used to call a From/To, Subject. From Harold K. Trout to Captain McElroy, Subject Water Bureau fraud, Philadelphia. Something like that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. And would those reports often get very lengthy? Did it take you many hours to type them? Were they...

SERGEANT TROUT:

They took -- not being a good typist, it would be common for me to be at a report -- making a report up for a couple hours.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And then the way they got you broke into a case of discipline, for instance, when we first -- we used to have what they called an initial report. The initial report was a quite lengthy report. You were supposed to cover everything you did in that initial report. In case you would be taken off that investigation and a new fellow put on it, he could take over your reports and see everything you did so that he would not duplicate what you already have done, unless he could see where you did not do a thorough investigation according to his viewpoint so that our first initial -- our first several initial reports when we got back to the troop would be scrutinized by the sergeant, the First Sergeant, and he would take a red pencil and wherever he saw a mistake, he would mark it with this red pencil and -- so that your first initial report would come back looking like a baby with measles. It was full of these red -- now you had to take it back to the typewriter to the report room, type it up without those errors and resubmit it. And then he would examine it again and if it was acceptable, he'd accept it. But you got to the point where you were pretty careful before you submitted this report. You would reread it yourself and see if there was any typographical errors or anything maybe that you should not have said that was in there. You reviewed your report to avoid any later aftereffects of it not being accepted by the person to whom it was issued.

INTERVIEWER:

Now did you also submit supplemental materials? Things that you had gathered along through the investigation?

SERGEANT TROUT:

The initial report -- it was called an initial report because that was your report that you made up as a result of your first day's investigation. Any report made after that was called a supplemental report.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But you always referred to that initial report as a -- that was your master file. It was your initial report.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. And as far as supplemental materials were concerned, I mean kind of like matters of evidence. Say there's a document that might indict someone or there's, you know, other pieces of material evidence. That would be submitted then at the time of the final report?

SERGEANT TROUT:

If it was -- if you did not obtain this evidence in your -- the first day you were out on it...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...it would not be included in your initial report. If you had a suspect as a result of your first investigation, you would list that. You would also list witnesses. Any witnesses that you thought would be a favorable witness, you would list. Even if it was an unfavorable witness, you would list them and mark them. They would be considered

unfavorable witness. You did that because -- for the prosecution. The prosecution could then look at your report and see who were good witnesses, what their names were and who might not be a favorable witness, and so he could be guided at going to his prosecution by what was on your initial report. Now if these things were found after your first day, they -- these items would then be included in your supplemental report. We also had a -- on our initial report, we had From/To, Subject. We had an item for suspect and there was no mark for accused. The accused came down at the end. When we finally made a arrest, it would be listed as a -- no longer a suspect. Then he'd be an accused. Many times the suspects were eliminated as a result of your investigation. What might have been a suspect on the first day, after your -- after you spent several days on the investigation, you could eliminate that suspect yourself because of insufficient evidence or something like that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Was there ever a time that you felt that someone had been wrongly accused or was it always very straightforward and if you were accusing someone, you were 100-percent sure?

SERGEANT TROUT:

I can only say this. We had a man on the force who thought that if he could come up with a suspect the first day he was out on an investigation, that would indicate to his superiors that he was doing a good job, and so he got a reputation of no matter what kind of a case he was on, he would always come up with a suspect or two. And then later on in the supplemental reports, he would eliminate them.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

The -- in other words, what I'm saying is he almost manufactured a suspect to make him look good on the first report. That's the initial report -- made him look good. But then back into the succeeding days of an investigation and supplemental reports, he would strike them off as being suspects and it wouldn't show. It just showed according to his records that he come up with a suspect every day that he -- every time he -- every day -- every job he went out on, the first day he would come up with a -- name of a suspect, even though they really weren't good suspects. Yes. We had one man that did that -- notorious for that.

INTERVIEWER:

Did that seem to work for him, that tactic?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Beg pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

Did that seem to work for him, that tactic? Did he move up through the ranks?

SERGEANT TROUT:

I believe it had an effect...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...because he was considered a good man. He later went up in ranks. When I say he was considered a good man, by his superiors.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. So we've just talked about the different kinds of paperwork and things you had to do associated with your investigations, but what about when you were just out on patrol? Say you noticed something going on or you just pull somebody over for a routine check; what kinds of reporting did you need to do for those types of duties?

SERGEANT TROUT:

We -- there were times we would go on a midnight patrol. There'd be always two of us and we were supposed to check -- we had no particular road to travel on. We were told we could go on any rural road that we wanted to in that particular county, which was to be patrolled. The idea was to let the people living in that county in the rural area know that there were State Police back in there all hours of the day and night. If it was in the daytime, we were told to stop and talk to these people, these farmers out in the fields. Say a few words with them just to let them know we were there. Same way at night. If there's a store open, stop in and say hello to them. Now when the stores closed and the -- and after midnight and everything is dark, any automobile that we saw traveling on those roads, we would stop, check their driver's license, check the operator's license, check their tags for authenticity and make a note of their plate number on their operator's license. We -- when we finished that patrol, we would make what we called a daily report and on that daily report, we would put something like this. Midnight to 8:00 a.m., patrol rural roads of Dauphin County. The following vehicles were stopped. We would give the name and the operator's plate number of

the vehicles we stopped. We were supposed to stop -- for each person on patrol, there were two of us usually, we were supposed to stop three automobiles a piece. That would be six. And so on our daily report, we would list the names and the plate numbers of these individuals that were stopped and checked maybe for loaded rifles in the back of the car, which in the rural areas was a common thing where they'd have what -- we called them poachers out hunting deer and -- with spotlights and so on. We would check for alcohol in the cars, beer cans. We would sort of give them an eye scan of their car. If we felt we wanted to look in the trunk, we would ask them to look in the trunk of the car. I remember one time we had a doctor who we -- said he didn't have a key to his trunk and we made pretend that we were going to get a axe and open the trunk ourselves, and then he found the key to his car -- to the trunk. When we opened the trunk, of course he had some illegal whiskey and when I say illegal whiskey, it was a whole basketful of these miniature bottles of whiskey that you could buy down in Maryland, and he had a whole basketful of them and that's why he didn't want to open his -- the trunk of his car. Usually they would open the trunk if we'd ask them to open it. We'd look and see what's in there and I don't really remember finding anything myself, other than that whiskey. One of our men found loaded rifles in the -- behind the upholstery of the back seat, which turned out that they had been out shooting deer that night and those -- they're the kind of things we looked for. But usually our patrols were routine. In those days, we didn't have drugs like they have now and they were just usually routine stops. If they -- if they only had one headlight, we would issue a little ticket. They called them in those days a PT-10 form, which meant that they would take their car to a garage the next day, get the license -- get the

headlight fixed, and then the garage owner would sign this PT-10 card and he -- the driver then would put that back in the mail and it would be sent into the barracks. When the PT-10s arrived back at the barracks, they would be issued to the -- or given to the officer who issued them and then he could correct his records that that defect in that automobile had been taken care of. Same way with brakes. If we felt the brakes were faulty or fenders rusting so bad that they were falling off the car, which was illegal, we would issue some kind of a notice for them to get that repaired within 24 hours. And the idea of the patrol was just to let the rural people know that we were out there checking their areas; looking for chicken thieves, any kind of a thief where they might be stealing porch furniture, garden hoses, wheelbarrows, anything that would be suspicious. Now we had one man in our Chambersburg substation who patrolled Route 11 and he was so observant that if a new car was parked at an area between midnight and 4:00 a.m. in the morning, he would know it was a strange car. He would stop and check that car, take down all kinds of information; license plate numbers, description of the car, and make a note of it so that if anything happened during that night unusual in the case of a crime, he would have that car to check and find out who was operating it and what they were doing at that time of the day. He had his road so well marked in his own mind that he could tell every time there was a strange car parked along there, and he was an unusual man. But there were others that did the same thing maybe on a lesser scale. They patrolled these areas so much that they could almost tell what cars should be there and what cars should not be there. That was one of the advantages of assigning people on the same patrol time and time again. Now in my case, I would draw midnight patrol maybe once every three or four

months and I remember this one time we were -- it was during the war. One of the things we did when we finished our midnight patrol was to appear down at Middletown at the depot when the traffic was letting out and we were supposed to direct traffic for -- this was during the war when the traffic was very heavy down around Middletown. And after the traffic was died out, then we were allowed to go in and sign in off of our patrol. But that was usually around eight or nine:00, even though our patrol actually ended at 8:00. But during the night then we just patrolled all around the rural roads and if we saw any life anyplace, we would stop and talk, let -- just let -- just to let the people know we were there. If we didn't stop and talk to them, they would have no way of knowing that we just went by.

INTERVIEWER:

Did people ever get angry because they felt like they were being stopped for no reason? I mean, I know that these days when you're stopped, it's because you've done something wrong.

SERGEANT TROUT:

No. The -- they -- I can't remember anybody becoming openly objectionable. Inwardly they might've -- say well, what are you stopping me for. But...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...I don't remember that ever really happening.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

We were -- first of all, we were instructed to be courteous to all drivers and that's the way we approached the car. We did it in a courteous manner that we're doing this for your own good or for the good of maybe others. Maybe we feel your car is not safe to be on the road, especially one headlights and in fact they -- many, many times they would thank us for stopping them. Many times. If we saw somebody in distress, somebody at nighttime with a flat tire, we would stop and help him. Shine our headlights on his car. Maybe get out there and direct traffic with our own flashlight away from that vehicle that's having a problem with their tires. We were out there to serve the public and that's what we tried to do.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Now when you would say find a case of illegal whiskey in the trunk of somebody's car, you would confiscate that. Correct?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

And then you would just turn that into your troop commander after the...

SERGEANT TROUT:

We would turn...

INTERVIEWER:

...(inaudible)?

SERGEANT TROUT:

...that into our quartermaster with a report that it was there and it would be attached to our report that we gave this to the quartermaster. Now he had what we called a evidence room where he kept these things locked up and -- until needed for court. When it was needed for court, then you had to get a special request from the District Attorney that they needed this evidence in court and we would take that out to the quartermaster and then he would then turn it over to us to deliver to the courtroom.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. Since we're on the subject of patrolling and things, I know that for a while, there was only the one-way radio where they would call out to you and then you would need to go to a telephone. But you were still on the job when the two-way radio came, so how did that make a difference in your position or did it at all?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, let's see. See, I wasn't patrolling when we had the two-way radio...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...very much. Now I -- we did have midnight patrols where we would be out on a -- in a two-way radio car where we could talk back and forth to our base station only for receiving instructions, like for instance Car One -- Harrisburg Car One, there's an accident on 322 North, three miles north of Duncannon. So we would go up there. Now if we only had the one radio, they would call over that one radio -- call your station. We would call the station by telephone and they would tell us on the telephone that the accident is up on 322. So it made a difference in that way. We

could talk back and forth to our base station right from the car, which would mean we could get to the area -- I can give you one example. We were on midnight patrol in Enola when the bank alarm went off and we got a call over the radio that this alarm had gone off at this bank. They gave the name of the bank in Enola. And within about two minutes of them receiving that call from the bank attendant, we were there at the bank, and he couldn't get over how fast we responded. But it just happened we were there when we got the call over the two-way radio. It turned out it was just a -- one of those malfunction alarms that went off. There was no effort to enter the bank. But see the alarm went off, which sounded -- which made -- one of the bank employees who was responsible for answering that alarm, he came down to the bank and he just got there when we got there. It was that quick. But they were -- that was unusual, too. It was just -- we just happened to be there at the time we got the call.

INTERVIEWER:

But the two-way radio did make things go a little bit smoother?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Oh, yes. It...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

That was a good improvement for the State Police was this two-way radio. However, there were dead spots. There were spots where a car could be and would not be receiving his call from his base station. If he was down in a hollow in a wooded area, it was -- they were considered dead spots there. He couldn't receive nor could he

broadcast out. There were times when a trooper would be -- would not respond to his call and his answer would be he must've been in a dead spot and didn't receive a call. But you got to know -- you -- a man on patrol in an area -- in a substation area would get to know where the dead spots were and they would try not to be in that dead spot too long. Maybe just to pass through. And maybe if he went through a dead spot, he could call his base station and ask if there's any calls for him. That happened. I don't know if they've ever rectified that or not. With these new improved radios, I got the idea that those dead spots were being eliminated. It was -- a lot of times it was because of the location of the tower that the base station was using and sometimes it was faulty equipment on the cars. Yeah. The radio -- the two-way radio was a great improvement.

INTERVIEWER:

As far as changes go with the State Police over the years that you were on the job, can you think of overall changes that you thought were very good changes, like affected your job in a positive way? And then maybe touch on some changes that you thought might -- didn't really help or might be more of a change that you wouldn't have done if you had been in control.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, right now I find that a difficult question to answer, but I remember in the days of reporting the fact that we had to make up our own reports was a task. It took a lot of our time to make up a report. I can remember being out on a job in the daytime, come back at 5:00 and sitting in the report room until midnight typing up reports maybe on my own time. But the report had to be in by 8:00 the next morning and if it wasn't, you

might get some extra duty someplace because that report, what you did the day before -- the First Sergeant wanted to know the next morning what did you do. What was the outcome. And he -- and the only way he would know that is in your report. And so that was one thing we disliked to do. We disliked typing up -- but now later on we find out that there's an improvement. I really don't know what the improvement was because I wasn't around when the improvement -- but I believe they got -- people who could do the typing themselves and maybe the report was maybe made on a tape by a Dictaphone or something to that effect...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...and a -- that a regular typist could type up the report saving the officer's time of making that report up. Oh, I can remember many a time making these reports because again, it had to be -- you weren't -- you -- they taught you typing at the training school, but they didn't make you become proficient at typing at the training school, and so your typing ability was limited and you learned by experience to make up a decent, intelligent looking report before you handed it in. And so you might go through three or four times of ripping it out of the typewriter and doing it over again on your own rather than to submit it with all these erasers and so on. So I believe that that was a big improvement that has been made since I was on the force was the typing of the -- preparing of the reports. They've changed the reporting procedures too, I'm told that have been streamlined, we'll say. We used to make up a -- what they called a daily report. Now the daily report was very simple to make usually. If you

were doing Farm Show duty, you made up one report every day you were there and all the report -- it was a regular form and you just filled in the columns. One would be time of departure and time of arrival. 8:00 a.m. or midnight to 8:00 a.m., patrolled Farm Show complex. That's it. Turn it in. Sign it and turn it in. Each of your daily reports had a number. Same way if you were on midnight patrol. Of course on midnight patrols, we had to put these three plate numbers on of operators that we stopped. But it was a very simple report. The big reports were those initial reports and supplemental reports that took so much of your time. Now if you made an arrest and you took a statement from the person you arrested, usually a confession, you would take him to the barracks, substation, wherever you were, sit him down at their desk and write up this confession. Now after you write it up, he told it, you would sit there and type it, give it to him to read and ask him to sign it then. But you had to type it up yourself. You had nobody to type it up for you. So you might spend two or three hours there with your suspect taking his statement, typing it up and then have him sign it. And then when he signs it, you take him to a Justice of the Peace and have him notarize it that it was signed by this man and that it is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. But we had to do that all ourselves. We didn't have any person who would do the typing for you.

INTERVIEWER:

So that sounds like it might have been one of the things that you liked the least about the job, typing up reports. Will you tell me maybe what you liked the absolute most? Was there one thing that was just the best thing that you did on the job?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, I thoroughly enjoyed these investigations we had in Philadelphia. The reason I enjoyed it was I had no reports to make. The senior man made the reports. I had no reports to make at all. We were away from headquarters. We were on our own. We did as we pleased, as long as we accomplished what we were supposed to accomplish. We had no inspections, no what we call emergency drills which we had to attend. We were just away from headquarters altogether on our own. We were our own bosses and the only thing we were expected to do was make a thorough investigation of the case we were on and submit the report as to what we found. But again, that was done by the senior man. Now he would -- the senior man would maybe spend a day back at his headquarters, which was in the detective bureau in Harrisburg. He might spend the whole day there typing up his report and I might be off that day at home.

INTERVIEWER:

That's nice.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But -- yeah. The thing there was that I had no reports to make. He had -- the senior man had the responsibility of submitting the report and justifying what we were doing. And each investigation was so different that when one investigation would be over, we would go on a different subject altogether, different goals in mind, and then even after that, I was sent up to -- this was an investigation formed by the -- what they called the Joint State Government Commission, where they wanted a State Policeman to

investigate these welfare frauds. And my territory was from Maryland to New York, from Lancaster to Altoona and I was on my own. I don't even remember submitting reports for that, other than verbal reports. I had that for about six months where I never went back to the barracks, my headquarters, for six months. I was like a -- I don't know what you would call it, out there by myself...

INTERVIEWER:

A nomad. Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...to the point where I got stuck in the snow up above where -- Williamsport on my way to Coudersport and I had to call the Coudersport substation. And I was told not to contact any of our substations, but I had to call them to find out if they could come down and get me out of the snow. It turned out they couldn't get down -- well, the road I was on, they -- the road was closed. They couldn't get down on it anyhow and told me to -- they couldn't help me. What I'm saying there is though I was not supposed to contact any State Police instillations. What I was doing was supposed to be on the QT from everybody. That night, I went -- I walked back to a farmhouse that I had seen when I had passed where I saw a light in there, and I had a feeling I was going to get stuck in the snow so I measured the distant where I got stuck from where that house was and it was one mile. And I walked back and turned out that he was a State Forrester and his wife living there and he had a four-wheel Jeep where he come up and pulled me out and told me where I could go down to the nearest town there and get a room and stayed there the night. The next morning, I got up and the snow had melted quite a bit and I was able to get out on my own. Those kinds of jobs is what I

liked a lot, maybe not necessarily because of the lack of reporting because lots of times I did have some reports to make, but I enjoyed the work. I enjoyed -- to me, it wasn't work. It was -- I enjoyed what I was doing, even to the point where I didn't ask for vacations, and I knew that -- I was told -- I was led to believe that if I didn't ask for my vacations, I couldn't make them up later on. It turned out later on that I was able to make them up. But they're the things that -- you were allowed 15 days a year vacation. If you didn't take it, you were -- they said you would lose it. But really in reality, it wasn't so. If you made the proper request, you could get your vacation made up and what they called -- I found that out through one of these deals. The Commissioner had a right to request executive leave over and above your -- in other words, if I lost my vacation one year, I could make it up the following year if he requested to the governor's office I'm told executive leave for this person and -- which they did for me and I got my -- I got all my vacation days made up. But according to your Commanding Officer, he was not allowed to do that. He couldn't do that on his own. You had to -- don't ask me what channels I went through to find that out, but remember Wilhelm was my boss and he saw that I got all the time made up for me.

INTERVIEWER:

He probably favored you because you had done such a good job.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Beg pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

Probably because you had done such a good job.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, I don't know that I did a good job, but I will say that I was conscientious with what I was doing. I tried my darnedest to do a good job. Whether I was successful or not, I don't know, but I like to think I was. I know in the case of Colonel Wilhelm, he was very considerate. He -- you could go in and talk to him, sit down near him across from the desk, tell him what you did, tell him what you want and if he was able to do it for you, he would do it. Many of the fellows wouldn't even think of going that far to sit down to talk with Colonel Wilhelm. They were sort of afraid of him. But I didn't find him to be that kind of a man. You could talk to him. He'd listen to you and he would do what he could for you. The only time he -- the only time -- and I think I mentioned this before when he told me don't get involved. He...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...wouldn't let me do what I wanted to do. He said don't get involved.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And they were good words of advice...

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...even to this day.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay. Well, in 1966 then you retired from the State Police. So after you -- well, I guess we should even talk about first, was that a mandated retirement? Was that completely voluntary? How did you go through the process of retiring?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, I'll give you the reason I wanted to retire. I had -- we had a new Commissioner who did not believe there was such a thing as experience. He was famous for saying that I did not have 20 years experience as a State Policeman. I had one year's experience 20 times. And so my experience to him was worthless, was not worthy of promotion. I took an examination for promotion to lieutenant and I -- at the end of the examination, the standings came out and I was 102 on a list for a promotion. So I thought well, 102 -- in the meantime they established policies of veterans' preference, race and gender and I could see 102 on a list for promotion was not in my time. The Commissioner was going out giving speeches in front of Rotary clubs, Kiwanis, Lions talking about what a terrible organization the Pennsylvania State Police was and how much they needed good positive leadership like he was going to give. His experience was Chief of Police of St. Petersburg, Florida before he became Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police, and I felt along with a lot of other considered old-timers at that time with 28, 29 years service that he was not worthy or he was not capable of criticizing the Pennsylvania State Police as he was doing in front of these

organizations. And so it made me not be proud of a State Policeman. It made me regret that I was a State Policeman and I started to think of retirement. I had -- I was coming close to 30 years experience, far down on the list for a promotion and thought that I was still young enough, I was 50 years old, that I could go out and get another job if I left the State Police. And so I told one of my cohorts on the force at the time if I could get a job making -- earning $50 a month, I could -- I would retire because with my State Pension and my State Police Pension, we had two pensions at that time, plus $50 a month, I thought that I could exist out in the world. And he came to me a couple weeks later and asked me if I would still consider leaving the force if I could get a job making $100 a week and I said yes. So he could arrange for me to get a job making $100 or thereabouts with the Racing Commission that was just starting up in Pennsylvania. The head of the Racing Commission was a former State Policeman by the name of Ralph Gardner and because of Ralph Gardner being a ex-State Policeman and a friend of mind, I was almost assured of getting this job with the Racing Commission. And so I talked it over with my wife about retiring, told her what I had in mind and she gave her consent by saying anything you want to do about that is up to you. Well, I said this to her maybe about eight or ten times asking for her -- I wanted assurance from her that it was all right with her for me to leave the State Police and retire. Finally I was telling my boss that -- Captain Bonboy (ph) that I was going to retire and I'd been telling him maybe for two or three months that I was going to retire but I didn't tell him when. Finally one day, he and Major Pizent (ph) called me and said are you still going to retire and I said yes. He said when and I said well, I haven't decided yet. He said well, we ought to know because if -- when you retire, we're going

to need somebody to take your place. Well, I said when do you want to know? Well, he said whenever you make up your mind. So I went home that night, sat down and we ate supper, went into the living room and I sat down, my wife was there, and I leaned back and said Rose, what do you think we ought to -- I ought to do? She said about what and I said about retiring. I said the captain wants to know. She said, oh, for God's sake, I don't care what you do. Well, I made her mad because of all the times that I'd been saying that to her. I finally made her mad and she responded by saying I don't care what you do. I made up my mind that night. I went in the next morning and told Major Pizent and Captain Bonboy I was leaving. So that's what led up to my retirement, mainly because I was dissatisfied with our new Commissioner, I was dissatisfied with 102 on the promotion list and I could get a -- two pensions. We had a -- at that time, we had a -- what we called a State Police Pension, which was set up to pay me 50 percent of my pay, and a State Retirement, which was also 50 percent of my pay. So theoretically, I could retire on 100 percent of my pay, which was $8500 a year at that time, and still draw $100 a month from the Racing Commission. But as soon as I turned in my request, I had -- my request to retire and for my figures on what I would get for my pension, the word leaked out to another friend of mine who was a security director for a department store chain. He did not want to approach me until I had really made up my mind about leaving because he didn't want to be the -- he didn't want to feel in his own mind that he encouraged me to leave the State Police. And so when he found out that I was -- really made up my mind, he came to me and asked me if I'd consider working for him. In the meantime, the State Police were investigating my character. Mind you, I'm a member of the State Police, but because I

was applying for a job with the Racing Commission, the State Police had to investigate my character to see if I was worthy of working for the Racing Commission. And so they came out to my neighborhood and asked my neighbors about what kind of a person I was and so on. They finally submitted a favorable report for the Racing Commission. So I had that to choose from, either the Racing Commission or this job with this other department store chain. I decided to go for the job with the department store chain and left the State Police. It wasn't long after that the one pension plan folded up, the State Police Pension folded up and we no longer got that pension. So I was there -- I was drawing a salary from the department store chain plus 50 percent of my -- on my retirement, State Retirement.

INTERVIEWER:

Why did you choose the department store chain over the Racing Commission?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Beg pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

Why did you choose the department store chain over the Racing Commission?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Let's see. That's a good question. All right. The Racing Commission was something like this. As I remember, the racing would be taking place at -- Pocono Downs was one place, I think someplace down around Philadelphia another the part of the year and another part of the year out around Uniontown or Washington, Pennsylvania or in the Pittsburgh area, out that way, which meant I would be moving around all those different areas depending upon where the races were being held. That didn't suit me

too good. By going to work for the department store chain, I would be doing a lot of traveling because they were a division of Lane Bryant and Lane Bryant was opening up these stores all over Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Virginia, and so that -- my job would be going -- visiting these stores in those areas, but would only be maybe two or three days a week that I'd be away from home. And the -- it was more of a reliable kind of a job rather than the Racing Commission. The Racing Commission would've been a totally strange job for me. My job with the department store chain would've been in security what they called and shrinkage control and it just seemed to be more of an interesting job for me. It turned out to have been a good choice because I later became director of this -- of that security. I was considered an executive with the company and they also made a pension plan for me and paid me well. They paid me -- because of that I was able to put my one daughter through college on my State Retirement money. I didn't need my State Retirement money to live on because I was living on this department store salary.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

So it turned out to be a good move. I also became eligible for Social Security by working for the -- because as a State Policeman, we were not eligible for Social Security. So because I worked -- because I chose to work for the department store chain, I became eligible for Social Security.

INTERVIEWER:

Now immediately after you retired, did you keep very close contact with the people you had worked with at your -- did you stop in at the troop or at the headquarters to just say...

SERGEANT TROUT:

I never...

INTERVIEWER:

...hi...

SERGEANT TROUT:

...went back to the State Police. I kept in contact with the men I worked with by becoming treasurer of the State Police Retirees Association. We had reunions every year and so I kept in contact with the men by being the treasurer for that association and kept active with them until just a couple years ago. But I never went back -- my reason for not going back to the troop headquarters and substations, the new men didn't seem to be very congenial. As a retiree, they didn't seem to want to be to talking to you. They just didn't make you feel at home and you'd ask them for help -- for instance we had a convention up in Erie and one of our retirees called a substation and asked for the road conditions between Hazleton and Erie and they said we can't tell you. You have to find out on your way out. In other words, there was a time when an active State Policeman would go all over backwards to help a retiree, but all of a sudden these troopers would -- didn't see any need or willingness to assist a retiree in

any way. And so it just made it feel that you weren't welcome at the -- and I never went back and still don't go back.

INTERVIEWER:

But you did feel a sense of camaraderie with the other retirees...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...and became...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...part of their group.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And even now, we have get-togethers of our -- the Harrisburg -- people that worked in the Harrisburg area, we get a -- we have a breakfast every Wednesday morning, which when I'm able to, I attend those breakfasts. All you do is just sit around and tell old stories and laugh at one another and kid about what happened in the past and share the news of the -- what the retirees are doing with one another.

INTERVIEWER:

If you could do it all over again, would you still be a State Policeman?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Without a doubt. Without a doubt. I would encourage any young man to seriously consider joining the State Police. It's a good job and it was a good job then and I understand it's a better job now even because of the improvements they made. Salary-wise -- a couple of things I'm sorry to see go away was the living together as we did. We ate our three meals a day together. We slept together. We took our showers together. We shared one another's woes and good times and -- but when they did away with living at the barracks, I think they did away with a part of the morale of the State Police because from what I hear now, the morale is not like it was when we were there. But we ate Thanksgiving dinners together. We ate Christmas dinners together. We worked together. We just did a lot of things together and -- but I -- it's still a good force and I would recommend any young fellow to look into it to see if they could make the grade, and I'm proud that I was. I take a lot of pride in -- they used to say you don't have to ask a Texan where he's from. He'll tell you. And I feel the same way. You don't have to ask me if I was a State Policeman. I'll tell you I was a State Policeman. I -- and I'm proud of it.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, we want to thank you so much for being a part of this project. You've been a huge part of the heritage and history of the State Police. It went on for 100 years and you were there for 30 of it, which is a sizeable amount. You were a big part of that

history and, you know, we really, really appreciate you sharing everything that you have with us.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, I certainly enjoyed this experience of relating my experiences and all the people who helped me to do this. Major Einsel (ph), Lieutenant Rodney, Lieutenant Manning and you have made it a very -- and Mr. Sullivan has made it a very, very pleasurable experience for me.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

One I'll never forget.

SERGEANT TROUT:

All right. Well, thank you so much for being with us.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Maybe next ten years I'll come back and tell you how good this has been.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

SERGEANT TROUT:

No. It's been a great experience.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, good.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And that's it, do you think?

INTERVIEWER:

You know, I think so. I mean, unless we do another review of the tapes and, you know, I might give you a call, but...

[TAPE 9]

INTERVIEWER:

Welcome. My name is Shelly Becker. I'm here with Retired Sergeant Harold Trout at the State Police Academy in Hershey, Pennsylvania. This is the State Police Oral History Project and -- with MR. TROUT. This is tape nine in our series and the date is February 17, 2005. So MR. TROUT, do I have your permission today to record this oral history interview with you?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes, you do.

INTERVIEWER:

All right. Well, thank you very much for being here. It's a pleasure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

You want to watch her, too. You want to watch her.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Beg pardon?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

You want to watch her. Look at her.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Look at her?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Right.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Oh. Is that different?

INTERVIEWER:

No. Uh-uh. Just like last time.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Did I always talk to you?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. You did.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Oh.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

She asks the questions.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Thank you.

INTERVIEWER:

So MR. TROUT, it's been a while since we last met, I know, but we're going to kind of -- we had talked on the phone about some other things that you wanted to mention and, you know, there were some other things that we probably needed to go over more in

depth from your previous interviews. So I guess we can kind of start by talking about -- I mean, we're probably going to jump around just to different subjects here, so -- there was a subsistence -- a chunk of money that the State Police would give you. Can you talk about that a little bit?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you...

SERGEANT TROUT:

I would like to, Shelly. Sometime around -- after 1939, sometime during '39 or 1940, the department came out with a ruling that if a married man assigned to a headquarters, Troop Headquarters, lived at home he would be subject to receiving a subsistence fee of -- they set it at $40 a month. Now in order to collect that $40 a month, you had to eat all of your meals at home and sleep at home if you lived within three miles of the Troop Headquarters. The reason for the three-mile limit was that if you were needed in an emergency, it wouldn't take you long to respond to that emergency at Troop Headquarters. Now if you were a -- if you were transferred to a substation, you automatically lost that $40-a-month subsistence, which was one of the reasons why the men, once they got accustomed to receiving this $40 a month and lived within Troop Headquarters' distance, they did not want to be transferred to a substation where they would lose that $40 a month. However, that $40 a month was not accountable as income. In other words, if -- for us stationed in Harrisburg, the IRS determined that that was not income to be taxed and therefore when we prepared our

income tax returns, we did not include that $40-a-month subsistence. However, any State Policeman assigned to the Philadelphia Troop area, the IRS in the Philadelphia area determined that it was income and was taxable. But yet when the department -- when the State Department -- when the State Retirement Board based their pension -- your pension funds, they did not include that $40-a-month subsistence. You were only -- received a pension based upon your official State Police salary, which at 1939 was $90 a month. Then it raised to $100 a month and then to $110 a month, with a $10 increase each year. Now then later on in the days of the Commissioner Frank McCartney, they changed that ruling and included your subsistence as part of your salary, which meant that when you retired, your pension was based upon your salary as a State Policeman plus the $40-a-month subsistence, which enhanced your retirement after 1966. Now when I retired in 1966, I had about one year's experience with that new increase, with that -- with your salary as a State Police and your subsistence being included so that my pension when I retired in 1966 was based upon my subsistence and my retirement. Now that would -- that brings me around to the cooking. Troop Headquarters -- at Troop Headquarters in Harrisburg, we had two cooks. The one cook had been a chef at the Penn Harris Hotel and was a excellent cook. The other cook had been an Army cook -- was also an excellent cook, but they cooked in two different ways. The chef from the Penn Harris Hotel who was a black man prepared food in a different way, more gourmet-type food, I guess. The Army cook prepared good food, but it was mass. It was -- he made good apple pies, he made good spaghetti and meatballs, whereas the chef from the Penn Harris, he prepared fresh ham. He prepared delicious Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

dinners, including celery and olives and pickles and anything that he would serve at the hotel. Now out on the substation, the substation cooks in my experience were -- at Gettysburg we had a retired farmer and his wife who ran the substation and they received a blanket sum of money from the State Police every month based upon the number of men they had assigned to that substation. In Gettysburg, we had about 10 or 11 men. So you had to eat all of your meals at the substation or you paid for your own at home. Now if -- and this also held true at Troop Headquarters. If you were not on subsistence at Troop Headquarters and you were out on a case and you were not home or you were not close enough to return to the barracks to eat, you were allowed for breakfast -- 35 cents for breakfast, 35 cents for lunch and 75 cents for an evening meal. Now there were occasions that if you were not able to eat a meal -- evening meal for 75 cents and it went over that, you would ask for a receipt from the restaurant and turned that receipt in and the state would reimburse you -- the State Police would reimburse us for whatever we ate for that evening meal. But there might have been a lot of questions asked, why weren't you back in time and so on. Out on the substation, if you were out on a case and you did not get back in to eat your lunch or evening meal, you also submitted at the end of the week, it was done on a weekly basis, your receipts or your vouchers, your expense vouchers for your meals that you ate away from the substation. Now in case of Gettysburg, the food was so good that we made every effort to get back to eat there. They would have country ham, home-cured ham. They would have things like corn pudding. They would have bacon and eggs for your breakfast. They would have all -- these would be fresh eggs because the farmer would raise his own chickens. He raised his own hogs. He raised his own vegetables

and the wife would prepare them. She even would can peaches for the winter and that's the way we ate at Gettysburg. At Chambersburg, it was an older man and his wife that ran that substation, which also had about 12 or 15 men there and they ran a restaurant. In addition to feeding us, they fed professors from Wilson College and from the Penn Hall School, which was a girls' school right across the street from our substation. Wilson College was right down the street from us and it was a common thing to have eight or ten women professors eating at the same time that we were eating. And of course you have eight or ten State Policemen around a table talking about what they did in the morning and eight or ten old women who were professors at a girls' school listening. At times they would chime in with some words of wisdom or advice. I'll give you a shining example. We were eating one day at lunchtime when the front door opened up and also we were running a substation there, which we had an office to receive anybody coming in so that if the front door opened while we were eating lunch, it was up to one of us to find out who came in to see if it was somebody looking for State Police or not. So the one fellow leaned back and saw this old lady come in and he turned to us at the table and said that some old lady just came in. Well, when that old lady came in, she stopped at the head of the table and very graciously bowed and said I heard what you said. You said an old lady. He said I did not. I said a nice old lady came in. And so she laughed. She took it as it was. But that was -- it's just an amusing little thing that I remember at the...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...Chambersburg station. And they -- and she did feed us well and at the substations, they made the beds for us. We were up -- to clean our own rooms, keep our own clothing on hangers. At Troop Headquarters, we made our own beds, changed our own linens and also it was up to us to keep our closets in order. The first sergeant would make a tour through the barracks every morning around 9:00 and anybody who had left the barracks and the bed was still not made, he would hear from him when he came back on duty. At the substation, it was not that way. The girls used to come in and make our own beds for us. Now did I say about the Philadelphia area? Yes. About the IRS...

INTERVIEWER:

Taxing.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...taxing? Yeah. I did say that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But that's about it for the substation and the -- now some of the substations -- for instance I remember I had a friend who was stationed at a substation in Coatesville and his substation at Coatesville was in a YMCA. The substation at Likens (ph) out of Harrisburg was at the Likens Hotel. The substation of ours at Gettysburg was an old house built before the Civil War and it was used as a inn for many years right along the

old Lincoln Highway. It had about eight or ten rooms in it and a large room for the dining room, and the substation at Chambersburg was just an old house where they added a wing to it to accommodate like a dormitory for six or eight beds. I forget how many were in that. And then upstairs, we had three bedrooms where we slept where the phones were in each room, and if you were assigned to duty all night long, you slept in a room where the telephone was and it was up to you to answer the telephone. That was usually assigned by the corporal or the person in charge of the substation as to who slept in the room with the telephone at night. The substation at Selinsgrove had been a undertaker's home at one time and I believe that building is still standing. It has great big white pillars in front of it as you enter Selinsgrove on Route 15. So that -- the substations throughout the state were all kinds of buildings, homes, usually an old home, usually a large home, usually a -- the one down in York, for instance, was a big old 1890 mansion. It was -- with three floors on it. That was the one at York. That was a large substation. Of course the Troop Headquarters at Harrisburg, before we moved out there, the State Police Troop E was the Harrisburg troop and their Troop Headquarters was at the corner of 18th and Herr Street. After their merger in 1937, they closed that building down and moved all of the State Police business out to the old Highway Patrol Training School at 20th and Herr and that was our Troop Headquarters for years afterwards for the Harrisburg troop and that was named Troop A. They dropped the Troop E and called it Troop A and it was called Squadron 2. It was also the Squadron 2 Headquarters. We had on the same property as the Highway Patrol Training School were the State Police stables where the State Police maintained their horses and above the stables was a indoor firing range that they used

for practicing their revolver shooting. One wing of the stables was turned into a garage for automobile repair work and lubrications and so on, maintenance of automobiles, whereas the other side still kept the stalls and they had stalls on either side for about eight or ten horses on either side. At the most, we only ever had about eight horses there at Harrisburg when I was on.

INTERVIEWER:

I'm kind of interested to know how these substations came to be. Did the State Police pick them and ask those people to have a substation or did the people ask the State Police to have a substation?

SERGEANT TROUT:

I don't know for sure, but I can give you my feeling how that was. First of all, it was decided at Regimental Headquarters where the substations would be most feasible. They tried to have a substation in each county. For instance, the Chambersburg substation would be for Franklin County. The Gettysburg substation was for Adams County. We had a Likens substation, which would be for Dauphin County, but we also had a substation at Duncannon, which was right up the river from Harrisburg. Probably would be considered Perry County. Then after they decide they wanted a substation in a particular county, then they would choose the seat. The -- it would usually be in a -- and/or near the County Seat. Now in Gettysburg, the County Seat is Gettysburg naturally. Our substation was about three miles west of Gettysburg on the old Lincoln Highway. At Gettysburg as far as I know, we never had horses. At Chambersburg they had horses, but the horses were kept in a stable downtown. They were not kept near the substation. If they decided to have a substation at Gettysburg,

they would probably announce through one of their politicians, a representative, as to who in your district would be interested in running a -- in housing ten men or eight men, however many they were going to have there and at what charge, and it was probably done on a bidding basis. If somebody would bid low, they would receive the bid, and then it was up to the sergeant in charge of that substation or corporal to keep headquarters informed as to the service. Whether they were being fed good, whether they were being housed properly and I believe that they -- if there was any complaints like that, they would first take them to the operator of the substation with a complaint in an effort to bring it up to par or they would arbitrarily change and have someone else take over. I don't remember in my experience that ever happening. The -- I remember we had a substation up at Duncannon it was called along Route 15 where they had well water and the well water was the cause of one of our men contracting yellow jaundice I think it was considered. They traced it to the well water and the State Police immediately withdrew that -- all of the fellows from that substation and got a temporary location for them in another location. This was at a motel. The one that developed this well water problem was at a motel. Small in a way compared to some motels today, but it was a motel. It was used for housing tourists traveling along Route 15 and Route 11. That's the only substation that I ever heard of being changed because of not being able to provide good service to the men. The cost of -- when we were in the training school, the cost of maintaining the Troop Headquarters in Harrisburg where the men at -- there at the Trop Headquarters -- this was before the merger -- cost the men -- cost about $15 a man to feed those men and because we were assigned to that troop, although we were eating at Hershey, we had deducted from our

pay every month $15 a month to help pay for the mess at Troop Headquarters. But we did not have to pay for any of our meals that we ate at the training school. If -- the men assigned to Butler, if it cost $18 a month to feed the men out at the Butler Troop Headquarters, any man assigned to us at the training school who were assigned also to the Butler Troop, they would have to pay $18 a month because the rate of pay for the mess was based upon the average cost per man to feed that substation, and we never really missed the money. Our pay was $90 a month less 15. That gave us $75 a month to spend what we needed, which wasn't very much because they fed us and they clothed us and the $15 amounted to candy and ice cream once in a while from the canteen.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, minus taxes, too.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Beg pardon?

INTERVIEWER:

You would have to take taxes away from that remaining 75 as well, wouldn't you?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, Shelly, at that time, believe it or not we did not pay income tax. No. We -- I can remember when they imposed income tax. They imposed income tax during World War II to help pay for the war and this might be contested by some of the old fellows, but they promised us when we -- when they started to withhold or when we started to pay income taxes that when the war was over, we would get all this back. They would cut off the income tax, which they never have. That's one of those political deals. But

-- yeah. I remember when they first told us we were going to have to pay income tax. It was during World War II.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you remember -- I mean this is a little off the subject of the State Police, but do you remember what the percentage was then?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Of income tax? I...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...have no idea.

INTERVIEWER:

No? Okay.

SERGEANT TROUT:

I have no idea. It wasn't much. No tax is large to begin with. No. It wasn't much. Amounted maybe $100 a year. Something like that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

No. It wasn't very much. Yeah. As much as I liked Franklin Roosevelt, that was one of his deals and they said we'd get it back. I won't say they said that we'd get it back, but they said we wouldn't pay it anymore after the war was over and I -- that brings back a memory after -- this was after I was doing civic duty. I was making a collection for a fire company and I remember going to a businessman asking him to contribute and -- to the fire company, and his answer was he'd be glad to contribute because he said if they put it on a tax basis, he said they'll put the tax on us and they'll never take it off. He said they never take a tax off once they put it on, and that was way back when and he's proven right many times since.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

So he gladly gave a voluntary contribution in lieu of a tax.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I mean, we're kind of talking a little bit about benefits and that sort of thing and I know that in previous interviews, you mentioned that you didn't really receive medical benefits. But I'm wondering, say you were injured in some way when you were at the training school when you're doing jujitsu or leapfrog or you're -- say you're just injured. What kind of medical care did the State Police provide for you?

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, good care.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

We had what they called a State Police doctor and even after the merger, we had a State Police doctor. His name was David Johnston, who was a very good surgeon, a graduate of Jefferson Medical School in Philadelphia and he was our doctor for our wives. He was our doctor for the men and a good doctor and at no cost to us. We didn't pay him anything. I was injured in the training school and they took me up to the Hershey Hospital at that time which was in the community building and they fixed me up and I never paid anything for it. Somebody paid it, but I never did. When a man would be injured on the force and couldn't perform his regular duties, they always found some kind of a duty that he could perform instead of firing him or instead of putting him in a home. For example, I can quote about Corporal Bloom (ph), who was shot by a bank robber in Shamokin and -- resulting in him being paralyzed from his waist down. Corporal Bloom naturally couldn't perform his duties as a State Policeman, but they transferred him to Hershey and they put him in charge of the mess at Hershey so that he prepared the menus, worked with the cooks, hired the cooks, fired the cooks, ran the mess at Hershey at his regular corporal salary on the State Police. I remember a man who was directing traffic out in the Greensburg area who was hit with an automobile and had a very badly injured leg, where the doctors in Greensburg wanted to amputate the leg. This Dr. Johnston that we got saw that that man was transferred from Greensburg to Harrisburg where Dr. Johnston could keep a constant watch on this leg and as a long result when I retired, this man was still

operating on two legs, could dance, could carry on a normal life as a State Policeman because of the care he received from Dr. Johnston. Now what that -- what involved -- what some of it involved was a regular trip to the University of -- to the Jefferson Hospital once or twice every week for many, many months to have this leg treated. It finally saved this leg of Haymore's (ph) and it didn't cost Haymore a penny. They did provide while he was recuperating a job, so-called a desk job that he could handle where he didn't have to go out in the public. He did not have to put on a regular uniform with side-arms and so on, puttees and so on. He had a -- what you would call the indoor barracks-type uniform. But he was able to answer the telephone and perform the indoor duties in place of a able-bodied man at full salary. He never -- they never cut his salary and it didn't cost him anything. So while we did not have officially what is known today as medical care, the State Police always took care of the men. I can remember cases of Highway Patrolmen -- one fellow who was our -- in charge of our mess at Troop Headquarters after the merger lost a leg riding a motorcycle, and instead of him being taken off the force, off the Highway Patrol, they provided an indoor job for him. Another man lost his hearing in the Highway Patrol. He was assigned to the Quartermaster's Unit in Harrisburg. I never knew of anybody being fired except maybe through alcoholism or something like that. I can remember them being discharged for that, but never for being injured or he -- too sickly. I can remember a man who had something wrong with his stomach or intestines or something where he could only drink a certain kind of cream and they provided that cream for him and he drank it every morning because I remember this glass of pure cream, and he was doing duty as a Highway Patrolman or as a traffic man for as long

as I remember, but they never took him off a -- off the payroll. They provided -- they found some kind of a job that he could do and do good. So while it was not officially known as medical benefits, they did take good care of us and again, there may be somebody like my age maybe who could tell you a story contradicting that, but that is my impression.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

I never had -- even when a man killed on duty -- I can't say for sure, but I know we as a group of men got together and formed an organization where if one of our men got killed for any reason, whether on duty or off duty, if he died and had a family, we all chipped in $3 of our pay and -- to a fund. It was called an Immediate Relief Fund. And as -- when that was all collected, it would be immediately taken to the man's widow to help her defray expenses. Now what she got from the State Police or from the state, I would think she would come under the Workmen's Compensation, the same as any other worker. But yet I can't say that for sure because I never knew the -- never had any experience like that. But as a State Policeman out working, I never felt for a minute that if I was killed that the state wouldn't take care of my family. I never even gave that a thought, to tell you the truth. I just assumed that they would be taken care of and I never heard of a case where they weren't taken care of. Now today, I read in the communicator where somebody was killed and they're taking up a collection to help defray expenses. In our day, we didn't do that. We just felt that the expenses were being taken care of by the department. Maybe they weren't. I don't know.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. You kind of mentioned earlier that, you know, even while getting into the State Police, you had to be in near-perfect condition.

SERGEANT TROUT:

You had to be a what?

INTERVIEWER:

In near-perfect condition. You know, your...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...physical health had...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...to be well. You had to, you know, have all your arms and legs and...

SERGEANT TROUT:

And all your teeth. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. But then if something were to happen to you while you were on the job as far as disability is concerned, you are still able to keep that job. There were some instances that you've told me of before where people were fired. Now when I was speaking to Mr. Grooms (ph) in the previous interview, he spoke directly about Court Marshal. But I would be interested to know how before this -- all this Court Marshal thing went

about, you said that people were just fired without even a Court Marshal. Can you describe that a little bit or talk about that at all?

SERGEANT TROUT:

As -- I can only speak from what I heard about Highway Patrol because I was never in the Highway Patrol.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But the old-timers that I knew in the Highway Patrol said that the corporal in charge of the substation had the authority to fire one of his men if -- for a reason. What would be a reason? Let's say -- they took a great pride in their motorcycles. As I remember them talking, they cleaned them for inspection every Saturday. They had to be spotlessly cleaned. Now if they had one man who was sort of a sloppy person and would not polish and would not have his motorcycle looking that clean, one Saturday, he'd be reprimanded. The second Saturday, he might be recommended -- reprimanded a little stronger. The third Saturday, he might tell the corporal go to hell. That meant he could be fired and he would have been fired, from what I hear. They would have been fired. You couldn't talk back. You couldn't swear at a non-commissioned officer. If you did, he had the authority to fire you. I don't know of anybody who was ever fired for that, but I remember the stories being told. I remember a -- one of a -- one of -- this was after the merger. One of our men was caught fishing in a place called Paradise. It's up near Bellefonte where they -- famous for their trout fishing up there. And this place called Paradise was a place you could

go and pay to fish for trout and you were guaranteed almost that you'd catch a trout fish in there, there were that many fish, but you were supposed to throw them back in for future fishermen. Well, this fellow and another fellow, one was State Policeman and the other one was a civilian, were caught fishing in Paradise one night after dark. Well, he was not Court Marshaled. He was plain fired by the State Police.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And I remember you asking Major Grooms would they go out and get another job. Yes. He immediately went out and got another job for the -- with the Bell Telephone, and the job he got was collecting money from the tollbooths, making rounds, you know, every once in a while and empty the coin boxes from the Bell Telephone, and that was his job and he just recently died and he died after retiring from the Bell Telephone. So even though he was fired from the State Police for doing something like fishing, which was against the law -- it was against the law to do that and he got fired for that without a Court Marshal. In those days as I remember, State Police didn't Court Marshal too much. Now when I say he got fired, again, he might not have been fired. In those days, they would say you're going to be Court Marshaled and fired or you can resign.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, in this case, the man resigned. When I say he was fired, I'm using that word loosely. He resigned. He wasn't actually fired. But he would no longer -- you could -- he could no longer remain a State Policeman after being caught doing that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. That's interesting.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But many times, they would go out and get another job. A State Policeman had a very good reputation. If you were good enough to be in the State Police, almost any other organization would hire you, regardless of what you did, thinking that they could correct -- if you had a -- let's say you had a weakness of drinking. Maybe the other outfit that would hire you would think that they could get you away from that drinking habit. It might be a -- I remember another fellow was on the State Police and he was stationed up at Munsey a -- with a drinking problem. And right after I got on, he left. He wasn't Court Marshaled, but he left under -- he didn't want to leave, but he -- they made him leave. And he immediately got a job as Chief of Police at Coatesville, Pennsylvania, even though he had a reputation of being an alcoholic.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And he got in trouble at Coatesville and lost his job there. We had two men -- I might have mentioned this before. Sanut (ph) and Gunderman (ph), two State Policeman

who were questioning a suspect I believe out around McConnellsburg just before I came on the job. It resulted in him dying. The question -- the fellow being questioned died, and they tried him. Margiotti (ph) was the Attorney General and Margiotti insisted they be tried for murder and they did try them for murder and found them guilty. The one fellow, I don't know what ever happened to him. But the other fellow came back into this area and turned out to be an alcoholic. He did get a job as Chief of Police at Shippensburg for a while and lost it because he was spending too much time in the barrooms and his excuse for being in the barrooms so often was that was where he could obtain information about lawlessness and so on, which didn't hold water with the township -- or with the Shippensburg town fathers and lost his job there. It turned out that he finally died in Harrisburg from drinking too much wine.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

I think I might have told the story before, but...

INTERVIEWER:

Uh-uh.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Did I tell you about Margiotti? He would have a habit of bumming money on the streets...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...of Harrisburg and every once in a while, he'd go up to Margiotti's office and bum money from him and Margiotti left word with his secretary whenever he comes, give him some money and get him on his way. And he'd get that money, go back downtown and buy some wine. Ended up sleeping the night under either the Market Street Bridge or the Walnut Street Bridge with the other alcoholics.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And he died that way.

INTERVIEWER:

It's a sad fate for someone who used to be a fairly prestigious State Policeman.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

It's a complete turnaround. You wouldn't really suspect something like that would happen.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Well, they blamed his drinking -- they -- his -- the fellows that knew him blamed his drinking as a result of this prosecution by Margiotti.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

They said they -- he hadn't drunk before. I would take that with a grain of salt myself because I don't think a fellow starts to drink because of one occasion like that.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum. Yeah. Along these same lines, I guess there's just one last thing. When someone's injured, like we were talking about, there's certain duties that they can do that will allow them to still work on the job and you had mentioned that a trooper's duty at headquarters was usually working at the governor's house. Can you kind of go into...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Say that again...

INTERVIEWER:

...a little more depth...

SERGEANT TROUT:

...again, Shelly, please.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, the -- a trooper's duty at headquarters...

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

...would usually be to do some kind of a post at the governor's house.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Some of the -- that was one of the drawbacks of being assigned to Troop Headquarters.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

For example, if you got sent to a substation, you were immediately -- you were the only one there to investigate any crime committed in that county where you were assigned. That was your job to investigate that and bring it to a conclusion. But if you were assigned to Troop Headquarters, you had assignments such as bodyguard for the governor at the governor's mansion. They also had a job for a State Policeman at the governor's office at the Capitol Building, which was a eight-hour-a-day job, even all night long. They had a governor's office -- they had a what they called a regimental guard headquarters -- at the headquarters, which went from 5:00 at night until 8:00 the next morning, where you could -- would be assigned. If the Electoral College was being convened as a result of a Presidential Election, you were assigned -- you could be assigned to attend this Electoral College, and what you did there you just stood around in uniform and looked official is all you did. Once in a while, they would have special details. I mentioned this before about bank runs to Philadelphia with a State Treasury Department representative. You would be assigned to that job. I had a job where I was accompanying civil service examination papers to Erie to guard them that nobody would tamper with them and get the -- or get the questions. I had that job. I

also had a similar detail to Philadelphia with the same thing. You were assigned -- if there was a -- you were subject to a lot of special -- what they called special details out of the Troop Headquarters. Now they also had a couple of old-timers who were considered very good investigators. If you had a serious kidnapping case or a serious bank holdup, they would assign these jobs to one of the older men. When I first came on, we had a bank holdup at Milroy and in those days, they kept you under surveillance pretty good up until 3:00. They figured 3:00 was the time that the banks closed and the bank holdups would happen before three. If you didn't get a bank holdup, after 3:00 then they would relax your duty. You could go -- maybe go a little further away from headquarters. So I was on duty one day and we got a call to go up to Milroy. Well, when I got to Milroy, I met the corporal in charge of the Lewistown substation whose -- who -- Milroy was in his district and he was the one to investigate the bank robbery. All I went up there for was to look for the bank robbers who were supposed to be hiding out in a field out near the river. So my job was to go tramping through the grass. That was all I did about this bank robbery. See being assigned to Troop Headquarters, he could call headquarters and say I need a couple of men up here, and so they would send a couple of men up and -- however, the actual job of investigating the bank robbery was up to the man in charge of the Lewistown substation, the State Policeman. So as a result of being assigned to Troop Headquarters, you did get an awful lot of special duties. Governor James had a daughter who went back and forth to Lancaster a good bit and I got the job of driving her down to Lancaster a good bit. Considered to be a bodyguard for the governor's family, you know. Major Adams went on vacation one time and at that time, there was

somebody plaguing Harrisburg with house burglaries. And Major Adams didn't want his house burglarized while he was away, so they sent two of us up to spend the night at Major Adams house all night long. And details like that. We were on many raids of bawdy houses and gambling houses throughout the whole Central Pennsylvania area. We would go to Shamokin, Mt. Carmel, Sunbury, Williamsport, even over to Schuylkill, Pottsville on raids, special raids because they had

-- headquarters always had more men than the substation. It was a -- an unusual affair, but it happened. I'd be stationed at Gettysburg and I'd have a date to go out with my wife that night when at 5:00, we'd get a phone call from headquarters. We need two men up here to have a -- go on a raid. So I'd be sent up to Harrisburg to go on a raid and my wife would go to the movies by herself, which she wouldn't do.

INTERVIEWER:

Speaking of that, free time, I caught from a previous tape that you mentioned something about wood shavings in your basement and I was thinking could this be some kind of hobby that you had and if so, how were you able to have any hobbies or did you have hobbies with such a busy schedule? I mean, how difficult was it to balance, you know, free time and work time?

SERGEANT TROUT:

I didn't get the first part of your question, Shelly.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I thought I heard from a previous interview that we did that you said you had wood shavings in your basement.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Wood shavings?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Yeah. Did you say something...

SERGEANT TROUT:

I don't remember that, but I did have a hobby of refinishing antiques.

INTERVIEWER:

That must've been it.

SERGEANT TROUT:

My wife would go to a sale and buy an antique. For instance, I remember she bought a -- she -- this was called a dough train (ph) and it was painted and so she wanted it refinished natural. Well, what I did, I was stationed at Chambersburg at the time and I took it out to the substation and whenever I had any free time out there, I'd work on it. However, if I got a call to go out on a duty, I'd have to go -- I only did it to keep from twiddling my thumbs. Now some people read. I was never much of a reader, sorry to say, when I was on substation. But I liked to fondle things. I liked to refinish furniture and I'd take it out there and I could find more leisure time to sit there and just sand and sand and sand and sand until I had it down to where I wanted it. So that's how I spent some of my spare time at my -- on a substation. Now at Troop Headquarters, you couldn't do that at all. If you had any free time at headquarters, one of the -- Major Keller for instance was a great one for saying -- he'd gather up three or four or five men to go out and play volleyball and you couldn't turn the major down. If he said let's

go out and play volleyball, you went out and played volleyball instead of staying in the barracks and playing cards or whatever your past time in -- at Troop Headquarters. There was time on substations where you did -- well, I can remember -- I'd mentioned this coming up this morning. They had a serious trolley car strike down in Philadelphia where they -- from previous experience, they turned out to be very, very bad, malicious. And so as a -- to prevent anything like this from developing, they called an emergency gathering of State Policemen and we were gathered in various places; some up in Bethlehem, some down in Philadelphia at the Troop Headquarters, especially up here in Harrisburg. We were all called in from substations to Harrisburg to stay for maybe a whole week during the -- until the strike was settled. Well, while you were in Harrisburg just waiting for this -- to be called, you had nothing to do. They didn't send you out on any details. You just stayed there. Well, a lot of the fellows played cards. At nighttime like I said before a couple of us would sneak away, leave word with somebody who's standing by at headquarters, we'll be down at the theater. If you call us, call us down at the theater. So we would arrange when we went into the theater that if we got a phone call, here's where we're sitting, and they'd come down and get us. And it was only a precaution. We were never really called, but they knew if -- where we were if we were -- now one night while I was there, I happened to be sitting right behind a man and a woman

-- man and a girl, it to turned out to be, and I observed this girl acting very peculiarly. She got up in a bitter way and left very rapidly and I suspected something was wrong. So I went -- followed her back to the back and I asked her if -- I identified myself. I was in civilian clothes -- if something happened there, and she said yes. That man was

getting fresh with me. And I asked her what he was doing. She told me what he was doing. So I go down and here he's a cleric with a round collar.

INTERVIEWER:

Whoa.

SERGEANT TROUT:

And so I found out who he was, but I couldn't do anything about the whole thing, other than I went down to this man's bishop and told him about it.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But officially, I couldn't do anything about it because I wasn't supposed to be there.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Oh. Exactly. Yeah.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But I did think that I did right by telling the girl that I would handle it in my best way and I did. I went and notified the bishop, which brings to my mind today the -- mostly what denomination he was. Either

-- he was not Roman Catholic. I know that. But with

-- today with the Roman Catholic church having their troubles with their so-called child molesters, I often thought of that case there, that man there doing the same -- more or less the same kind of unorthodox behavior. But I was not able to do anything there officially because I wasn't supposed to be in the movie to begin with. Oh, yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, one of the last things that I think we wanted to wrap up with, you had mentioned that you wanted to kind of describe and talk about the different types of saddles that you used when you were riding horses.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Yes. All right. The saddle that was officially a State Police saddle was called a modified McClellan saddle. Now a modified McClellan saddle was a -- had a deep -- what I call a deep seat to it. It was black. All our saddles were -- all -- no. Our official saddle was black because of the uniform. We didn't use brown saddles. We had a saddle for trick riding, which was a -- called a western saddle. The western saddle had a brass horn in the front of it, which was used as a handlebar for when you started doing tricks alongside the horse. You hold -- you held that horn with one hand. Then they had what they called a English saddle, which was a very, very flat saddle with two -- a stirrup on either side with just a -- like a step held by a single strap and an English saddle in my estimation was very difficult to stay on, unless you were a expert rider. The McClellan -- modified McClellan saddle had a deep seat and they had stirrups which were -- we called them box stirrups. They were made of wood covered by black leather and it was a easy saddle to sit in. You sat deep in the saddle and it sort of had a back to it, too. Nothing much up front, maybe a little mound over the horse's neck and as a result of discipline, when we were training to ride, if the riding instructor saw some -- one of us not performing like he thinks we should, he would discipline us. Instead of -- if we were out marching, they would give us double-time where we'd have

to run. What the riding instructor would do was tell us to cross stirrups. That meant you took your right stirrup, threw it over the horse's neck in front of you, took your left stirrup and threw that over in -- over the other side in front of you and then he would make you trot. Well, while you were trotting, your -- you have nothing in your -- you have no feet in the stirrups. You're bouncing around. The doggone box stirrups are bouncing around hitting you, and it ended up, you got hurt. It hurt. You didn't get hurt seriously, but it was very extremely uncomfortable riding. And he'd make you trot until you felt like you were going to jump off and then that would be the end of that discipline. Also when you were forming a formation in horses, these box stirrups -- the horses would be inclined to squeeze up against one another and the stirrups would be digging into your legs or to your knees and the horses would be squeezing one another, and the more they squeezed, the more your knees were getting squeezed and it hurt. And of course you'd land-blast the guy next to you. You'd say that was his fault. Ride your horse. Ride your horse. Make your horse stay away from me. But you couldn't do that. Once the horses got the command to form a rank, they knew what was happening and they immediately got in there. Now the western saddle was a easy saddle to ride on. It was cushioned. It was wide. It was very comfortable to sit on. It had all kinds of straps and gadgets on it that you could hold onto if you were in an awkward position. If you got a command to stand up while the horse is running, it was easy to stand on because it was a flat saddle and covered the whole back of the horse. It was a very comfortable saddle to ride on and easy to stand on. You could not -- I don't -- I can't see how you could stand up while a horse is running in a -- what

we called a modified McClellan. That McClellan was named after General McClellan of the Civil War and it was a -- it was sort of a modernized
-- more or less flattened it out a little bit than a regular McClellan saddle. That's why they called it a modified McClellan saddle. The -- before parades, we used to put weights on the horses' feet and the day of the parade, we would take the weights off the horses and that would make them prance higher. Made them parade nicer. They were pretty. Of course we groomed them very well before the parade. Some fellows played with their decorations on their bridles and so on like that, had fancy emblems, but that was up to you if you wanted to do that. All our blankets were -- the Troop E blankets were -- had a big E on the -- on each corner. If you were assigned to Troop A, it would be A, and we had four troops. We had A, B, C, D -- we had five troops; A, B, C, D and E. A was Greensburg. B was Wyoming. C was Reading. D was Butler and E was Harrisburg. And my number was E-44 and the E-44 was worn on a emblem on your collar and the purpose was to be plainly visible to anyone -- instead of asking your name, all they would take was your number and if they said it was E-44, that was you. They knew who E-44 was. We did not wear nametags in those days. Major Adams had a daughter who rode horses. Colonel Wilhelm had a daughter who rode horses and they used to ride -- they used to get together and ride them together on a Saturday afternoon and we would be -- one of us would be assigned to go over there and get those horses out, get them cleaned up a little bit if they were dirty and get the saddles ready for the girls. And once in a great while, one of the girls wouldn't show up and they'd ask you to go along with them, and it was usually a ride up through Wildwood Park, which is now up around where HACC is right now.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

That was called Wildwood Park in those days and they had a nice bridle path up there and we used to ride up in there with them.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Evelyn Wilhelm and -- I can't think of -- oh, Ruth. Ruth Adams. Yeah. Ruth Adams.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I mean, we're just about out of time. About a minute. Was there any concluding remarks that you wanted to mention or anything that -- loose ends that you needed to tie up or anything along those lines?

SERGEANT TROUT:

I can't think of them right now, Shelly.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

I'll probably think of them when I get away from here.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

SERGEANT TROUT:

Took care of the substations pretty good.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

But see that substation business that would -- could be so varied throughout the state.

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

I'm only speaking from what I knew myself from my own experience. I told you there about the -- out at Butler where they must have arranged with a restaurant to eat all their meals at a restaurant, so that -- which means that their sleeping headquarters could have been in a hotel or a rooming house...

INTERVIEWER:

Um-hum.

SERGEANT TROUT:

...somewhere in -- now up in Shamokin, Shamokin was just a house for that substation. That was a substation of Troop E at that time and that was just a house where they slept upstairs and ate downstairs, just like a house. But in those days, if you were assigned to a substation and you were married, even though you might have lived right across the street from the substation, you could not go home and sleep. You had to sleep at a substation. Same way with me and Gettysburg. When I was in Gettysburg, my wife lived in a house -- my wife and child lived in a house in Gettysburg. But yet when I was assigned to duty that night, I had to stay at the

substation and sleep. The only time I could go home would be on my night off, which was two nights a week. Those two nights, I could go home and sleep at home.