**Janet:** This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. I'm here today, November 8th, 1993 at the Ellis Island Oral History Studio. I'm here with Mr. Louis Schindel who was here stationed at Ellis Island for one month starting October 7th, 1941, when he was a recruit with the United States Coast Guard reserve.

I want to welcome you back and I'm looking forward to hearing what you remember. Let's start by your saying how it was that or what were you doing? When you heard that you were coming to Ellis Island, what was your situation?

**Louis:** Good morning. The memories, I'm going to apologize. Its 52 years and things have slipped from my memory. However I was enlisted in the coast guard, sworn in to serve the country. I don't remember exactly whether the swearing in ceremony was here or over in the federal building but that's perhaps not important. We were transported here and this was the recruit station.

**Janet:** If you could back up just a little. How was it you decided to serve in the coast guard?

**Louis:** Good question, thank you ma'am. It turns out that I had in the period of time. I had a private pilot's license, which I got through the cooperation of the US government. Back in the 1939 and 40, there was the civilian pilot's training program which at the colleges encouraged we college kids to go for our pilot's licenses.

If I may sidetrack a little bit, we talk about preparation of war, someone had some foresight. They sensed that things were getting hotter in Europe with the Nazi mess. They must have looked at the records and said, "If we go to war, we need more pilots."

So at no cost to us, we were put through pilot's training and I was awarded my license in the spring of 1940, I believe it was. When things got hotter, I went to the navy, to the marines and to the army, and said "Hey, I have a pilot's license. I want to enlist and become a pilot." They turned me down. You know why? This will blow you apart because I have flat feet. I kid you not, rejected from pilot's training because of flat feet.

Then still sensing the need for being in the military service because of the pressures of Europe, I enlisted in the coast guard. There I was welcomed I guess with open arms because I was a lucky kid, I was brought up playing, working with boats, so I knew something about handling boats.

After the processing, I was invited... memory problem of course, whether I was sworn in in New York or sworn here in the Island, not sure. The night of October 7th, 1941, I slept here, memories. Triple decker bunks, that I remember, a great diversity of people from all over the country.

I did find and I found this just late last night, I was wondering whether at any time I had kept a record and by gosh I did. I have here a 1940 diary but it also has a 1941 section in it. I kept the diary for two years.

**Janet:**  Do you have October 7th?

**Louis:**  October 7th, was a Tuesday, look at that. It says here I reported into the CG office, Coast Guard office. Something was wrong with my papers. I had to take a boat to Ellis Island two hours later than the rest of the gang. Left New York at 11:30 ushered to receiving station, given chow. That's fancy for food. Found a bunk in a room with about 300 other fellows, bull sessions, bull sessions. Sat around and did nothing all afternoon. There seems to be a lack of leadership organization, lousy chow in the evening at 4:30.

That was the first day at Ellis Island as a member of the Coast Guard, which at that time, by the way, the Coast Guard, I don't think was folded into the navy. It became part of the armed forces until perhaps a year or so later. That's something you'd have to check in the history books, so that that was the beginning.

**Janet:** Do you remember your impressions coming to Ellis Island? Do you remember what it looked like at that time and how many people were here roughly?

**Louis:**  The memories are short. Again I beg your indulgence because just a few years have passed and a few of shall we say traumatic years, referring especially to the war years I remember the size of the area where we stayed and was impressed with the high, high ceilings.

When we've returned here recently, and this is how we connected, somehow or rather the main hall, whatever the proper name of it is, did not seem like the place where I had been. I asked one of the Rangers who excused himself for a moment and then pointing to another building, he identified that as the Coast Guard receiving station during World War 2.

The other impressions where that the gang of course was, they were young, activist, noisy and so forth. While here we were given inoculations, then the uniforms were given out. I have one recollection of uniforms by the way. Including uniforms were shoes, black, standard shoes, of course, and one of the fellows with whom I'd become friendly apparently had extremely wide, wide feet and they couldn't fit him.

So during the time that we went out on drill, and there was a small section that was our drill section, by the way we drilled, with wooden rifles. This guy and his name was Bob, I can't remember his last name, drilled in bare feet. That was great.

**Janet:** Bare feet and wooden rifles.

**Louis:** Bare feet and wooden rifles. One fellow whose name may appear in this diary that I found was a guitarist and he kept us amused during the evenings, which was great. We were assigned to certain duties, and again I must confess, something inspired me last evening as I was watching the evening news. I went into our storage room, and I found this thing. It had slipped my memory completely, so I really haven't read it to pick up the detail. But this fellow did keep us quite amused. We did duty and I notice here I stood guard duty at the prison. Apparently there was a military prison here of some sort.

**Janet:** Do you remember at all where that building was, the prison building?

**Louis:** No. Whether it was in our building, I do not.

**Janet:** So these were Coast Guard...?

**Louis:**  Recruits.

**Janet:** Recruits who were imprisoned for some reason?

**Louis:**  Well whether they were recruits or they could have been any kind of military personnel who were sent here because it was a lock up of some sort.

**Janet:** So that was your first duty to guard that prison?

**Louis:** Apparently so. I guess I was too sloppy to be permitted to wash dishes. One other thought that I've had and that is since visiting here and since your contact, I've tried to dig back and try and figure out about my grandparents and so forth. And by gosh we have nothing so far in our records showing where my father's parents, how they came into this country.

Unfortunately, there are none of the older generation to help us form this bridge. Somewhere in the paperwork we may find that Info. I have no recollection from childhood or when we're all growed up, as they say, of my parents, aunts, uncles and so forth talking about that. Why is that? I would ask you to explain whether there's an evolution in the interest in immigration. I guess the restoration-

**Janet:** I think it is clear that people were at one time ashamed and weren't that forthcoming, and now of course we've come full circle and we're honoring people for having emigrated but I'm them curious. Was there talk among your cronies or fellow recruits here about Ellis Island as an immigration center? Did people talk about their families maybe having come through? Was being here somehow-

**Louis:** There was some. Yes, Janet, there was some and detail of course I can't remember, but there's a vague memory of someone saying for instance, "Yeah, my parents came here from Germany or from Ireland or so forth."  Then for a period of time we'd kid one other, "Hey, Irish," or something like that. So yes, there must have been mention of it, but I don't recall any detailed or in depth discussions.

**Janet:** How about the fact that you were preparing for war and you were looking at the Statue of Liberty every day? Was having been sent to this particular site, do you think that somehow the patriotism, the place played into.... What were the attitudes of your fellow recruits at that time? Do you remember the kinds of things you talked about?

**Louis:** I would say that... Well first from that other building would the Statue of Liberty been visible? I'm just wondering but we can examine that later. But I would say deep, deep in the memory is some thought about the mess in Europe, we're going to be in it, I am talking for others. We want to be part of the solution to this mess. I think that was the general theme.

I would say also there were threads of being homesick, being disillusioned about being on a little island with triple decker bunks and rotten food and so on. The normal griping which any group of people would suffer from. Projections outwards as the meaning, I must confess that nothing strikes deeply in my memory. In the book my old diary here, I wish I'd had more time to read it.

**Janet:** I think we should certainly Xerox October 7th, 1941 and then as you read it after would if you find that there's more, hopefully we could Xerox it and keep it in your file along with your tape people could have access to that.

**Louis:** Great, well on October 8th, as an example, I was on the 4 to 6 watch and we saw the movie called Philadelphia Story. That kind of stuff is entered here.

**Janet:** Do you remember recreation here during that month? Were there movies often? Where the other things?

**Louis:** I think there were movies quite often. I do have some notes here that I read some books. I haven't read any since obviously but there would be specific notes as to reading of books.  Oh, and one thing that that might be of interest. Twice or three times, we were sent to Manhattan to participate in parades on.... Quick, tell me. When is Armistice Day? Oh, I got you there. It's now known as Veterans Day.

**Janet:** Oh, the 11th, November.

**Louis:** The 11th, here from the 11th. Oh, I'd been I've been hospitalized here, which I'd completely forgotten, but on the 11th the President gave an address, and on celebrating what was then known as Armistice Day now Veterans Day. On two or three occasions, we were formed into squads and we marched Fifth Avenue. Once was for, and I wonder if the celebration is still going on, gathering of the colors at a church. The flags from all over the place and state flags. It was some sort of a ceremony.

**Janet:** This was all during that month period between October 7th and November...

**Louis:** October 7th, the final day was, when I was thrown off here, on Friday November 21st so it was six, maybe seven weeks. I was transferred to duty on USCGC boat 429 at the Rockaway Station, so they threw me out here on November 21.

**Janet:**  I think I neglected in the very beginning, would you say your birth date and how old you were when you were stationed here?

**Louis:**  My birth date? Madam, that's confidential. October 30th, 1919. So when I was here I was 21? You're better mathematician than I am tell me.

**Janet:** Yeah, 21.

**Louis:** Oh, I must have celebrated my 22nd birthday here because on 30th, I was here. Again I must apologize the years and the events following have dimmed the memories. There may be something here in the book.

**Janet:** Well why don't we not deal with the book here on tape and then as I say afterward we can include anything in your file from the book?

**Louis:** I'm just thinking in terms of things that might be of interest or highlights that might embellish this a little bit.

**Janet:** Okay, why don't we talk and when we get to turning over the tape, you can look through there and then continue?

**Louis:** Alright, good. Sure.

**Janet:** Where did you grow up?

**Louis:** I was born in the city of Newark, moved... We stayed in the hospital I think a week at that time, ask my mother but raised in Orange. I have always lived until six years when we moved from a home to an apartment condo, I had spent all of my life in Essex County, New Jersey.

**Janet:** Was this your first time away from home when you were recruited into the Coast Guard?

**Louis:** No, during college years, during childhood, I admit to being raised in a family that was financially stable. We not traveled extensively but trips into New England and so forth and of course during college I had greater adventures traveling to the Midwest, traveling various places. You're taxing my memory now. There was sufficient dough so that I was mobile.

**Janet:** Were you a college graduate when you were recruited?

**Louis:** Very complicated. I had 4 years of college, 3 undergraduate and one of law school but held no degree because of complications of the time let's say. Later I went back to school and in 1973, 30 years after I was to have got my degree, in 1973 I got a degree from Breakers.

**Janet:** How about the other recruits? Just a rough guess of numbers of recruits who were here when you were here?

**Louis:** Again thanks to the book my estimate, the first night was 300. By the way, I'll shift it back to you, it would be of interest to me to know how many Coast Guard recruits from this naval district or did a Coast Guard district, it would've been at that time, were recruited and sent through Ellis Island for our indoctrination. I have no concept of that the total numbers. No recollection.

**Janet:** How about the indoctrination? What exactly were you indoctrinated with?

**Louis:** Oh, great, great stuff. Again thanks to the quick reading of this book, we did drill, military drill, up, 2, 3, 4, in a little hunk of the island somewhere which maybe we can identify later on. I do recall it was so small that the [unclear 00:23:02] who was in charge had to devise special turns and so forth because we just couldn't maneuver as a full -fledged squadron. Then of course there were periods when we were in a classroom situation being indoctrinated, telling us our rights and wrongs and so forth.

Beyond that I have no recollection there was not much... Don't forget we weren't at war at that time. The formalities of indoctrination perhaps hadn't been developed to their full extent. We, as I said, did spend time doing those things. The uniform thing, in retrospect was a joke because I think the first time we got trousers and the second time we got T-shirts and shirts and finally we got hats.

It was piecemeal and we finally wound up with full uniforms. The pea coat, remember the short, blacked... I kept through the war. I remember giving it to someone afterward, beautiful, beautiful, quality stuff, fantastic.

Are there recollections of Ellis Island?  Somewhere in the back of memory, I do remember standing at the edge of the island looking out, but cannot recall specifically whether we were looking out at the Statue of Liberty or lower Manhattan or a place known as-

**Janet:** Governor's Island.

**Louis:** Governors Island, well it depends on where you're from. Is it Jersey City or is it Jersey City? No, I remember we did stand and smoke and look out and say, “Look at that, look at that,” just as we did when we came here that this morning. No improvement in food, apparently considerable liberty time. Apparently twice or three times a week we were permitted to leave the island.

**Janet:** And then what? You would go by ferry, some kind of a ferry to?

**Louis:** Yeah, here again, you're taxing my memory. Whether there was direct ferry from here to lower Manhattan to... What's the name of...?

**Janet:** Battery Park.

**Louis:** The Battery Park. I have no specific memories of the mode of transportation or the route.

**Janet:** But when you had liberty went to New York as opposed to going to New Jersey for example?

**Louis:** I think we had to go to New York, again memory plays tricks, I don't think that was transportation from here to... I think we had to go to New York, and I would meet with friends there or hop a train and go home to Orange or more specifically by that time my mother had moved to Maplewood but memory of the exact mode of transportation.

**Janet:** Why did you land the hospital here?

**Louis:** Apparently I had stress in my innards. I'd had jaundice as a kid, I had always had a tender stomach, shall we say, and later on I tell you a story about... I tell you the details of my stomach.

**Janet:** What do you remember of your hospital experience here?

**Louis:** Okay, I believe I stayed on the island here, though later in service.... As a matter fact, while I was a cadet, I was sent to the marine hospital at Stapleton, Staten Island for surgery but this time I think I was treated right here, and my recollections are affirmed, that is the service and it was a decent situation. As a matter of fact, the whole thing, except for my recollections of food, it was a decent human situation here when we were recruits.

**Janet:** How would you characterize the recruits, if you had to at that period?

**Louis:** Again I wish I had more time with the old diary, but I did catch some notes in the diary which said that there was age diversity, geographic diversity, mostly from the east coast as I recall Religious diversity. I have no recollection as to whether there was racial. I don't know how many non-Caucasian were taken in at that time, nothing on that score.

My guess is that the age ranges would have been... what the minimum wage would have been 17 or 18. I don't know what the law says at that time, through college level. A few older but not many, taking a guess I would say that perhaps 30% were college. We college guys sort of fell in together. I suppose that's a pretty normal pattern, a clean bunch of American kids. Let's call it that. That's all I can remember as far as the past is concerned.

**Janet:** Do you remember getting your orders to ship out?

**Louis:** As noted, I was sent to that private boat in Rockaway, and that was on 19th of November, 1941. It was a Coast Guard reserve boat that I was sent to, a small private boat. I think there were only 6 of us and we did harbor patrol.

**Janet:** Do you remember your feelings about leaving here and going there?

**Louis:** Affirmative, my recollection is that perhaps it was too confining here, perhaps there were too many people in a big, big room but I was delighted to get the hell off of Ellis Island, if you will.

**Janet:** Okay, well that's a great place. We're going to pause now and turn the tape over. We're going to resume now. This is side B and I'm speaking with Louis Schindel and he has just now looked through his diary which somehow came to his mind last night to find, a testimony to the unconscious mind. Not having had the chance to really look through it, he has just done that. Why don’t you mention the kinds of things that you had noted in your diary I that we haven't already covered?

**Louis:** I did discover in the diary that I had time to read while here on Ellis Island. There were several movies, thank goodness I guess. The diary did record the fact that I had visitors. Until I found that diary, I had no recollection that family members and others had been permitted to visit here with us or with me. Again I cannot fix the place in which we met, whether there were little family rooms. Nothing comes directly to mind except the fact that there were visitations.

**Janet:** And you had leave also when you could go home?

**Louis:** Yes, my recollection is, again the diary helps, that we had a fairly liberal leave policy possibly. There's some notes here that, knocked off at four and we were due back at midnight. Perhaps we had half day where we could go home and visit. Good transition from family life to military life, I guess I'd call that.

The mail started to come in regularly, which was helpful, even though a short distance, it was always great to have mail. I remember standing watch duty a couple of places anchor watch, and here memories come back that there were slips and boats anchored nearby.

We did have some drills, rowing drills, and we used pulling boats, I guess, for that purpose and someone had to watch them during the night. They'd wake us up and make a stand out there for a couple hours. That's minor watch duty compared to some of the watches that I stood both as a seaman and as an officer, sometimes here or sometimes in very quiet places like during the Battle of Okinawa.

However the other items, I'm trying to think now, I did read Wilder's Heaven's My Destination. That's recorded in the book somewhere and trying to remember, memory slows down a little bit you know. Trying to remember other reading but nothing comes to mind quickly at this moment.

**Janet:** I think you mentioned that there were a group of recruits that came to Ellis Island.

**Louis:**  There's a note again that 100 recruits came in from New Orleans which surprises me now as to why they were transported that great distance when of course there is a great deal of Coast Guard activities down in that area.

Perhaps this reflects the decisions by the people in power that the war Europe was more accessible from here than from New Orleans but that was 100 guys that came in.

I have here for the record if you want them, I have a picture of me in 41 and that's for the files here if you want. There's a later picture in 43 when I'm all dressed up as an officer. Well I was commissioned as an officer so I was entitled to wear the uniform by gosh.

**Janet:** Why do you say for the tape just kind of a thumbnail of after you left Ellis Island and you were on small boats in Rockaway, is that what you said?

**Louis:** The first boat came out of Rockaway. We were assigned to harbor patrol duty spending most of our time between Stapleton, Staten Island, and there's another name for the Coast Guard base there right near Stapleton and we would cruise back and forth from there to the old fortress.

Oh, my goodness, the memory has slipped again. There was an old fortress from the revolutionary war which today is the base of the Verrazano Bridge. That was our assignment, to cruise back and forth recording vessels entering New York harbor.

**Janet:** What did you do after that? Just tell about the steps in your military career.

**Louis:** The harbor patrol was on two different craft. I'll come back one quick story. We were assigned one day to escort the Queen Elizabeth I believe it was from the anchorage outside of Brooklyn up to the slips, up to the docks in Manhattan. We were assigned to the star bird stern position.

I think there were five or six Coast Guard boats. Leading the group was a heavy duty Coast Guard tug of very rugged piece of equipment. The anchor ball, that's a black ball that's hoisted when the ship is at anchor, was dropped that was the signal that the Queen Mary was getting under way and they gave her the gun as they say.

And because we were nothing more than a pleasure craft without a great deal of power, as a matter of fact it was a converted sailing vessel therefore the engines were very small design for emergency purposes. Instead of sailing up the river with the Queen Elizabeth, we were pushed down the river by the wake of the ship and we never did catch up her but that that was one of the quirky memories from the war period.

After the six or seven months harbor patrol, I was assigned to an attack transport, and we fitted out and trained here. It was the USS Samuel Chase. Then we went to-

**Janet:** When you say trained here, where?

**Louis:** It was in Hoboken, part of the training is even though the boat as dead at the dock you learn how to lowered hoist boats. You learn your way around the ship. You learn safety details and so forth. That was part of the ship's standard training when you joined a ship.

**Janet:** We were at war at that time when you were learning that?

**Louis:** Yes, we were then at war. That was from June '42 till September of '42 that I was on board the Chase. Partially here and partially in Solomon's Island Chesapeake where we actually at night learned to lower craft off the ship, and men would scramble aboard these because it was an attack transport.

These were small craft designed to hit a beach. You probably have seen this in film strips and movies, hit a beach and attack. That was an exciting period though short. I was then transferred to the Academy, the Coast Guard academy, to pursue a commission.

After the commission, after the Coast Guard event... oh, by the way, I was the only Coast Guard officer ever to take 6 months to get through the academy. It was a 4 month course during which I spent two months in hospital on sick leave because I had surgery during that period but I finally made it.

That from there too Edgewood Arsenal where I became a chemical warfare officer, and that caused me to be assigned to District Coast Guard officer, seventeenth naval district [unclear 00:41:33]. Where chemical warfare isn't effective but we trained everyone in the use of gas masks, and one of the great memories is we also had control over a thing called smoke out.

There were pots of smoke material, again I would say 5 gallon containers and on giving the signal, these could be lighted off creating smoke so the enemy aircraft would be thrown off their course.

Don't forget at that time a great deal of navigation was visual. We did smoke out of Ketchikan harbor. But that's a memory and then from there several months in the Aleutians aboard a Coast Guard cutter and finally, in the last part of the war, I served in a Coastguard buoy tender.

Now you wonder what a buoy tender was doing in a hot war, and by hot war, it was one. We were sent to Okinawa. Arrive there about two weeks after the invasion. Our purpose in being there as a buoy tender lay buoys to anchor the navy craft in the harbors. We had the equipment and the know how to do that. I was bored until peace and finally released from service to go home for discharge.

**Janet:** What do you recall of actual combat?

**Louis:** Two areas of actual combat during the Aleutian period, we were not directly active but we were a support chip during the period when the US Armed forces threw the Japanese off of the islands of Attu and Kiska. As a diversionary tactic, they had invaded and taken over those two islands, which are the most westerly islands of the Aleutians. We had to send troops up there to clean them out, and as I say our particular vessel was a support vessel. We were not in direct combat.

However the Okinawa event was certainly very hot. We arrive there as noted about 2 weeks after the invasion was launched. We arrived in a convoy escorting a floating dry dock, a rather long vessel perhaps 250 foot long, but a floating dry dock to be used there. Our arrival at Nakagusuku one, which is the Nakagusuku bay on the easterly side of the island, we were welcomed by kamikaze who headed for the dry dock.

Fortunately he missed by perhaps as little as six feet. He broke his wing on the side of the ship and went into the drink or into the water. Six feet to the right, he would have been in and the bomb would have destroyed that very, very valuable dry dock. But we spent the whole... We were general quarters every night on standby for the kamikaze. That was rough stuff, believe me.

**Janet:** What was your rank when you left the service?

**Louis:** I was a two striper lieutenant. Trivia on that point on leaving naval service, one did not get discharged you were retired to inactive service. During the Korean War I was recalled and here in New York, I'm not so sure, but I think it was the Federal building, downtown New York. We were invited to line up for the doctors. After I was through, the doctors asked me to define a thing called atrophic gastritis which I had recorded on instructions from my personal physician. This was 1952 or three.

This relates, by the way, the fact that during my stay at Ellis Island, I was confined to the hospital for about a week or 10 days. I guess I've always had a temperamental stomach but the doctors could not define that. My personal physician had told me to put on the record and about six weeks later, I received an official discharge papers. I was no longer on inactive duty but received an official discharge.

10 years later I was in for a review of my temperamental gut or stomach, my innards and I asked that doctor who was a very sophisticated gastroenterologist, the specialty had become a special specialty, and I said, "Doctor, what about that?" And he said it's an obsolete diagnosis. So I was discharged from service under false pretenses, but I'm still around.

**Janet:** Tell me about feelings, the feelings when the country actually went to war when you were in the service. What happened among your fellow service men? Can you give some kind of feeling about that?

**Louis:** Excellent. During the period when I was in New York area from '41 through middle of '42, when we went ashore, we stopped at a bar. People would turn their backs on us. The minute war was declared. They would come up to us and say, "Hey, can I buy you a drink?" That I remember. The attitudes were of course completely changed.

I guess my personal thought was though I still have a feeling that there were two different wars, the European war and the Asian war, the Pacific war, Atlantic and Pacific. But even though the attack was in the Pacific and within hours the president declared us at war, I guess there was a sense of, “Well I did the right thing. I enlisted and I'm supporting my country.” Even today that continues, I feel that something told me at that time that's where I should be and I resolved to follow that instinct, that reaction.

**Janet:** How about when the war was over? Can you recall the feelings you had and your fellow servicemen had?

**Louis:** I was in Okinawa at the time the bombs were dropped. As a matter of fact, just a couple of weeks ago, I found a newspaper, New York Times, here I go again with a bad memory, recording the Japanese surrender, which was about 10 days after the first bomb was dropped.

One distinct recollection is in Okinawa, which was a tremendously busy, busy operation. It was the staging point for the proposed physical invasion of the mainland of Japan, tremendously active.

Somehow or other before peace was declared there was a false VJ day and men in the fleet celebrated by firing guns. In many ships, there are 50 mm guns mounted in various positions, small guns and during that event, it was rumored that six servicemen were killed because the guns were shot at the bridges of various ships and they killed people. That's one recollection.

Then of course when it was confirmed, the exaltation was fantastic. The 24 hour watch, in a ship, you always have 24, but there was a skeleton crew. We could go out on deck of the ship at night, whereas as part of that we had to be.... You could turn lights on so that... Of course we were all tremendously relieved when the final peace was declared.

On December 7th, 1941, I was on one of the small boats, I'm reading here off of the book. I slept until 4pm. I was the only one. The others were off on leave. It was a Sunday. Turned on the radio, heard that the Japanese cut loose, Pearl Harbor 7:55 AM.

Cabinet meeting at 8:30 tonight, declaration of war tomorrow is my bet. All men in uniform ordered back universally. Anyone in uniform had to get back to his base. That I remember and there we are. That was the day. FDR gave a request to Congress for war in 500 words and within a half hour, Congress Okayed the declaration of war.

I must confess that sometime tomorrow or maybe the next day I'm going to start to dig out more information on Ellis Island, i.e. family. I know my grandfather came from Germany, I believe Frankfurt. He was number seven son. He had a younger sister. I do not know if they came here as a group but I understand that he did.

As a matter of fact there is a legend within the family that because there were so many kids in the family, when they steamed up into New York harbor, I think this could have been about 1860, the legend that his father threw them overboard and said, "Joey, you go it on yourself," and he had to swim for it, not confirmed. I don't have that information. His wife, my grandmother, was born and raised in Troy, New York, but we cannot put that together nor on my father's side is there any specific detail. I'll send you a memo when it's all put together.

**Janet:** Is there anything you'd like to say about your civilian life after you left the service, for the record?

**Louis:** I do recall that I was pretty much of a mess for about a year and a half or two. I really had trouble settling after the routine plus the trauma and I had come out of Okinawa, which was of course a highly pressurized, traumatic event. I had trouble settling into a career, tried several things, reasonably successful. At one period of time, I opened and operated a retail business which was destroyed, I don't know whether you want to put that in quotes or underline it, by the changing times in retailing. Discounts ruined my toy and juvenile furniture business.

The last 20 years of my career were spent as a housing specialist with the State of New Jersey Division of Housing. That was like I suspect all government operations. We had our good periods and our bad periods depending on leadership and problems, but mostly I felt that that was a creative period in my life when I was part of society and doing my thing at reasonable pay and reasonable hours, rewarding. I look back to that with satisfaction, shall we say.

**Janet:** We just have just a couple of minutes left. Maybe you could say your wife's name?

**Louis:** Alright.

**Janet:** And any children.

**Louis:** My wife's name is Lothar. She took her retirement a few years ago after almost 45 years in nursing. We have three sons, he oldest living in Maryland, father of two bambinos, crazy, little guys whom we love tenderly. We see them about every three months we're able to get together.

The second son lives in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. We see them more frequently. They too have a couple of little guys that are the joy of our lives. Our third son teaches in the Mammoth County School, what's the name, quick? Mammoth County Junior College, name slips me. He's unmarried but his dedication is in the world of English.

**Janet:** Tell me your wife's maiden name and your children's names.

**Louis:** My wife was Lothar Rosenfeld. She was born in Germany. She arrived in England on the day the British and the Germans declared war and went into nursing from that point on, the three boys, Lawrence, also known as Larry, Paul, and Andrew. Other trivia, let's see.

**Janet:** Now you've got one minute. Is there anything you'd like to say in closing?

**Louis:** Yes, this has been a great time, obviously a once in a lifetime experience getting back here and talking to you all. Grateful to you and to Peter for your hostessing and hosting the event and be assured of future cooperation if there's any way I can help you piece this together.

**Janet:** I want to thank you. It's really been a pleasure and I thank you very much for these articles that we will keep on file with your tape. I've been talking with Louis Schindel and this is Janet Levine. It's November 8th, 1993. We're here at the Ellis Island Oral History Studio and I'm signing off. Thank you.