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HANDY

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Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations Division (OPD), U.S. War Department, 1942-44;
Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1944-47.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1 (November 6, 1972; pp 1-47) Early military career: Virginia Military Institute; joins field artillery; service in France during World War I; desire of officers to serve overseas during World Wars I and II; reduction to permanent rank after World War I; field artillery school, 1920; ROTC duty at VMI, 1921-25; advanced field artillery course at Fort Sill; Lesley J. McNair; artillery improvements prior to World War II; McNair and the triangular division; importance of army schools in preparation for war; lack of support for army during interwar period; Fox Conner. Command and General Staff School at Leavenworth, 1926-27: intellectual ability of senior officers; problem solving; value of training for development of self-confidence; lack of training on handling personnel problems. Naval War College, 1936: study of naval tactics and strategy by army officers. Comparison of Leavenworth, Army War College and Fort Sill: theory vs. practical training. Joseph Swing: report to George Marshall and Henry Arnold on foul-up in airborne operation in Sicily; impact on Leigh-Mallory's fear of disaster in airborne phase of Normandy invasion.

Interview #2 (May 22, 1973; pp 48-211) War Plans Division, 1936-40: joint Army-Navy planning committee. 2nd Armored Division, 1940-41: George Patton; role of field artillery in an armored division. Return to War Plans Division, 1941; Leonard Gerow; blame for Pearl Harbor surprise; need for directing resources toward one objective; complaint about diverting Normandy invasion resources for attack on North Africa; Operation Torch and Guadalcanal as turning points in war; risks involved in Operation Torch; fear that Germany would conquer Russia; early decision to concentrate attack against Germany rather than Japan; potential landing sites in western Europe. DDE's early contacts with British; Sir John Dill. Henry Arnold and Ernest King; cooperation with Navy planners; naval aid for US troops in Philippines; Navy dislike of Douglas MacArthur. General Chaney and Special Observers. Col. James Stack, Col. Charles Gailey and recruitment of new staff for OPD. Strategic survey committee: need for long-range planning; Navy emphasis on Pacific Theater; demoralization caused by Pearl Harbor attack. DDE's dislike of defeatist attitudes; Operation Torch; failure of Dieppe raid; problems with British lack of unified command; advantage of US system; examples of Middle East theater and occupation of Germany; Canadian reaction to Dieppe failure; attitudes of Henry Stimson and Winston Churchill toward Normandy invasion planning; Bernard Montgomery. Colored troops in England. Mark Clark. George Marshall: interest in opinions of subordinates; awe of staff toward Marshall: how Marshall handled briefings; his excellent memory. Walter Bedell Smith. DDE's removal of subordinates: Gen. Orlando Ward. Mamie Eisenhower's contacts with Handy during war; Marshall's concern for wives of Army commanders. DDE's reports to Marshall and Handy. Assignments for George Patton and Omar Bradley. Casablanca Conference: lack of

planning for conference; British Conference; development of plan to invade southern France (Anvil); British opposition to Anvil. Acquiring ammunition for soldiers. Pressures on OPD staff; preparation for briefings; need for younger officers who could handle hard work.

Interview #3 (December 18, 1975; pp 212-258) Handy's inspection trip to North Africa, spring 1943: Omar Bradley; troop replacements; problem of creating unauthorized units; lack of army training in personnel matters. British interest in attacking southern Europe rather than cross-channel. Quebec Conference: Harry Hopkins; briefing FDR prior to conference; British better at planning while US better at executive action; development of plan for Anvil at Tehran conference. Charles Gailey. DDE's visit to US, December 1943. Officials by-passing chain of command to get information from lower ranks. Marshall's views on airborne operations. Marshall's removal of corps commanders. Gen. Terry Allen. Problem of dividing up resources among theaters. Use of battleships to support Normandy invasion. Ernest King: his support of US troops in Philippines; as commander of USS Lexington, 1930.

Interview #4 (March 29, 1979; pp 259-345) Normandy invasion: Handy's views of Omaha Beach; army units on Omaha Beach. Desire of officers to serve overseas in wartime. Quebec Conference: preparations for participation by FDR and Churchill. Assignment of John S.D. Eisenhower to European Theater. Handy's inspection trip to France, October 1944; James F. Byrnes; need for ammunition by troops. Handy's promotion to Deputy Chief of Staff. Transfer of troops to Italy prior to Ardennes campaign. Problems of maintaining 90 divisions; replacement of personnel; Brehon Somervell and army support; relief of combat commanders. Comments on Francis DeGuingand, Alan Brooke, Charles Portal. Marshall's interest in favorable publicity for army. Treatment of enlisted men and black soldiers. Criticism of continued war needs after V-E day. Stalin's ignoring advice from US Post-war army; finding new positions for senior commanders. Vannevar Bush. Army reorganization; need for Plans and Operations to be closely tied. Handy's contacts with DDE and Mamie. Handy's retirement postponed so he could command army group at SHAPE, 1952-54. Handy's visit to White House for Churchill reception. Security for DDE's trip to Germany and FDR's trip to Quebec. Rumor of DDE-Summersby affair: DDE's alleged letter to Marshall; reliability of Merle Miller's interview of Truman; DDE's desire to have Mamie with him in Europe.

[Eisenhower Library Oral History Project, interview by Dr. Maclyn Burg, 1972-79]