

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **Robert Charles Schneider (CN 391, T1)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words which were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case “[unclear]” was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as "ah" or "um" are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

. . . . Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

() Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

Electronic interference on the original audio tape persists throughout the recording, in some instances making it difficult to hear Schneider or the interviewer clearly. The microphone only barely picks up Shuster’s interviewing questions and comments; audio cleanup of Schneider’s comments made Shuster’s questions more difficult to hear, but these were verified in a different version to the extent possible.

This transcript, created by Paul Ericksen and Grace Gardziella, was completed in November 2019.

Please note: This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.



Collection 391, Tape 1. Oral history interview with Robert Charles Schneider by Robert Shuster on April 28, 1988.

SHUSTER: [Intrusive background interference and hum] This is an interview with Reverend Robert Schneider by Robert Shuster for the Archives of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College. This interview took place on April 28, 1988, at 2:30 P.M. in Reverend Schneider's home. Why don't we start off with some...a little family background? Can you tell me about your parents?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I'm one of seven children. My father, as you, Bob, know, was the owner of Ranger the Gospel Horse. It was my privilege of naming that horse – that was back in the 1940s. He was with Billy Graham in various meetings and that horse got quite a bit of fame and [laughs] notoriety. And so, I was really raised in a Christian family. My oldest brother by ten years was soundly converted when he was nineteen years old and almost immediately became a preacher and later a tent evangelist. And at that time, I accepted the Lord too. I went forward in a church service at the Elgin Bible Church way back there in about 1928, and.... You're wanting to interrupt. Then go ahead [laughs].

SHUSTER: Alright, you....what was your father's name?

SCHNEIDER: Bill Schneider. He lived right here in the Elgin area.

SHUSTER: And you mentioned about Roger the Gospel Horse...

SCHNEIDER: Ranger.

SHUSTER: Ranger the Gospel Horse, I'm sorry. Can you give a little more background about how that ministry got started and what it involved exactly?

SCHNEIDER: Well, Dad in his younger years was a real cowboy. He used to break horses that they would catch roaming the hills out West and ride them to break them. And he bought this little colt when it was about three months old along with its mother, the mare. And one day, when Dad went into the stall, the little horse was alongside of the mare and Dad said, "Come around to the other side, and I'll give you a handful of oats." And the horse backed up and came around as if he understood, and Dad gave it some oats. And two or three times he said that same thing and the horse just naturally came around, learned that he could get some oats by coming around so he did it. And Dad knowing horses sensed that this was an intelligent horse, unusually so. So he began talking to it and giving it commands. And in due process of time he taught it to answer about thirty-five different questions out of the Bible. He would ask the horse how many loaves and how many fishes that the Lord used to feed the five thousand, and he would tap out the numbers. And he would ask also such questions as what does the old serpent look like and the horse would open its mouth and stick its tongue out [laughs] sharply. He had some little comical questions. He would ask, "What do the girls look like when they chew gum in the choir?" And he would give the horse a handful of grain and the horse would open its lips just perfectly wide open and [laughs] chew the oats. He would say, "What did the Prodigal Son's

father do when the Prodigal Son returned from his field trip?” And the horse would come and put his front foot around Dad and put his head around his shoulder. And so it was quite an attraction. He started out by taking it to Sunday school picnics and then an evangelist up in Michigan invited him to bring the horse up, and they built a special platform that could hold the horse. It was a beautiful Arabian stallion horse.

SHUSTER: Full-sized horse?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, full-sized horse. And some people objected to using a horse to help preach the gospel. But in this case, for instance, why, the evangelist invited Dad into the inquiry room when they give an invitation and people came forward. I don't know just how many came forward that day, but Dad said about twenty-five of them raised their hands and said that they would not have been there if it had not been there to see the horse. So that encouraged Dad, of course.

SHUSTER: Do you recall what the evangelist's name was?

SCHNEIDER: That...that time up in Michigan I do not remember. I could probably look that up in the...in the records that we do have, and some of those that I've turned over to you. But Bob Murfin was heading up Youth for Christ here in the greater Chicago area about that time. And he invited Dad to bring the horse down to a tent meeting down in Galesburg, Illinois, and there was a young man that was invited to do the preaching down there and that was Billy Graham. Well, that sort of started them working together, and Dad presented the horse at Soldier Field before about 70,000 people. Billy Graham was the speaker there at that meeting. In fact, I was at the Moody Bible Institute at that time and helped usher that...that very meeting. Ranger the Gospel Horse.

SHUSTER: What...what do you think was the attraction of Ranger that people came to see?

SCHNEIDER: Well, people are normally interested in horses, and to see a horse that could answer questions out of the Bible, it was a double attraction. In fact, sometimes before Dad would show the horse to people that would beat a path to his door to come to see this horse. And he would sometimes ask the father or the mother if they brought their children along to ask them about these questions from the Bible before he had the horse answer, and he would prove that the horse sometimes knew more than they did [laughs] about the Bible. I think it was a way that Dad had of sharing his faith.

SHUSTER: What...what happened to Ranger? How long did your father keep him?

SCHNEIDER: Well, Ranger got to be older and so did Dad. Dad had retired from a trucking and excavating business that he had started many years before that I worked into and will maybe tell a little bit later on in this interview. But when Dad got too old to travel with the horse and he had to...had a stable built into one of his trucks and that way he took it around. But he later gave it to Bill Rice, John Rice's brother, who had a camp for handicaps down in Tennessee. And so that's where the horse spent its later years.

SHUSTER: Now, was your father a rancher or...?

SCHNEIDER: He was a farmer. But he was also in later years he went into landscaping and rock gardening, and he would build rock gardens in Navy Pier and in the Merchandise Mart, and each time he'd come by with a blue ribbon. And he had a quite a knack along those lines.

SHUSTER: So, your home was in Chicago?

SCHNEIDER: In Elgin.

SHUSTER: In Elgin. And what about your mother? What was her name?

SCHNEIDER: Well, her maiden name was Dalby. And she was one of eleven children. Her grandparents, my great-grandparents, had thirteen children and they all came over from London, England. So, that didn't leave too many of our family over there in England.

SHUSTER: And her first name?

SCHNEIDER: Edith. Edith Dalby was her maiden name. Yes. My sister...

SHUSTER: How would...?

SCHNEIDER: Yes. I was just going to say my sister's name is Edith and my young brother married an Edith, so we have Ediths in the family.

SHUSTER: How would you describe her?

SCHNEIDER: My mother? The best mother in the world. Yes. She came to Christ in early years, and it was through reading a Bible that she gave me back in 1940 that I came to the full assurance of faith. I used to read a chapter out of my Bible every night before I'd go to bed. I wasn't a dedicated Christian. I wouldn't go to a movie on Sunday [clears throat] and I didn't drink or go with the wrong crowds, but I really had never turned my life over to the Lord until 1940, and that really made a change for me.

SHUSTER: Would you say that yours was a devout family?

SCHNEIDER: Well, yes, and especially so after my one brother came out so completely for the Lord. He had started in a downhill stretch and had gone on....

SHUSTER: And his name was?

SCHNEIDER: Bill. My father's name was Bill. But my older brother had started to...playing his accordion and musical saw and a musical pitchfork on the stage in Chicago and it was not the right kind of life that the folks had hoped for. And so when he really came under the hearing of the gospel through a local evangelist, why, he was gloriously saved. And we used to say that



even a dog knew that Bill had come to the Lord. He treated his dog better even after that [laughs].

SHUSTER: What was the evangelist? Do you recall?

SCHNEIDER: No, I really don't. I don't remember the name of the evangelist that led Bill to the Lord.

SHUSTER: Would you say that your entire family became more devote...devout after?

SCHNEIDER: Well, yes, I...I would say that. My older sister married a minister. My brother Bill mentioned...we mentioned became a minister. My next younger brother became the head of Chapel Crusaders Mission, and he's still the director of that now. And so, each one of the family seemed to follow on in the ways of the Lord.

SHUSTER: When you were growing up, was there an emphasis in your home on faith in Christ or family devotions or involvement in church?

SCHNEIDER: Well, we didn't have family devotions as we have it in our own family. We always said grace at the table. We always had to...we'd pray before we would retire at night, but not the kind of devotions that we would like to have as our own family. Uh-huh.

SHUSTER: From you childhood, what are your strongest memories? What stands out most in your mind, particular memories?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I think of life on the farm. I think it's a shame if children have to be brought up living in an apartment where they never get out to play in the grass or otherwise. We always had a very happy time. In fact, my next younger brother went out of a cement block business, sold-out, so that he could buy a farm and raise his family of four children on the farm.

SHUSTER: What was his name?

SCHNEIDER: Stan. And all of his children have turned out well, and they've all come to the Lord, and that was a...a definite purpose that he had. In working on the farm, you work together, and you are together and it has a lot to helping a family develop a oneness and a...a unity.

SHUSTER: Did your family have this kind of unity?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, yes. That's right.

SHUSTER: Now you mentioned your brother Bill and your brother Stan. Do you have other brothers and sisters?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, I have.... We're seven children as I believe I mentioned at the start. And we're four boys and three girls. There's one younger sister, a younger brother, then my next

older sister, next older brother, and then another sister, another sister, and then my older brother Bill. The next older brother went in business with my dad as I did and later when.... Of course, I left the work in 1943 to go to the Moody Bible Institute. My dad retired from the work and my older brother took on that business, which later became a very, very prosperous trucking and excavating business.

SHUSTER: And what were your brothers' and sisters' names?

SCHNEIDER: Well, my older brother Bill. My sister Edith – her married name is Batten. She married Reverend Everett Batten. And then my brother Ed, who has been the president of the Lions Club here and is well known in the greater Chicago...greater Elgin area. And then my sister Bessie, who is married to Dan Rediger. He's a well driller and a tree planter. And then I come next in the line. Then my younger brother Stan who's director of Chapel Crusaders Mission, who's also a farmer. And my younger sister who married Herschel [?] Johnson as a furnace man.

SHUSTER: Now what year were you born?

SCHNEIDER: I was born way back there during World War I. [Laughs] 1918.

SHUSTER: The same year as Billy Graham.

SCHNEIDER: Uh-huh.

SHUSTER: And you mentioned a little bit about your conversion, but how did you come to know Christ?

SCHNEIDER: Well, through my brother Bill coming to the Lord, why, there was new light on the...on the picture. My parents were Christians but not as devout of Christians as they later became. But I was invited to a gospel meeting by my brother Bill, and I went forward in a meeting when I was maybe ten or eleven years old. But I never had the full assurance of faith. I didn't know for sure if I died I'd be with the Lord or not. And this was after I'd got into the early twenties, and a young friend of mine....

SHUSTER: Your early twenties.

SCHNEIDER: Yes. And a young friend of mine was killed in an automobile accident not too far from our home, and I couldn't help wondering, "What if I had been with him? What if I had been killed? Would I be with the Lord or not?" Various things came into my life at that time that caused me to really look to the Lord. And as I said, I always used to read a...at least a chapter out of my Bible before I'd retire at night, and it says in the Bible, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." [Romans 10:17] So it was through reading the Scriptures one night back in November of 1940. I don't know exactly what Scripture I was reading. It very likely I was reading in the Gospel of John, but at least the truth of John 5:24 got a hold of my heart and my mind where Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you he that hears my word and

believes on Him that sent me has everlasting life and shall not pass into condemnation but is passed from death unto life.” So that was what I needed. Now there was no conviction of sin at the time which rather verifies to me that I had been saved earlier in childhood when there was that conviction. But the sense of God’s presence and the assurance of faith that was given to me through the Scriptures that night was so real that I didn’t even want to go to bed that night [laughs] to sleep that night, afraid that it might not be real in the morning. But it was, and it is, and it still continues to be.

SHUSTER: Now, when you...when did you start developing the conviction that you wanted to be a missionary or be involved in Christian work?

SCHNEIDER: Well, immediately when the Lord really got a hold of my heart, I think like David said, “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” [Psalm 116:10] I began to witness right away. “This is real. Jesus is real. He’s not just a story in history. Jesus is crucified and risen and alive today and living in me, and I must share this with others.” And it was amazing as the Lord gave me that desire, how souls would come to the Lord and change their lives. I had been...been a member...I’d become a member of the Presbyterian church here in Elgin, and there was a very devout man there at that time by the name of Reverend Vonks [?], and I had joined the church and had been sprinkled there as taken into the membership. But that was several months before I really had this experience with the Lord, and at that time I was not sure whether I had ever been saved before or not. And so I told this dear pastor that I’d like to give my testimony at the church to say that before I said I was a Christian but now I know I am. And he said, “Well, you could give that in the evening service. We’ll have a testimony time.” But I said, “Most of the people that are there in the evening...most of the people that are there in the morning service will not be there in the evening.” So he did allow me to give a witness there which was an unusual thing in that rather reserved Presbyterian church atmosphere. But that was right here in Elgin, Illinois – the help...House of Hope Presbyterian Church. So immediately there was that desire to share and to let people know that something really had taken place in my life.

SHUSTER: And you say your conversion was around 1940 or...?

SCHNEIDER: November of 1940. If that was my conversion. I think that that was...

SHUSTER: Right.

SCHNEIDER: ...really just coming to the full assurance of faith, but at least I’ve told you the story.

SHUSTER: What was the response of the church to your testimony?

SCHNEIDER: Well, nothing immediately, although later I had different ones come and say how much they appreciated it.

SHUSTER: Were any people surprised or put off by it?

SCHNEIDER: Not that I heard of that they were any of them put off, but many of them were surprised [laughs].

SHUSTER: What...did you witness in other ways?

SCHNEIDER: Yes. I was in business with my dad and driving a truck, and then shortly after we began excavating and I was driving an excavating high-lift machine and going around taking bids on work, so I had opportunities with people and I began passing out tracts wherever I went and giving witness wherever I could. And at that time I also met an Ernest Cobur [?] who later became Reverend Cobur [?]. He was a sign painter. He had his own neon sign business until shortly before I met him, and his wife had been praying for him secretly that he would get out of that business because most of his business was making beer signs. And one day, according to his testimony, he closed the shop and he had had a large amount of beer signs already...stock signs already made. He had not been in the business long. He'd gone into debt to get into business, and now he was going to go in debt by closing his shop and telling the Lord he was never going to sell another beer sign. And he went home and told his wife, and she said, "Well, I've been praying that you would do that." But this was the man that through this sort of faith he inspired me. And he worked up an object lesson out of neon signs and a coil that he would use to send sparks and people could grab hold of it quickly that wouldn't hurt them [laughs]. And he used that as an illustration that you just have to make a decision for Christ and you may think there are things that would scare you off but don't be afraid. I mean that sort of a...of an illustration. He had a real way with young people, and he said he couldn't carry a tune in a bushel basket so he carried me around [laughs] to lead the singing for him in the meetings and to lead testimony meetings and so that really helped me. And at that venture I met Doris who was a very close friend of the Cobur family, and we served the Lord together for quite some time before we even began dating, but it was so apparent that the Lord just sought us out for each other.

SHUSTER: When you...you mentioned as you were driving, you would pass out tracts, witness. How would you begin? How would you talk to somebody about their salvation [?]?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it might sound strange – I don't remember [laughs]. Why, then my heart would just overflowing and I would talk. It was later that we went to the Moody Bible Institute and learned how to do it. I didn't know how to do it then. I just did it [laughs].

SHUSTER: You mentioned Pastor Cobur and his preaching. What was his preaching style like? What was...what was it like to see him...Pastor Cobur's...?

SCHNEIDER: Well, he was very dynamic...dynamic. He was a very interesting speaker. He just beamed, he radiated the love of Christ. He was not always the best grammatically. Not that he was bad that way, but he wasn't always just correct that way. But he always came across as one who really loved the Lord, one who was very sincere, and his dear wife was the same. And so it didn't take him too long before he actually got out of the secular world and went into fulltime preaching. While he was still a Christian layman, there was an opportunity given for him to take over a Sunday school out at Keeneyville here on Gary Avenue and just north of Wheaton a bit. And he invited me and Doris to go along and assist and help teach in the Sunday school. That

gradually developed into a small church conducted in a school house right on Lake Street and Gary Avenue. And then a man who actually subdivided Keeneyville by the name of Keeney gave us...gave the church a lot if they would build there. So we were able to build the first little building which became the Keeneyville Bible Church. It's quite well known here now in the area. Dr. John...Pastor John Sale has been...had been the pastor there for a number of years until just recently. They've built...they've had two building programs since that initial little building. Now the building will hold I would suppose about 350 people and they have a good attendance there, the Keeneyville Bible Church. And that church [volume level in recording drops] when we later went to the mission field in 1947 began our support and they still continue to help us in our support. We're otherwise members of the Elgin Bible Church and we've been members there. We were charter members of the Elgin Bible Church.

SHUSTER: [Unclear] the Elgin Bible Church?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it did not take out membership, didn't come incorporated as a church until I think in the 1950s. But it used to be a Paul Rader tabernacle and my first acquaintance was back in about 1928. They simply had wooden benches and sawdust trails back in those days. Now it's moved out of the center of Elgin and is located on Irving Park Road just east of Elgin.

SHUSTER: I was going to ask you about Paul Rader since you grew up in Chicago. Did you ever hear him preach or meet him?

SCHNEIDER: I often heard him preach over the radio. I never got to meet him otherwise. But since you bring him up, let me skip ahead about [laughs] a couple of decades. In 1953, I believe it was, we were stationed in Morocco in the midst of the Zemmour Berber tribe area about an hour's drive from one of our large American air bases. They had what they called "eggs in many baskets," and they had these airbases around the world. This was not too long, of course, after World War II. And one...we had become acquainted somewhat with the fact that there was a base there. It was fairly new at the time. About five thousand people later moved in there. But there was a big Cadillac drove in the yard and this was the chaplain of the airbase and his assistant.

SHUSTER: He drove into your yard?

SCHNEIDER: He drove into our yard. It was out on a farm, a rural area in this Zemmour Berber tribe. And, of course, we invited him in to have a cup of coffee and it was a Sunday afternoon, and on our tea table in our living room there at Khemmiset we had a hymnbook, and this hymnbook was Paul Rader's hymnbook. And who should this chaplain be but the son-in-law of Paul Rader. [Laughs] So that was a good introduction to him.

SHUSTER: What was his name?

SCHNEIDER: His name was Theo Miller. He's now gone to be with the Lord. I think his wife just recently passed away, because we otherwise had a letter from her each Christmas time and we haven't heard from her so we're supposing that she's gone to be with the Lord too. But he

was such a great help to us and he had a real prayer burden for the Muslim world and was making it....

SHUSTER: Reverend Miller was.

SCHNEIDER: That's right, and his wife. And they were working very closely along with us. They helped us in getting supplies and [buzzing electronic interference] [unclear] for our station there. And so we had really appreciated him. And when we mentioned Paul Rader, why, I could hardly keep that out of his juncture.

SHUSTER: Paul Rader on the radio. What do you remember of those programs?

SCHNEIDER: Well, that would have taken me pretty much back into my childhood actually. But Paul Rader was my dad's favorite radio speaker, so whenever he was on, why, we had the radio on.

SHUSTER: Why was he your dad's favorite?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I just don't know. He just took to him. I took to him too. [Laughs] He had a very plain simple message and yet straight down the line.

SHUSTER: What do you mean by down the line?

SCHNEIDER: Well, he didn't seem to compromise. He really preached the gospel and seemed to really love the Lord.

SHUSTER: Can you recall anything else about his program or Paul Rader's...Paul Rader's character or other [unclear] of his?

SCHNEIDER: No, because that...that dates back into about the later 1920s, the first of 1930s and that's kind of a long stretch to remember [laughs] to bring out much, I'm afraid.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that the Elgin Bible Church started out as a Paul Rader tabernacle. What was that exactly?

SCHNEIDER: Well, he apparently had extension tabernacles because he was an evangelist and even though he later became the pastor of the Moody Memorial Church, why, I have never really studied the life of Paul Rader to give you the kind of answers that you might want here. But this was one of his extension tabernacles, and it existed until just a few years ago after the Elgin Bible Church moved out of it to their new facility on Irving Park. It was during that winter of heavy snows, and the snow was so heavy on it, it actually collapsed, the old building.

SHUSTER: Was it used as a church then or...?

SCHNEIDER: No, it had been sold to an adjacent hardware store by that time.



SHUSTER: Now, did Paul Rader come out to the tabernacle to teach occasionally or was that [unclear]?

SCHNEIDER: No, by that time he was rather limited and he was so fully occupied, I guess, at Moody Church.

SHUSTER: And so you didn't go in to hear him preach at Chicago Gospel Tabernacle.

SCHNEIDER: We heard him constantly over the radio, but we didn't get in.

SHUSTER: Now, after you...you attended high school here in Elgin?

SCHNEIDER: Yes. Both my wife and I are graduates of Elgin High.

SHUSTER: And then you went on to Moody Bible Institute?

SCHNEIDER: Not right away. In fact, not for seven years because when I was in school I had.... During my...my junior...or rather my freshman year of high school, they had.... And this was not at the Elgin High School. It was the Abbott School, which was a junior high school that had just been built. We were the first students in there in 1934. And they had what they called Trades and Professional People's Day, and the students could sign up ahead of time what particular trade or profession they might be interested in. And I put ministry, still carrying through with this idea that had been in my...mind and heart from early on.

SHUSTER: About how old were you?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it was my first year in...in high school. Fourteen. And they did not evidently have anyone else who put down minister, so they didn't bring a minister. So I had my choices to where to go, and I went to the carpenter shop, not thinking especially that's where Christ got his start [laughs]. At least I was interested in the carpenter shop, so I went to the carpenter shop that day. I only cite that...I only mention that to show that it was still in my mind there, although I did not take what would have necessarily been helpful in that regard of college preparatory course. I had the business world already more in mind and my dad's business I suppose, so I took the business course and graduated in that sense and went into the business for about seven years and bought into the business and had a share in the business.

But it was in 1943 after Doris and I had been engaged under the agreement that we would wait and see what the Lord wanted of us because we both felt the Lord might be calling us into fulltime Christian service. And my brother Ed that we've already mentioned that later took over the business, he and I more or less were running the business then. Dad had already become rather a silent partner. And he came to me and we were about...trying to locate to buy another piece of earth-moving equipment and he said, "There's no use of you investing further in the business if you are going to Moody," which I was considering doing and yet hadn't made that decision. But a decision had to be made, and we were praying, and others were praying for us, especially Ernie Cobur and his wife that we might know the mind of the Lord as far as our future

was concerned. So I told him at that time, I said, “Well, I’m going to Moody.” If I had invested further, it would rather be saying, “I’m staying in the business.” So this was an ideal time. So that was April 1943. Now, I didn’t go to Moody then because the classes didn’t start until the fall. But I did go in the fall, and I took the pastor’s course there, not thinking of mission work.

SHUSTER: Now, between the years of going to Moody, of course, and World War II when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, did that affect your life in any way or [unclear] different?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it...it helped the business in the sense that it gave us business in cutting down drill fields for instance up at the Great Lakes and helping produce the...the fields for their drills and otherwise.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh. What were the drill fields for?

SCHNEIDER: Training. Drill....

SHUSTER: Oh, drill...

SCHNEIDER: Training for the...

SHUSTER: ...parade grounds.

SCHNEIDER: That’s right. Uh-huh. That was it. So then at Moody, why, I took the...as I said, I took the pastor’s course, but through the prayer bands there.... They had ten different prayer bands that would meet a half hour each day, five days a week so that you were praying around the world. And since I had just gotten out of business and been out of school for seven years I needed time to study, and I didn’t have to work because I had money to pay my way through school. But if you attended any particular prayer band regularly, it was rather supposed that you must have a particular interest in that field. Well, I was attending all of them. And so when they were interrupted in personnel for the next term for the Muslim prayer band and the home prayer band, why, the home prayer band petitioned me to assist them to take the position of publicity chairman, which would do the...advertise the prayer band, put the signs out, and etcetera. And so I said, “Yes, I’d be interested in running for that office.” But it was voted by the students who would have these positions. Well, when it actually came out in listing, why, the listed me to assist in the Muslim prayer band instead of the [laughs] home prayer band.

Now, I could see how the Lord had a definite purpose in that, and then after that first semester, I was asked if I would and was elected to be the deputation chairman, which meant that I would have a team of musically talented people and those that could give testimony as to what the Lord was doing in their lives and what he was directing them to as far as missions is concerned. And where churches would open up, we would hold services in churches, and so I would present the challenge of reaching the Muslim. Then the next term I was asked and given the opportunity to lead the Muslim world prayer band and challenge the students with about a ten-minute challenge before we spent some twenty minutes in prayer for that half hour section each week for the next term. Well, from what I’d learned and known about the Muslims by that time, I knew that they

were very hard people to reach with the gospel, and so I had the joy of leading souls to Christ. I was working at that time in a juvenile detention home where each Sunday we'd have maybe a dozen or more that would profess faith in Christ as I'd deal with these young fellows that were in there. And so, there's a real struggle going on in my...into my heart whether or not I should accept this opportunity to head up the Muslim prayer band, because how could I challenge those young people if I wasn't going there or if I wasn't willing to go there? And I sensed that there was a struggle...I had a struggle going on in my heart because of what I've just said – the difficulty of reaching the Muslims, and I was a homebody, as I already mentioned, and thinking of going overseas in some faraway land. I didn't know whether I would be a linguist or not. I had never studied other languages before, and so there are a lot of things going through my mind. But primarily what won out as far as the Lord was concerned that if I'm not yielded to the Lord, and we thought we were by giving up the trucking business, by postponing marriage for about as it was for about five years, then if I'm not willing to go wherever the Lord wants me to go, what am I anyway? So I had to have that out with the Lord. And I can remember standing there in my room at the Moody Bible Institute in the old 153 [or 163?] building, the original building, on the third floor. I walk in, closet open, and the lights on there, and I'm thinking these thoughts, "Am I going to accept this opportunity or not?" And I did not know for sure the Lord was calling us to the Muslim world, but I knew that I had to be at least willing to go the Muslim world or I wasn't good for anything. And so I had it out with the Lord. I said, "Well, Lord, at least I'm willing to go. If you want me to go, I'm not going to tell you no." It wasn't my prime desire, I'll tell you now. But at least I said, "Lord, I...my prime desire is to do what you want, not want I want." And so I accepted that challenge. And then after that term, why, others took over, of course, and yet the result of that challenge stayed right with me. And when we got within about six months of graduation, and I say "we" because Doris has already been attending evening school, and she came in to day school to graduate at the same time with me. And so...so she was also in her turn invited to assist in the Muslim prayer band, and so she got into it that way too and we had this mutual burden. So we began looking around for a mission board that would work among the Muslims. We still didn't know this was where the Lord wanted us but we heard much in those days that you cannot guide a stationary object and a ship in dry-dock does not need a rudder. "But he that sits in darkness and hath no light, let him wait on the Lord," [Isa. 50:10] that's for believers who don't have any idea what the Lord wants them to do. But the Lord had given us some rather clear indications that it might be the Muslim world, so we thought the safest way is ahead in that direction and if it isn't of the Lord, he can certainly stop us. And...you want me to go ahead and give further word along this line or stop now?

SHUSTER: Well, before we get to that why don't we go back and talk a little about Moody and your years there.

SCHNEIDER: Uh-huh.

SHUSTER: Before you came to Moody, what had you known about the Muslim world?
[Unclear.]

SCHNEIDER: Nothing. Nothing.

SHUSTER: No connotations in your mind at all?

SCHNEIDER: In fact, before we went to the mission field, I never even met a Muslim. First one I ever met was in my cabin on the boat going over. Now there are 250,000 in the greater Chicago area. Now there are four and a half million in the United States. In that day, I had a book that was printed in Washington D.C. by our government. It had to do with the churches and their doctrinal statements and other religions in the United States. Muslims were not even mentioned in that. Now they're growing by leaps and bounds.

SHUSTER: Why did you choose Moody to go for Bible school?

SCHNEIDER: Well, Moody Bible Institute and their...WMBI, I meant to say, their radio program, we had that on all the time at home and whenever we heard a radio program it was on WMBI [laughs]. So we heard about this school, and it was just a natural, I guess.

SHUSTER: Were there other schools you did consider going to or...?

SCHNEIDER: No, that just seemed to be where the Lord wanted us to go. I mean, there wasn't even anything else [laughs]...anything in consideration. And Doris was already going there in evening school.

SHUSTER: Were there professors at Moody who had a lasting impact?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I'm sure they all do it [?]. Dr. Kenneth Wuest, the Greek teacher, was such a devout man. And his wife would pray for him – they had no children. She would pray for him every minute he was in class teaching, and he had such an emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and so his life certainly influenced me. And then Dr. Wilbur Smith, who I considered one of the greatest theologians of our time. He was the.... And Dr. [Perry Braxton] Fitzwater that any who know Moody's past at all would know that name. So there were a lot of them there that had a great effect upon us. And then Dr. [Robert A.] Cook. He came later while we were there and headed up the missions department. And then the superintendent of men, Mr. Adolph Gorman, who's still living with his wife in Wheaton, Illinois. They became very close friends of ours too. So the...not only the curriculum but the people there certainly. And then the association that we had and began with...with the ones of the students. One, for instance, who was Doris's prayer sister, is still there now on staff. She was a student there at the time, and she'd been praying for us so definitely. She came and visited us in Morocco, in Spain, and then into Morocco, and she'd been praying for us since we arrived there in '47. We took her around on a tour of the various places where we'd worked and things we'd done and she would say, "Oh, this is where you did this. Oh, this is where the...." You could see that she had just lived it with us and remembered those things.

SHUSTER: Knew your life as much as you do.

SCHNEIDER: Yeah. So this is the kind of association that you get in graduate school like that. You meet people that continue to be your prayer partners and friends and so it's worthwhile that way too.

SHUSTER: What was her name?

SCHNEIDER: Alice Lindsley. Yeah. She's very well-known there. And then another who is a professor there now but was not there then, Dr. Ray Tallman. I don't know if you know him or not, Bob, but he is the director of missions there. And he was a teenager in the American Navy over in Morocco and our home was a home away from home for him. And he retired from the Navy while he was over there and stayed on about six months to help the missionaries. So we recommended that he go to Moody Bible Institute. He went there and now he's the director of missions there. So we have a real in there at the Moody Bible Institute which is, of course, very helpful with our ministries right now too.

SHUSTER: You mentioned Dr. Kenneth Wuest was a devout and accomplished theologian. How do you mean that?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I think I mentioned and I can repeat that he had such a proper emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit and depending upon the Holy Spirit. And then, of course, in the study of Greek he would bring out such golden gems out of the Greek, for instance, and certain things that you just remember that helped you even in your ministries and in your personal life. Now we're looking for the rapture of the Church. We're looking for the coming return of the Lord Jesus. And he brought out of Greek how that there are two words for air in the Greek language. One is the rarified air of the mountaintops, and the other is the air that we normally breathe. And when it says "We are caught up together to meet the Lord in the air" [1 Thess. 4:17], it's not the rarified air of the mountaintops but it's the lower air that we breathe. And when Satan, he brought out, is called the "prince of the power of the air" [Eph. 2:2], why, the Lord is coming to escort us through Satan's territory. So that's sort of a golden nugget that you would get under such a man as that. Uh-huh.

SHUSTER: Do you recall examples from his life [unclear]?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, he was not well physically. In fact, he didn't live to be ver...very old. He didn't live too many more years after we left the Moody Bible Institute. We did get to know his dear wife after he was gone and as a widow. We got to know her, and she just recently went to be with the Lord, and that's another story of the blessing that she brings to it. But I mentioned how his wife would be praying for him, but in his illness sometimes he wasn't able to get there, and we'd spend the class time in prayer. He wasn't able to come to class because of his illness. So one day he said he thanked the Lord for his illness. He felt honored that the Lord had allowed him to be as weak physically as that because it forced him to trust the Lord, and the Lord trusted him with that illness [laughs] that he would because the Lord said he would not allow us to be tested above that which we are able [1 Corinthians 10:13], and he was tested so much that it was honoring to him before the Lord that the Lord considered him strong enough to undergo such testing.

SHUSTER: As Paul explains [unclear].

SCHNEIDER: That's right. Uh-huh.

SHUSTER: What was his illness?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I don't know if he ever really spelled it out, but if he did, I've forgotten what it was.

SHUSTER: You mentioned Wilbur Smith as, you thought, the greatest biblical scholar of his day. What did you mean by that?

SCHNEIDER: Well, he would in the pastor's course. We had him more than other students would have had him, but he would always start out his class with some little nugget that he'd just gotten out of the Scriptures. He was a rather short, stocky man with a rather deep, bass voice. He had lamented that he couldn't sing, but he was sure he was going to sing when he gets to heaven. But he would march back and forth in front of the class and say, "You know men, I saw something in the Scriptures that I'd never seen before," and he'd bring out such a thought that at Christmas time now just coming up. He said, "It's interesting that the bread of heaven came down from Bethlehem, which means the house of bread, in his nativity." And he had a sense of humor about him too. He said one morning as he walked back and...walked back and forth in front of the class in a more serious mood, he said, "You know men," he said, "last night we were out to a twenty-fifth wedding anniversary celebration and that man told me that in twenty-five years of married life they had never had an argument." Then he walked back and forth for a few times without saying anything and then he looked over his horn-rimmed spectacles and said, "You know men what I've got to say about that?" And then there was a little time of silence. "What a delight."

SHUSTER: [Laughs].

SCHNEIDER: So he was a great man and we thought a lot of him, and I'm sure that he still lives in his books and in the memory of a lot of people.

SHUSTER: You...of course, you were at Moody during the time when America was in the World War...World War II. Did that affect life on...on campus in any way?

SCHNEIDER: Well, of course, a lot of prayer went up, and...I suppose not more I can say than that. It affected everybody.

SHUSTER: Now, were missionaries able to go out or was...were you able to go out as missionaries to fields during the war?

SCHNEIDER: No, not...not during the war. One of the missionaries that later became Doris' coworker—in fact, she is still over there in Morocco—went out the year before we did. Ila Davis



by name. And she was ready to go and then the war broke out so she couldn't go. One of the missionary....

SHUSTER: Ready to go to Morocco?

SCHNEIDER: Yes. One of the missionary couples that had left before the war broke out and was headed back and got to New York with all of their baggage to go back, Mr. and Mrs. Shortridge by name. And the war broke out, they couldn't get back. By the time the war was over, the wife had taken ill and so they never did get back to the field. The other two men, two couples, they...both men passed away. They were elderly. They both had intended to go back but they both passed away before the war was over. So when I got to the field I was actually the only man under the GMU [Gospel Missionary Union] even studying the Arabic language. Later on in our little talk I can tell you about a John Barcus who graduated from Moody and had gone over to reach the Jews over there, but he was studying French. So I was the only man actually on the field to reach the Muslims back there in 1947 when we began language study.

SHUSTER: Were you at Moody or in Chicago the year that the war ended?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, we were at Moody. Yes.

SHUSTER: Do you have any memory of what that was like [unclear]?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it was great elation. Yes, everyone was so happy.

SHUSTER: Was there some kind of assembly at Moody [unclear]?

SCHNEIDER: Well, that again was kind of a long time ago, Bob, and nothing rings out in particular in that regard right now, but I'm sure that there was.

SHUSTER: Those years were also the years that Youth for Christ was getting...was getting started by Torrey Johnson and Billy Graham in Chicago and others in other cities. Were you involved at all with or in the beginnings of Youth for Christ?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, I was. In fact, before Youth for Christ we had in the Elgin area what we called Fox Valley Young People. The Fox Valley runs through Elgin, the Fox River. And one of the young preachers from Wheaton that we had speak to the group one time was Billy Graham. And then, as I mentioned, my dad having gone into Youth for Christ and got to be a friend of Dr. Bob Cook and Billy Graham. Another who was on the initial planning board was Emmett Ralston, who actually started Chapel Crusaders Mission that my brother helped to found with Dr. Reverend Ralston. And Reverend Rolston passed away about three years ago and my brother by virtue of that became the director of Chapel Crusaders Mission. While at Moody, I went to see Bob Murfin, who was the Chicago director for...for Youth for Christ, and he had....

SHUSTER: In Chicago?



SCHNEIDER: He was in Chicago at the time. He had an office in Chicago. And my roommate at the time had been the roommate of Bob Murfin, so that's sort of firsthand information about Bob Murfin. But I visited him and got some talent to come out to the Keeneyville Bible Church where I was heading up a Youth for Christ venture there at that time. So we did have some roots in Youth for Christ, uh-huh.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that you heard Billy Graham preach when he first came there. Can you recall anything about [unclear] that made an impression beyond [unclear]?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I didn't say I heard him preach. I said he came and spoke to the Fox Valley young people. My wife heard him, but I didn't hear him. I didn't hear him when he was here. No, I didn't.

SHUSTER: What...but you were involved with the Youth for Christ group at the Keeneyville church. What were those early Youth for Christ [unclear] like? What...who came to them? What was the program?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it was thrilling to see how youth were attracted to hear the message of the gospel and here in the Elgin area, and we turned a lot of literature, a lot of clippings over to the Archives, that you know of, Bob, that shows regular meetings here in Elgin that were very well attended and we got in on some of those. But by the time Youth for Christ really got moving along, we were gone to the other side of the world. We left in '47, and that was when Youth for Christ was really blossoming out here.

SHUSTER: Now, Youth for Christ nowadays is mainly aimed at high school kids. Was that also true...true before?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it was aimed at youth because "Youth for Christ," but it was very interesting to see how many older people attended those meetings. There were lots and lots of older people that came too.

SHUSTER: What was a typical meeting like? What happened in a meeting?

SCHNEIDER: Well, they always had a choir. They always had vocalists, soloists. They had musical numbers, and a dynamic speaker, and always an invitation, and they had workers that were prepared ahead of time to deal with souls as they would accept the Lord. It followed the general pattern of an evangelistic meeting.

SHUSTER: So was there anything different about Youth for Christ or special about Youth for Christ?

SCHNEIDER: Well, it...it was more, I would suppose, youth-directed than an evangelistic service. I mean Youth for Christ was different [laughs]. That's why it won its popularity, but I'm sure that Billy Graham had a lot to do with that because he was magnetic. It seemed as though whenever Billy Graham spoke, the Spirit of the Lord just took those words and drove them right



home to the hearts of people, and it was amazing. We are just currently reading the book by...it isn't by Mrs. Graham, but it's by Patricia Daniels Cornwall, and it's giving us a review of some of these things that we knew about and some of these things we didn't know about. But what is mentioned here by Patricia in the book is that it was just amazing when he would give an invitation after a very simple presentation of the gospel. Now the gospel is a simple message and yet it's profound, and as he delivered that message, the Spirit of the Lord was just there to touch hearts. Now, I think the key to why the Lord has so blessed Billy Graham comes along the line of his desiring to be upright, downright [laughs] straight in line for the Lord. I heard many years ago that when he gets his men together to pray he will say, "Are we all confessed up to date?" So I think this is the secret. And then he always emphasized the need of prayer. Before any of these crusades there was a lot of prayer. There were cells that were formed to pray and to ask God for this kind of an outpouring and that's what we've been seeing.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that the YFC meetings were usually more youth-oriented. How did this show up in the program, a typical program?

SCHNEIDER: Well, of course, they had youth participating, and the message was aimed in their direction.

SHUSTER: In what way?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I would...I would say you just have to listen to Billy Graham's [laughs]...to see how he does it. But he would...he would bring something out of current events that was of interest to them and then out of those current events he would show how relative to this was to what the message of the...of the Scripture is. And it was like Christ did in his day. He would take things that the people were seeing and knowing and doing and bring object lessons out of them. And I think this is one of the things that...that has been typical of Billy Graham. He brought you up to the place where you were interested, it was something you knew about, something you wanted to know more about, and then he brought it in relation to the Scriptures and what it should mean to you personally. I don't know how to say it any better than that.

SHUSTER: Why is that specifically youth-directed? I mean, that would be good technique for anyone.

SCHNEIDER: Well, I see...I see your point, but I don't know [laughs].

SHUSTER: Okay. Did you ever hear Torrey Johnson or other Youth for Christ speakers that you were involved with?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I know their names, but as I say we got to the other side of the world and forty years over there. Rip Van Winkle twice, you know, [laughs] and not only that we forget but we've been away from so much of it and it's rather amazing to some people what we don't know having been gone so long [laughs].

SHUSTER: Now you...why don't we pick up at the point where you were committed to become a missionary to the Muslims. How did that develop? I mean, you mentioned your involvement throughout your time at Moody Bible Institute.

SCHNEIDER: Yes, and I mentioned how I had surrendered. And Doris felt wherever the Lord called me, if we were called to work together, that she was called too, but the Lord did give her that special burden too to reach out to the Muslims. And so we were together in this fact that we were to look for some mission board that would work among Muslims and if the Lord opened the door, why, that's where we were to go. If the Lord closed the door he would open something else. There was a Jewess that had been converted under the British Syrian Mission at the Moody Bible Institute, a student at that time, and she introduced us to the representative from Canada. I can't remember her name right now. But at any rate we got to meet her and she gave us some application forms to fill out and we did and doctrinal statements and all that goes along with it. We got an answer back from them. One of the questions was, "Are you engaged?" Yes. "If you're engaged, would you wait for marriage until you were on the field for two years?" Well, we had been praying together for over five years and we were engaged for a fairly large part of that time, and we had rather felt that we should get married before we went to the mission field. I was then twenty-eight years old, and so we wrote and said that we felt that we should get married before we went into the field but we would not allow this to keep us from going to the field. They answered back and they said they would accept us but only under the condition that we would wait until we were on the field for two years. So we began to look around for other missions, and they were like...scarce as hen's teeth in those days, working in any particular way among Muslims. We....

SHUSTER: And you were committed to working with Muslims?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, we sensed that this was the direction the Lord was indicating from the experiences we'd had there at Moody. And so we began trusting the Lord and looking to the Lord for direction and for leading us to a mission board if this was not to be with the British Syrian Mission. And as we look back at it now and all the troubles in Lebanon and otherwise, we can see why the Lord didn't allow us in that direction, although we did run into troubles in Morocco too, politically. But at any rate, why, we heard about the North Africa Mission, now called Arab...Arab World Ministry. And there was a man by the name of Dr. Harvey Farmer, who was the North American representative for this otherwise British board. We wrote to him. Before we got his answer, I sat in class...and this was about six months that we've been really looking for a mission and about six months before we were to graduate and wanting some direction. I sat alongside of one of the classmen who knew John Barcus. I knew John Barcus as the head of the Jewish prayer band. I'd attended his program regularly when he was heading it up that term. I had not known that he'd gone to Morocco to work among some 350,000 Jews over there. But this student had John Barcus's prayer reminder. He said, "John Barcus has gone to Morocco to work among..." and I wouldn't have even known where Morocco was. "He's gone to Morocco to work among the Jews over there but there are many Muslims." He didn't say ninety-nine percent Muslim. But I took the address of the Gospel Missionary Union under which John Barcus had...and his wife had gone out to Morocco and went down to my post office box within the same hour, maybe within the same five minutes. And here in my post office box was

the letter from Dr. Farmer and in it he said that the North Africa Mission—and this was right after World War II—was not accepting candidates from North America at that time. But he said, “I highly recommend the Gospel Missionary Union.” So now when you’re praying and listening to the Lord for indications, why, things like that really set your heart. And from this we felt even right from the start rather sure that this is what the Lord would have us do. So we applied. We had their questionnaire. It had the question, “Are you engaged?” It had the question, “Would... would you be willing to wait for two years before you got married on the mission field?” We said the same thing as we did to the British Syrian Mission. When they wrote back they agreed that we would get married before we went. So, that’s what got us directed toward the Gospel Missionary Union and shortly after graduation we went to candidate school. We got married shortly after graduation and two months after that we went to candidate school. And normally up until that time their candidate school was a six-month period where you would live in at the mission, you would teach Sunday school, you would take meetings out, you would help around the place, and they would get to know you and you would get to know the mission for six months. But just as we came, our candidate school had only three months. It cut down from six months to three months, and when we arrived in October of 1946 down in Kansas City where the headquarters was, our home church, the Elgin Bible Church, had already sent down our first support, which was seventy dollars...

SHUSTER: A month?

SCHNEIDER: ...seventy dollars a month per person. Half of that was to be received on the field, and the other half of it went into the medical and the field work and into the general fund. So thirty-five dollars a month was supporting a missionary on the field at that time.

SHUSTER: You mentioned the question that was on those applications, “Are you willing to wait two years before you get married on the field?” What was the purpose of that?

SCHNEIDER: Well, my wife in particular could see the purpose of that after we didn’t wait that long, and we were not sorry we didn’t wait. I mean we’re sorry...not sorry we married. But within the first year on the mission field we had twins, which made it more difficult for her to get the language. So there’s real reasoning behind it. But in our case, why, we were both well enough in...in years and had known each other long enough and we felt that this was the way and we did.

SHUSTER: So the purpose was to lessen stress and adjustment?

SCHNEIDER: I’m sure. Yes. I wouldn’t say it’s a bad rule, but in our case, why, I’m glad we went the way we went.

SHUSTER: You mentioned that the candidate school was cut down to three months from six months. Why was that?

SCHNEIDER: Well, I’m thinking now it’s only six weeks. So they feel that they don’t need all that time. I’m not the one that can say that. I just know that it was cut down and by virtue of the

fact that it was cut down, I think we got to the field quicker than anybody else that ever joined the mission because our support came in and [laughs] we finished candidate school and we headed for the mission field.

SHUSTER: Was that in any way a product of the end of the war and the possibility of going back out again?

SCHNEIDER: Well, the war had concluded in '45 and this was '47 when we headed out. And we left in March but our boat didn't leave...it couldn't pass life...life boat inspection for about a week so we actually arrived over in Morocco the 11th of April in 1947. I didn't know that I was going to be such a bad sailor or I might have thought more seriously about going [laughs] even then. But we headed right out into a storm, and if it had not been my first ocean voyage I wouldn't have thought that...I might have thought this was more of a storm than [laughs]...than it was. We must have headed out into a tail end of a hurricane. The waves were going right over the boat, and I was just sick as can be. In fact, I tell a little bit of a story and I say that after about three days I got up on top deck to get some salt breeze and my wife came up and she said, "Is the moon up yet?" I said, "Oh, don't tell me that. I think I'm up too" [Shuster laughs].

SCHNEIDER: [Laughs] At least by that you know I was pretty sick [laughs].

SHUSTER: You were sick the whole voyage?

SCHNEIDER: Well, no you...you get your sea legs a little bit, but whenever it starts getting rough again, why, I would still feel it. In fact, I started a Bible study onboard and found some Christians that were willing and wanting to meet, and I had to excuse myself from the Bible study one night and visit the rail. People used to ask us how we travelled and we'd say by the rail [laughs]. Yeah.

SHUSTER: How many other people were with you in candidate school?

SCHNEIDER: Well, there were others that were going out to Morocco. There were Clem and Dorothea Payne [?] and Verna Jantz [?]. Clem and Dorothea Payne have both gone to be with the Lord. They died of cancer within the last, well, he about three years ago, she about five years ago. And Verna Jantz [?] who is ill now with cancer down in Oklahoma. And then Doris and I, we were in candidate school. Then there were others that were going to other fields, but they weren't getting the same orientation as we were entirely because they weren't heading in the same direction.

SHUSTER: Now were there actual classes you attended in candidate school?

SCHNEIDER: Yes, there were classes. And they were classes telling us about the mission and the work on the field, and furlough, and we learned about their insurance program and etcetera. There were a lot of things to learn. But they were more interested in getting to know you in practical Christian work and they had opportunity for that sort of [unclear].

SHUSTER: Looking back on your training, what kind of things was it that you think they wanted to know about you? What were they trying to find out?

SCHNEIDER: Well, they were trying to find out what any mission wants to find out. How well you work with people. How committed you are. How trustworthy you are. Whether you have a proper knowledge of the Scriptures. And in some measure test you out a little bit in language.

END OF TAPE

