

Q: How did you meet your wife?

A: She was one of the four or five, you might say, eligible girls there. So there was quite a bit of competition with the large number of bachelor officers that we had. We would meet at the officers club, at horse shows, sports events, and similar activities. I was the successful one of several suitors and won my bride, the prize of the lot.

Incidentally, Joe Collins [J. Lawton Collins] was also married over there. He was married to the daughter of the chaplain of the American forces, Colonel Easterbrook. The weddings were something quite splendid. Both Joe in his marriage and we in our marriage were married in the kaiser's palace chapel. The kaiser had a palace and beautiful grounds there. So we were married in the kaiser's palace chapel, and after that had a beautiful reception on the grounds surrounding the palace.

### University of Kansas and the Engineer Rifle Team

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Q: You returned from Germany in May 1922 and were assigned to the ROTC unit at the University of Kansas. Was that mandatory assignment or did you request that?

A: I did not request it, but Colonel Perley F. Walker, who was the dean of the Engineering School at Kansas University, specifically requested my assignment because he was not satisfied with the officer who had been in charge of the engineer ROTC unit there. I had served under him in the 219th Engineers, so that was how he knew me and probably the reason he had specifically requested my services. It is not the type of, at least at that time, it was not the type of detail that I would have particularly requested or liked.

Q: Do you think it may have harmed your career at all at that time?

A: No. I think that probably using those four years in certain other activities might have been better insofar as I individually was concerned, in connection with professional advancement. But it was an interesting assignment and we

enjoyed it. Lawrence, Kansas, was a delightful little town, and it was near Fort Leavenworth. Later Colonel Miller, Dorothy's father, was assigned to Fort Leavenworth as the surgeon. So it made it very nice for us on weekends to travel up to Fort Leavenworth and spend weekends with her parents.

We organized an ROTC rifle team there at the University of Kansas. I had been a very good shot over in Germany and elsewhere, and we turned out a rifle team that did extremely well in ROTC competition. Somehow the Chief's Office knew of my being a fair rifle shot, so I was ordered to join the engineer rifle squad, and during the summers of 1924 and 1925 and two succeeding years I was ordered to Fort Mott for competition and practice. There we had practice for six or seven weeks and then proceeded to Camp Perry [Ohio] for the National Rifle and Pistol Matches. Prior to '24, the engineer rifle team had joined with the cavalry as a joint team because our branches were small compared to the infantry or the marines, who had dominated the shooting prior to that time.

Well, in 1924, my first year, I joined up with Major Sturdevant [later Major General Clarence L. Sturdevant], the team captain, who chose me as his shooting partner. The ten-man team had to consist of not over five men who had fired in previous competition with the other five made up of novices or those who had not previously fired in a national match.

So he and I were shooting partners on this first all-engineer team. To the surprise of everybody, we won the National Rifle Match. He and I led off as the first pair on our team on the initial ranges and then at the final 1,000-yard range he and I were the last pair up. I remember I fired the last shot. Major Sturdevant's last shot had just given us the match by one point. So the observing crowd behind us shouted, "Shoot it in the lake, Casey," but I paid no attention to it and got another bull's eye, beating the marines by six points to the surprise of everybody and the great jubilation of the engineers.

Oh, I might add one thing in connection with the national matches. They did have the so-called Infantry Match, with the competitive squad teams lined up in adjacent positions about 500 or 600 yards from the targets. At a signal your team would advance, say, 25 yards, lie down, take shooting position, and fire. You couldn't see the targets, which were screened, but you were firing at imaginary targets representing the enemy sited just above

the butt level, the barrier that protected the target operating personnel. You were supposed to advance, fire, and then when you were sure you had sufficient hits on the targets, under supposed fire superiority, advance and then fire again. The unseen targets were changed each minute and a red flag displayed stopping further advance unless a stated number of hits were made on each target. Points were given on the time of the overall advance and on minimum ammunition expended. Of course, the infantry team prided itself as normally winning each year.

Well, to show how the engineers thought it out, we decided that what we would do would be to fire and then advance in successive steps without firing over almost two-minute intervals. I was team captain, so before firing again to get the required number of hits, I, with my wristwatch, watched the timing. About one minute and 45 seconds after each firing, I would order the firing of three or four shots to cover that advance, and then wait a few seconds after the second minute, and fire another three or four shots, knowing that our shots were so successful that they would have covered the targets adequately for almost the next two-minute period.

So instead of advancing and then firing every 25 yards as the others did, we'd advance that yardage, hit the ground but not fire, advance again, hit the ground again and so on. By watching the timing very closely, as it came toward the end of two minutes we'd give a burst of fire and then we knew that they'd be pulling the targets down, and after the two minutes give another burst of fire. Then we knew that we had almost two more minutes to advance by steps to the next place before we'd have to stop to maintain adequate fire coverage.

In doing that, we got so far ahead of the adjacent teams that our umpire, an infantry major, was afraid we were going to be hit by the adjacent bullets and he almost frantically ordered us, oh, several times, to stop before I finally did. However, it just showed how the engineers, by a little forethought, worked out a plan that succeeded in beating the infantry in their prized competition. We protested his ordering us to stop and virtually disqualifying us, so they authorized a rerun and another opportunity to do it, and of course we just came through winning hands down.

Q: Did you continue to work on engineering courses while you were at the University of Kansas?

A: None other than what I was getting in teaching the engineer ROTC students. I did not take any courses or undertake any specialized research at KU. However, I did organize the courses that we were giving to the students.

Ours was a little more difficult situation because the ROTC there was voluntary and not compulsory. In the land grant schools, all of the students had to take basic ROTC for the first two years. I had to do a selling job in trying to get the students to come in and enroll, and by reason of that we had relatively small units. That in turn made it difficult to get our courses to fit into the curriculum without conflicting with the other required engineer courses that these students had to take. As a result, I had to have two or three sessions in the same course because we had civil engineers, electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, and you couldn't get them all to get a common free time for the ROTC courses which they were taking. So I did have, even though it was a small unit, a greater number of courses that had to be given. I was the sole engineer officer on duty there at the time.

[**Note:** Casey wrote "Muscle Shoals" for the *Kansas Engineer* at this time, see Appendix B.]

Q: Did any of the students stay on in the Army?

A: Yes, several of them did. One in particular, I'm trying to think of his name. He was a cadet captain, and he was commissioned in the infantry later and served over in the Pacific. I ran across him there, and he was doing very well. He was with Sixth Army. I can't recall his name right now—oh yes, later a Colonel [August E.] Schanze. We had several others that went into the engineers.

### Company Officers Course, the Engineer School

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Q: In 1926 you returned to Camp Humphreys to take another course at the Engineer School. I think we discussed that somewhat already. This was your first real introduction to the civil works function of the Corps of Engineers. Was it already a foregone conclusion that you were going to receive a civil works assignment after graduation?

A: Not necessarily. People were normally assigned initially to military duty but the personnel office, I think, did try to conform to a general schedule