RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS ABBEY

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
JUNE 25, 2016

TRANSCRIPT BY

JESSE BRADDELL

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Dr. Thomas Abbey on June 25, 2016, in Jacksonville, Florida, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for having me here today.

Thomas Abbey: You're welcome.

SI: To begin, can you tell me where and when you were born?

TA: I was born in Newark, New Jersey, October 10, 1925. The family, we moved to Nutley, New Jersey. I was raised and went through the school system there and applied and enrolled in Rutgers in 1943 and was able to complete a half year when I realized the military was going to draft me. So, I joined the old Army Air Corps. That was on August 3rd of that year, of 1943, and served with them until May 25th of '46. In that period of time, they trained me to be a radio operator and take Morse code. I was attached to a squadron of e-47 paratroop drop planes.

SI: Okay.

TA: The C-47s, and wound up in Europe, although I never was in on any paratroop drops. The outfit I had primarily ferried gasoline and medical supplies forward to "Georgie" Patton and his Third Army and took casualties back to a place outside of Paris where we were stationed. It was interesting--you get trained six months to be a radio operator and you get overseas and you're in radio silence, because you're in a plane that has no armor or any way of defending itself. After the war, I went back to Rutgers in '46 and, by going through summer school, was able to graduate from the College of Agriculture in 1949. My brother was able to catch up with me and we graduated the same year, although he was a year-and-a-half older than me, in the College of Agriculture.

SI: You had originally been in the College of Agriculture.

TA: Yes, right. I originally was aiming to get into veterinary school. However, at that time, the State of New Jersey had an anti-vivisection law. The Puritans had put in, way back, a law through the Legislature that you could not cut on a dead human being. Therefore, we had no medical school, no veterinarian school. We were at the mercy of the University of Pennsylvania and New York and Cornell for veterinary schools and they only took one each from New Jersey. There were two fellows that had a little bit better grades than I did and they got in and I didn't. So, I went to work for a pharmaceutical company from New York, Leterle Laboratories. They sent me out to Elkhart, Indiana, to sell their veterinary medicine, which I did for about two-and-a-half years. Then, I had a chance, with a competitor, to come South and get away from the snow and the ice. [laughter] I did. I came down here and worked for a number of years for them, in fact, seventeen years. Then, my boss retired and a new boss came in and we could not get along. He made it rough on quite a few of us and finally told me, he said, "You just don't fit the company mold, the way you do business. We suggest you find some other work to do." Well, that was kind of rough on me, because I had an eight and an eleven-year-old, a wife and a home to support, but I temporarily took another job. Oh, at the time, they just utterly disbanded the veterinary division. I got a job with a pharmaceutical company selling human medicines to doctors, MDs, and so forth, hospitals, pharmacies, and did quite well at it, but still wasn't satisfied. A doctor said to me, "Why don't you try medical school?" I said, "I'm too old." He

said, "You don't know--try." So, I checked the University of Florida, Miami and Georgia and they all agreed that I was a little too old, but, in talking to an osteopathic physician, he said a couple of his classmates were older. "Why don't I try their profession?" which I did, was accepted by the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, packed up the family and went up there. Four years later, I had my degree.

SI: Wow.

TA: Came back to the west coast of Florida, the St. Petersburg/Tampa area, and took further training. Then, I had the home here in Jacksonville and had leased it out. I came back to the home and set up shop and practiced for thirty-eight years, of family practice here in Jacksonville. It was just at the time the medical profession of MDs and the osteopaths were beginning to get together. They had been at each other's throats for over fifty years, but they decided--the military did it. They started accepting osteopathic physicians and the medical private practice followed suit. So, members of my Class of 1970 were the first to be accepted in residencies by the MDs. One fellow went to the Cleveland Clinic, another went to the Public Health Service, their internship, another went to Johns Hopkins and another one to the Army medical training for residencies. I stayed with family practice and, at one time, was on, as an active member, five of the seven hospitals here in town and enjoyed it, had good relations, had a great practice. Towards the end, I combined with, let's see, an MD critical care physician, an MD pulmonary specialist, MD internist and two DO, family practitioners. We had a great group, but, when my wife died, I just lost interest. I practiced until I was eighty-three years of age, so, we don't go by the sixty-five-year rule. [laughter] I quit. When I quit, just happened my wife died about the same time and here I am now, but it's been a great life. I've had a lot of interesting cases. One of the things, though, they had a ninetieth birthday for me here last October and it reminded me, we're getting a little older. [laughter] When I was four years of age, my mother would take my brother and myself over to Elizabeth, New Jersey, which is an old pre-Revolutionary War town. We had an aunt of the family lived there, Aunt Fannie (Steelman?). She was my mother's father's--what do you call it?--cousin. We would go up there and on the front porch was a rocking chair and this old fellow with beautiful white hair would sit in that rocking chair. I'll always remember him. He always had on black pants with big, wide black suspenders and a white shirt, long-sleeved with them rolled up in the summertime and high button shoes, black shoes, and the stockings with garters on them. That's what interested me, why a man would wear garters, but, in those days, there was no elasticity in the socks and the men had to hold their socks up with garters. He sat there and he'd get each one of us and put us on his knees and rock us, like we were on a horse. He told my mother he was a Civil War veteran and we used to talk with him and ask him about things. He said when he was a little guy our age, his father would take him down, four miles down the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks, to an old soldiers' home. He would visit, with his father, these old soldiers, some of which were Revolutionary War veterans. So, I have talked to a Civil War veteran who has talked to Revolutionary War veterans.

SI: Wow.

TA: So, this country isn't as old as we think it is. I thought that was interesting, that he'd tell my mother that, but it's been a great life. My Rutgers years, I came out of service and those several years I spent in service I felt was taken away from my chance to get ahead. So, I was there to

study, as most of the GIs were at the time, the ex-GIs. We didn't date much. We were out to learn and, by beating the books, and so forth, I did pretty good. I became Phi Beta Kappa. That is one reason I got into medical school, was that backed me. I thought about, when I was applying for medical school, "How can I set myself apart from others?" I said, "We've got to sell them on something different." I went around to all the doctors I knew, that I knew well, and asked them if they would give me a letter of recommendation for medical training. Sixteen of them wrote me letters of recommendation. Now, most times, you'll get two or three letters of recommendation in an application. I had sixteen, plus a couple of them were Rutgers professors, plus the preacher, plus several other people, and my physical and application and photo, and so forth, I couldn't fit them in a manila envelope. It was too much. [laughter] So, I got a box in which typewriter paper comes, about that high, just eleven-and-a-half-by-eight or whatever. It all fitted in there and I wrapped it up, sent it UPS to the school and I was accepted. A couple years later, when I was well established in school, I asked the registrar, "How'd you come to accept me? I was not the young crowd." He said, "Well, any guy that would take the time to do all that," he said, "he must be pretty interested in getting into school. So, we looked him over pretty heavily," and that was me. That's how I got into osteopathic medical school, but I enjoyed it. Actually, a lot of the courses I had in Agricultural College at Rutgers helped me in medical school, such as biochemistry. That was about the main one that really helped, that and physics and chemistry, but it's been a great trip and I've enjoyed it well.

SI: I want to ask more about that, because I have heard it from other alumni about what an uphill battle it was for New Jersey students just to get into medical schools in that period, since we did not have a school.

TA: No.

SI: Every other school had quotas for New Jersey students. Also, alumni note that the Agricultural College really had a much more advanced curriculum than most people would think.

TA: Oh, yes.

SI: Could I go back and ask you some questions about your early, pre-Rutgers life, and then, move up?

TA: Sure.

SI: First, what were your parents' names, for the record?

TA: Okay, my dad was German and he was the second generation. My great-grandfather came from a little town called (Ichweisen?) in Germany, between Wurzburg and Nuremberg, a farming town. He was a butcher and he came to New York, immigrated and started butchering and got out on his own and was very successful. At one time, he had thirty wagons running meat to hotels and restaurants in New York. He made out very well. My grandfather got into business with building pianos. He and a fellow named Staib got together and the name was, at that time, Abendschein. Abendschein is German, "*Abend*" meaning "evening" and "*Schein*" means "glow" or "sunset," but what happened, after Rutgers, my brother was working in the South and he had a

devil of a time with the name. Nobody could pronounce it, nobody could spell it, and so, he changed it. Well, here I was with one name and him [another] name. They called me "Abbey" at Rutgers, so, we changed the name to Abbey, A-B-B-E-Y, and it worked out real well.

SI: Wow.

TA: And that's the only reason, because he changed it. I wasn't going to be left on a whim. Since then, I have had, through the Internet, people get a hold of me and wonder if I was an Abendschein and had we changed our name. I found there's a bunch of them. There's a bunch in Nebraska, Maryland and around, none down here, but that was the reason of the name change.

SI: I was wondering if it had to do with World War I, but it came much later, obviously.

TA: Yes, yes, right.

SI: I know there was a lot of anti-German backlash during World War I.

TA: Yes, there was, and World War II, too, very much so, not quite as much as with the Japanese, but there was quite a backlash. I was with a couple of Jewish fellows and, after the war was over, we moved to--we didn't move--but we flew down into Germany, except the very end, we were in Germany, near Frankfurt. They kind of shunned them. They really shunned everybody, but more so the Jewish fellows. That wasn't the reason for the name [change]. I had always wondered, "Was my family originally Jewish?" because they were butchers and many of the butchers in old Europe were Jews. He was a butcher and his father was a butcher in these little areas of Germany that were a very strong area for Martin Luther and the Christian Lutheran heritage. They were Lutheran. I just wonder if they didn't marry out of the faith and were talked into the Lutheran faith. No, maybe I'll have to go and get the DNA for that, but, anyway, they were second generation. My mother's family was English all the way.

SI: Okay.

TA: I traced them back to the first [generation in America]. She, maiden Grandmother, was a Lawrence, L-A-W-R-E-N-C-E, last name. That was her married name. Her maiden name was Draiper, D-R-A-I-P-E-R. They came from a small town outside of London called Feltham, F-E-L-T-H-A-M. During World War II, we wrote letters to the family that were in England, but never got a chance to get over there and see them, never did, and I've got a ton of relatives. The first English relative, William Lawrence, came to this country in 1636 on a packet, a small British vessel, called the *Prentice* and they landed in Long Island and he started farming. He became very successful. The Dutch made him a magistrate, a judge, and he was a judge for several years under the Dutch. When the British took over New Amsterdam, he just flipped and they accepted him as a judge for the British. [Editor's Note: What is now New York City was first settled by the Dutch in 1624 and named New Amsterdam. In 1664, the British took it over and renamed it New York.] From there down to the Civil War, we haven't been able to trace it too well, because that William Lawrence, he had four or five children by the first wife, and then, he had a second wife that he had four by and they were all over the place. I hadn't been able to run them down until I got into this one Lawrence that was in the Civil War in the Volunteers

from New Jersey. Yes, a part of the family, my paternal great grandfather, is real old, pre-Revolutionary War English, and the other half of the family is German that came over here about 1880. Between there and '85, he came over here. He married a German girl, Sophia Kahlman, and that great-great grandfather--no, he would be great-grandfather--he is buried in a Lutheran cemetery in the Bronx, New York, must be an old cemetery. I don't know where it is in the Bronx, but the Bronx is pretty much a rundown area, as far as I've heard. Now, it's not the area it used to be.

SI: Some parts are being gentrified.

TA: Yes, near the old Yankee Stadium wasn't so hot, but anyway. We were raised in the Nutley School System. My mother was always saying we got a terrible education in English, but I found, while we went to Rutgers, we weren't the only ones. There was a professor, the head of the English Department at that time, he was appalled at our ability to know grammar and structuring the sentence and the use of verbs, adverbs and on down. He made everybody take a primary course in basic English for the first six weeks we were in freshman Rutgers. A whole bunch of us had to take it and it's the best grammar course I ever had. It was great. It helped out. The schooling was great at Rutgers.

SI: Tell me about growing up in Nutley during the Great Depression.

TA: Oh, yes.

SI: What was that like?

TA: It was rough and we kids were old enough--I was six years of age when it really hit, 1931--we were quite cognizant of the fact--I know my mother and father got into quite a few arguments--the fact that he couldn't find a job. He was laid off and, for eighteen months, we lived on the graces of my grandmother, my mother's mother, and her two brothers who still had jobs, because he could not find work. He finally found a job in what was called Manhattan Rubber Company, which was a large rubber company in Passaic, New Jersey. It paid twenty-six dollars a week and at least that put food on the table, but we couldn't pay the mortgage payment on the house. They let us go for, let's see, ten years with just paying the interest on the mortgage and, finally, they foreclosed and we had to get out. That's when we moved to Bloomfield, New Jersey. It was rough. I remember, we had a big plot and my dad turned the ground over for us and we guys had a garden, my brother and I did, half the garden. The other half my dad took care of and he raised all kinds of vegetables for our table, which helped out greatly. I remember one year, we put up 130 quarts of beans, green beans. I mean, it was productive, and canned tomatoes and squash. We put up quite a thing. We guys would take the green beans with us and go up and down the street selling them. We'd get a quarter here and fifty cents there and we had enough to go to the movies on a Saturday afternoon. Yes, it worked out pretty good, but we learned the habits of the Depression days and we've never really lost them, actually. You always had to have that influence of pinching pennies when you really don't need to or to take the lesser expensive item than the top of the line item. It was rough, but I remember I wore a lot of my brother's clothes, hand-me-downs. I can remember going to school with patches on the knees and my dad was good at fixing the shoes. You know how kids will wear out shoes. He would

get a sole and he'd glue it on the bottom of the shoes and they'd last another three or four months, and so forth. So, we learned to pinch pennies. So, we got through the worst of the Depression. Actually, people don't realize, the Depression had its effect right in 1931, '32, '33, and so forth, right up until 1941, World War II. All of a sudden, jobs were everywhere. That's when we broke out of the Depression, although Roosevelt's WPA and those programs were helpful. At least people weren't sitting around; they weren't making much money, but it was the war that changed things. [Editor's Note: The Works Progress Administration, or, after 1939, the Works Project Administration, was an agency that was part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and employed millions on public works projects like buildings and roads, as well as in specialized areas, such as the arts, from 1935 to 1943.]

SI: Did you have to go out and get any jobs? You mentioned selling the beans.

TA: Yes.

SI: Did you do anything else that contributed to the household?

TA: Well, we were a little bit too young at the time. Let's see, in '41, I was, let me see, '25, '35, '40--I was just turning what? sixteen. I was a little bit too young for them hiring, really. We had a newspaper route. My brother and I did have that. We delivered Sunday papers every Sunday morning, 106 papers on a wagon, [laughter] a wagon that you pull. We made money that way and we cut lawns, that's how we did it, the old reel push mower, yes. We had about six lawns we cut and we'd get a dollar or fifty cents for cutting a lawn. The last year I was in high school, one of the teachers got us [a job where] we cut the high school lawn. Fortunately, it wasn't too big of a lawn, [laughter] but we cut the lawn and got paid. Oh, big money there--we got four dollars for that, cutting the high school lawn. Those were the jobs we got during the first part of World War II. The thing I remember mostly was the drives, the drives for metal, the drives for rubber. On this metal drive that we had, [involving] the whole town, of course, we took the metal products down and put them on the high school lawn. Now, this was a three-story building and we made that pile up to the third-story of the high school and we almost did it with the rubber drive of all the old tires we could find and rubber goods and put it up there. It worked out fine. Then, there were the--we didn't have blackouts. We had dim-outs, though, because the lights from New York City, New Jersey, all along the coast, would silhouette the ships going up and down there. The Germans were in the U-boats, just outside, and they'd have a good silhouette and knocked off a lot of ships along there. So, the early war days, were the first two years of the war, of course, we got the heck beat out of us. We weren't winning anything, except the Battle of Midway, and it wasn't until the invasion of North Africa that things began to change a little, but they were sinking ships right and left those first two years, tremendous. [Editor's Note: The Battle of Midway occurred off the island of Midway in the Pacific against the Japanese in June 1942.] So, that stuck in our minds. We went down a couple of times to the beach at Asbury Park and, let's see, what's a couple of the other ones? I can't remember.

SI: Belmar, Bradley Beach.

TA: They were further down a little bit.

SI: Yes.

TA: My grandfather had been raised, on my mother's side, in Toms River, New Jersey.

SI: Really?

TA: Excuse me, he went to school in Toms River. He was born and raised in Barnegat, New Jersey. Now, this is just a crab and fishing village off of the main highway about five miles. You have to go down to it and one road out. I visited the town. It hadn't changed much for years. It probably has now, but they had to bus him or he had to find some way to get to Toms River for education. Finally, he boarded up there for the years, during the school year, and then, go back home for summer in Barnegat, but what else can we help you with?

SI: This is all great. You mentioned your brother was a couple years older than you.

TA: He was eighteen months older.

SI: Okay.

TA: He was born on April 25, 1924, and was just a year ahead of me in school. Then, when he got yanked in the military, he lost more time than I did. So, we went through summer school and that's how we both got caught up together and graduated together. I wanted to say he was my best friend.

SI: Yes.

TA: Yes. He went into the army air corps. in February of, a year-and-a-half before me.

SI: 1942.

TA: Then, he went through mechanic's training. Why I mention him is that he was a mechanic gunner on a B-25, medium bomber, and had twenty-six missions, twenty-six missions over Europe. After the war, they were stationed in Holland towards the end of the war. They moved him down to an old Luftwaffe training field in Germany at a place called Kitzingen. Kitzingen was only twelve miles from where my father's family came, this town called (Ichweisen?). Yet, we guys never thought to try and get down there. I flew down. After the war, I flew down five times to his base and he came up once to see me in Paris, outside of Paris, but we never thought of going there and looking up the family history. We were interested in, "Where's the nearest beer hall and where are the girls?" Anyway, he had the distinction of getting a furlough, when the war was not over, a furlough or a three-day pass to go to Paris from Holland. He went to Paris and they had hotels that they took over where they, the GIs, could get R&R. He'd been out partying the night before in some bars, and so forth, and sleeping late. All of a sudden, he heard all this noise outside. Bells started ringing and he heard this crowd and noise. Opened the windows, the streets were just full of people. [laughter] The war was over. Paris went mad. They just went mad. So, he joined them and he also got down to Nuremburg to see the trials of the Nazis. He had more experiences than I did. Hell, I wish you could've talked to him. He was

a great one, a great storyteller, but, anyway, that's why he caught up with me in Rutgers, so that we graduated together.

SI: Were there any other siblings?

TA: No, but, in my second marriage, I had a boy that I raised, so [that] there were actually three of them. Let's say he was about ten years old and I raised him. One's down in Birmingham, Alabama, one's in St. Augustine, Florida, and the other one's on the north side of town, so forth.

SI: Okay. You did not have any other brothers and sisters.

TA: No, no sisters, no brothers. That was the family.

SI: Okay.

TA: Let's see, what else?

SI: Tell me a little bit about Rutgers before the war.

TA: '41, the war was [on], I went in …

SI: Yes.

TA: Yes. I graduated in '43.

SI: From high school?

TA: Yes. So, it was Fall of '43, '44, yes, the beginning. No, it was the summer and the fall of '43, I was in Rutgers, and then, was yanked out and went into the Air Corps.

SI: Okay.

TA: So, I was not in Rutgers before the war was on.

SI: You would have seen it when it was transformed by the war.

TA: Oh, it was transformed. We had a lot of military in there. There was a big school for training them to be administrators after we won the war. It was a really strong program of English, Italian, mostly English and Italian, and there was a little Russian being taught, but it was English and Italian. Oh, one interesting thing, when my brother and I came back, so did millions of GIs and they all had the GI Bill. All wanted to go to school. So, although we had been in there before and were accepted in there, housing, oh, no place, we couldn't find it on-campus. They weren't helping us any and my brother--he was great at this--we were sitting in front of a place called Winants Hall. I don't know whether it's there anymore.

SI: It is, yes.

TA: It is?

SI: Yes.

TA: Oh, that's an old one, and it was the billets. It was a barracks, but across the street is a Catholic church. The priest was standing out on the steps of the Catholic church, shooing some dogs away, and Larry said, my brother said, "I'm going to go ask the priest if he has any parishioners that would rent to us guys." He said to me, no, he didn't have any he knew of. He said to Larry, my brother, he said, "But, I do know that the Hungarian section up here in town, they were taking some of the students in certain homes." So, Larry said, "Let's go. It's only a few blocks up from Winants Hall." I don't know whether it's still there, but it was a large Hungarian section there. They even had a Hungarian theater and churches, and so forth. So, he gave us the names of some people. No, he gave us the name of the guy that ran that theater. So, we went up to see him. He said, "Sure, I've got a family you might hook up with." So, we went down and we found this house, an old two-story wooden house, but immaculately kept. We talked to the woman and she said, "Well, I'll show you the room upstairs." We went upstairs, looked at the room. It's a nice, fair-sized bedroom with a double bed in it, not a queen size, the old double bed. Finally, my brother said, "We'll take that." She said, "Well, I'll give it to you, but it's only for one, [not] two." He said, "Look, my brother and I slept in a double bed for eleven years during the Depression. We can sleep in this thing." "You two can sleep in this bed?" "Sure, we can sleep in it." We said, "All right." She said, "All we need is one more desk." She had one desk in there. So, she got another desk in there for us and we went in and said, "Well, how much will this be?" She said, "Twenty-two dollars," and he said, "For each one of us?" She said, "No, for the room." [laughter] So, for three-and-a-half years, we went to Rutgers for eleven dollars apiece, a month, for a room. I got a kick out of that one and he did, too. He could make a dollar go farther than anybody I saw. [laughter] He landed that one real good for us, because, then, what we would do, from there to Bloomfield was not a long hop and we could make it on the weekend. So, we'd go up there maybe one out of two weekends, and then, my mother'd get all this food and she'd give it to us and take us back to Rutgers. That worked out good, because we didn't have to go out and eat in restaurants or in the cafeteria much. The other thing I have forgotten to tell you, when I went to Rutgers the first term, I tried to get a room in Winants Hall, but they didn't have any. I learned that the College of Agriculture had some rooms over what they called the short course building. You know the campus; there was a wooden building set up on the path. There was a pond, and then, there was this wooden building up there. I don't know what they used it for. We called the lake the "Passion Puddle." I don't know whether they still do or not.

SI: Yes, they do.

TA: They do? [laughter] Then, the short course building was here. So, there were three floors, and then, on top was an attic, big, but they had two nice rooms up there. Two guys could sleep in one and two in the other. So, I got a bed in one of the rooms and we got them free for shoveling coal in the furnaces of the greenhouses, the dairy building, the horticulture building and the short course building. There were one, two, three, four buildings, plus the greenhouses. So, the four of us would divide up and we figured each one of us shoveled between three-

quarters and a ton of coal each night to stoke those fires, but we got our rooms free for it. I remember this one time, on the Ag Farm, they were cutting down the number of young pigs that had been born on the farm. The prof wanted to make sure we knew how to correctly butcher a pig. So, we went down and each one killed a pig. The bottom line was that when we finished up, we could take one of the pigs home, half a pig, not the whole pig. So, we cut him down the middle. Anyway, we cleaned up the pigs and what are we going to do? Well, you've got to get them out of here. So, we took them back to the short course building. We went through the basement. We had keys just to the basement and climbed all those stairs up to our attic and hung the pigs. It was cold in the [attic]. It was beginning of October, yes, and we hung them in the area that was not prepared as two rooms. The next morning, the prof comes tearing up there, "What? Any of you guys all right?" and so forth. There was a trail of blood up all the stairs, [laughter] all the way to the top. He thought we had been injured during the night. He made us get down there and clean every step and clean them up that day, but that was my experience with pigs. How to get that pig home to my mother and dad, so, what we did, one guy had an old duffel bag and I got it from him, because he wasn't going home that day. They had a locker in one of the buildings and he was able to put his pig in there, but I cut it in quarters and put my half, the quarters, in that old duffel bag and wrapped it in--I forget what, a plastic. I put it over my shoulder and took it on the train and up to New Jersey. Fortunately, it didn't leak and I got it home that way. Yes, so, I had the scholarship to Rutgers, I had my room free, half my groceries are coming from home. So, I made out like a bandit that first year as far as costing money to go to school.

SI: Who are some of the professors that stand out in your memory?

TA: I wish I could remember them. That's the problem. There was a guy named (Vandervoot?) and he was a young, wiry fellow, well-educated. He was a driving force in there and there was a professor, the chief of one of the departments, Bill--can't remember his name. I'm sorry, but my memory is getting bad at this.

SI: It is all right. We can fill these things in later. I just wonder what stood out about them.

TA: One, he reminded me of being a common dirt farmer that was well-educated and you could relate to him real good. The other guy was more of a politician and he knew all the right people in the Legislature to get the appropriations, and so forth. He was "Slick Willy," really good. I wish I could remember this third fellow. Then, I had a biology professor; I can't remember his name. He was downtown. I don't know whether that old building is still there. It was where they taught biology and botany. I had both botany and biology and he was a great teacher. I can't remember too many of the others. Oh, we had a geology professor and we toured all over Northern New Jersey checking out rock formations, and so forth, great teacher, but he was wild. "Stop the bus, stop the bus." He'd jump off the front when he saw a rock formation and he wanted to jump on it. [laughter] I forget--well we had a nickname, of course, for him. I had some good professors. There were practically none that just wanted to slough you through a course. They were there to teach. They were good.

SI: Did you have any interaction with Dean Helyar?

TA: Helyar?

SI: Yes.

TA: He's the one I'm trying to think of.

SI: Good.

TA: One of them. He was the dean of the college. He's, of course, long since dead, I'm sure, but that name has come up before, I'm sure, with you.

SI: Yes.

TA: Yes, Helyar, he was chief man. I remember the day I had to go over to the main building, administration building, on that campus. He'd come out and he stopped and talked to me. He said, "What do you think of it, Selman?" and he said--I forget what his answer was. It was Selman Waksman. You know who he was.

SI: Yes. [Editor's Note: Dr. Selman Waksman was a microbiologist whose research led to the discovery of streptomycin and who coined the term "antibiotics." He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1952.]

TA: He was sitting on the steps, reading a paper, and so forth. He was kind of aloof. He was more with the graduate students. He didn't work with us too much, but he was friendly. If you talked to him, it was no problem. We got to know him. Helyar was a great man, really a good mentor, and I forget the courses he taught us now. You go back seventy-some-odd years and you forget a few things, [laughter] but they were great years. Yes, Rutgers gave me a great [education]. I'd have never gotten into medical [school] if it hadn't been for Rutgers and I really enjoyed it, appreciate it.

SI: I want to ask about your time in the service, and then, go back to Rutgers.

TA: Sure.

SI: You said it was the Fall of 1943 when you were drafted.

TA: What happened, August 3rd, I enlisted and, bam, my birthday is October 10th, I was in the service, on the way to Fort Dix, spent a week, ten days in Fort Dix, shipped to Greensboro, North Carolina, and basic training. I left there and went to Michigan State for pre-officer training. Oh, then, I got sick and they moved them out and said that it would be a long time before they had any more officer candidate openings. They were backing up. My brother, I wrote to him and he was then at gunner training at Fort Myers, I think. He said, "Try radio school." He said, "Nice, clean work." He said, "My work is dirty with mechanics." He said, "Try the radio school. See if you can get into it." So, I applied and they took me. I went to Scott Field, Illinois, and had six months' training, mostly Morse code and the equipment we were using, which was pretty primary in those days, nothing like they've got today. The only piece of navigational equipment

we had was a radio device that brought in the signal over the tower where you were heading or homing. That's all. When you got near, then, you had to work by sight to see the field where you're landing. In that six months, we trained hard. Scott Field was an old permanent base and it was only twenty miles from St. Louis, so, you know where we guys would hit on weekends. It was a fantastic liberty town, terrific. People, on Fridays, going home, wouldn't need their weekly [mass transit] passes anymore. So, they'd give them to us guys and we could ride all over the city free for the rest of the month. There was a lot to do in St. Louis, and then, they shipped me overseas from there, from there down to Newport News in Virginia and over. It's funny, I went over on a ship called the (*Leewinoak*?). The (*Leewinoak*?) is a Dutch name, a Dutch ship the Germans captured, and it was a supply ship for the German pocket battleship the *Graf Spee,* which the British cornered and sunk just off Montevideo in South America, Uruguay, I guess it was. They captured this ship and turned it into a troop transport. [Editor's Note: The German cruiser *Admiral Graf Spee* was utilized effectively as a commerce raider at the outset of World War II. Following an all-out effort by the Royal Navy to find and sink the Graf Spee, the British cruiser HMS *Exeter* and the light cruisers HMS *Ajax* and *Achilles* made contact on December 13, 1939. In the ensuing Battle of the River Plate, the British forced the *Graf Spee* into the neutral port of Montevideo, Uruguay. The captain of the *Graf Spee* decided to scuttle the warship just outside the port on December 17th.] So, everything in there was in German and here we were sailing overseas in this thing and they had already hit the beaches now, D-Day [June 6, 1944]. So, we landed at Le Havre, which was just flattened, and took us to a camp called Camp Lucky Strike, which was nothing but a bunch of tents overlooking the Channel, just grass. It must've been pasture right before that. That's the first we got to realize that we were really in a war zone. German POWs were serving us out of the mess hall, out of the mess tent, and there was a cracked up German bomber that never made it back, made it over the Channel and crashed there. It's the first week out there, but, when we got to this base outside of Paris called Villacoublay, it was an old French base before [it was] the Germans' airbase and the Germans took it over, used it as a base when they were bombing England. Then, we took it over and they put our planes out. They apparently had raided the German base and caught them off guard, because there were a number of burned out German planes around there, but the thing that interested me, here was the runway. Then, there was about a three-hundred-foot drop off into a glen and a little stream down there and a village. That's only three hundred feet. When you had a loaded C-47 and you tried to take off, it was like going off an aircraft carrier. A lot of times, you wouldn't get enough speed. They dropped down off the end of the runway, and then, eventually, you'd see them come up, but they claimed they lost one or two that didn't make it up, but it was a good field. Where were we going to sleep? It was in a monastery. There was a five-story monastery at one side of the field, right near a garden that the monks had. The monks got out of the first three floors and let us have the first three floors and they went up to the top two. We had all French women serving us chow, and so forth. I'll never forget, I got there and it'd been nine days since I'd had a bath, on the ship and in this camp and all. They said there were showers down in the basement, "Wow." We dove down to this shower. I went in there, stripped and went in these showers. The mist and the fog were just complete from people who were in there taking showers. We didn't care. I got in there and started to shower. All of a sudden, I heard somebody singing in a high-pitched voice. I looked over and looked through and this woman says, "*Bonjour, monsieur*." [laughter] She was a French girl that worked in the kitchen. They were allowed to take showers at noontime. We didn't know that. We were just new. So, I took, first thing, shower I had in France was with a French girl. [laughter]

SI: Yes.

TA: I was in a monk's cell, which was about six feet wide, a little over six feet wide, ten feet high, and then, this little, tiny window up there. This tech sergeant, an old timer, had been there since, practically, well, way before the invasion, I mean. He had the bunk up there and he said, "You take this one." Boy, he had a lot of stories to tell me, great stories. I was all ears listening to this. When the war ended, I went on detached service to Southern France. When I came back, I said, "Where's (Lindy?)?" He was awful skinny and a little emaciated looking. He said, "Well, you know he was going to marry an English girl." I said, "Yes. Did he marry her?" "Yes, he married her." He said, "A month later, they found out he had tuberculosis and he's dead." So, they tested me--sure enough, I came up positive.

SI: Wow.

TA: But, I never got active tuberculosis. Every six months, they were checking me. When I got back to Rutgers, they checked me and, when I got working in companies, they checked me every year. As a physician, we were checked every year and I always came out positive on the skin test. So, I finally told them, "Quit the skin test. Just give me a chest X-ray and a blood test," and they did. So, once you become positive on TB, you can remain positive antibodies the rest of your life. So, fortunately, I never got it, but we were packed in that little tiny cell of a room and, if anybody should've gotten it, I should've. Fortunately, I didn't get the tuberculosis. That's the closest to a combat wound I got. [laughter]

SI: When you came over, were you coming over as a replacement or as part of a unit?

TA: Replacement? no. Well, yes, some of the guys, although things hadn't ended yet, they were sending fellows home, because they were just about ready to jump the Rhine River. When Montgomery decided his end run around through Holland, they called it MARKET-GARDEN, a big parachute drop, I had scarlet fever and I was in the hospital. When they jumped the Rhine, they had so many planes, they didn't need us, just kept taking those supplies to Patton, General Patton. [Editor's Note: Operation MARKET-GARDEN occurred from September 17 to 27, 1944. The 17th Airborne Division dropped across the Rhine River on March 24, 1945. This drop was known as Operation: VARSITY.] So, I never got in on a parachute drop, jump. We did lose a couple of planes because they flew too far. You'd fly forward and you'd land on a cow pasture, and then, they'd come to [the landing site]. What we'd do, we'd have five-gallon jerry cans of gasoline and you'd line the bay of the C-47 with those and put chains through them, so [that] they wouldn't fly all over the place. You'd go as far forward as you can and land on a field, which they'd have a portable transmitter for you to home in on, but they didn't always work well. Some of the guys, they'd be looking for the field and they'd go too far. They'd get into Germany and a couple of them got shot down. So, we did lose a couple of planes that way, but, fortunately, we didn't. We landed on more bumpy cow pastures than I ever saw, oh, gee, dumped off all these cans of gasoline, usually medical supplies, too. I think back, now, when you're eighteen and nineteen years old, you never think about it. You're indestructible. Nothing's going to hurt you. All you needed is to get over the lines and some Kraut take a shot at you, hit one of those gas cans, sparks fly, you'd be a Roman candle, but you think about that

now; wounded came back and upfront went the gas cans and the medical supplies. Anyway, that was my experience.

SI: You said you could not really do much on the radio because of the radio silence.

TA: No. The only thing I did is, when you get halfway back to your base, you dial in the direction they gave you and listen, work it back and forth until you heard a code that would come in, in Morse code, "Di-di-dah, di-di-dah." When you got your code numbers, which were usually four numbers or three numbers and a letter--and they'd change them all the time, because they didn't want the Germans getting that and flying and get you to land--that code and, halfway back, we'd dial in the radio compass, they call it. Then, when you got within sight of the area, then, it was pilot to the setup or control tower. The very last month I was flying like that, they had a new system and we had on the plane what they called a trailing antenna. When you got it up in the air, you let this thing out. It was a cable that let out onto your airplane with a steel ball or an iron ball on the bottom of it. It held it out there at an angle and it acted as an antenna, so that when you sent out your message to where you were going, three, four hundred miles into Germany, bang, they could pick it up. Coming back, they could pick it up. We got back to Paris and there was ground fog all over the area. So, they said, "We'll bring you in on GCA," ground control approach. That was a system where, through radio waves, they could tell exactly where your plane was and was it lined up with the runway. So, I got listening and it got so interesting, them talking us in, "You're a little bit to the right. Take two degrees to the left," tell us, "You're too high. Come down in a little bit greater descent." I forgot about the antenna and we came down and, bam, that steel ball hit the runway, broke loose and went flying. "Oh, my god," I said, "I'm going to be up for a court-martial on this one." The pilot said, "Don't worry about it. We've lost more darn balls," he said, "[from] guys not pulling them in," but that's how we would get our distance. Now, this old pilot told me, the fellow [that] had the TB told me, that when he was flying, once they got over the English Channel, then, they could work their antenna. They'd put that steel ball out, because, even so, it was several hundred miles to their base and they'd get them home. His interesting story was that they took him, in plain clothes, while he was in England before the invasion, and sent him to Sweden to fly supplies to the Norwegian Underground. [laughter] He said they were sitting in cafes and the next table would be German spies. They knew they were German. They were talking German, not Swedish, and they [the USAAF men] were talking English. They knew they were here, but they never were able to shoot down one of those planes flying supplies to them. He said, "We'd just fly at mountaintops and go in and they'd tell us where the mark was. We'd drop the supplies to the Norwegians and come back," military supplies, what an interesting fellow. I'm sorry he got tuberculosis. I can't think of much more. You got some more things you can think of?

SI: You were stationed outside of Paris for a long time. What was it like going on leave in Paris?

TA: Oh, you bet. We were ten miles south, southwest of Paris, at Villacoublay, France. I checked it on the computer. It's still a private airport, private airfield. We could take the bus into Paris, a half-hour and we were in there. They had leave hotels for us. They had what they called a "halfway home club." The French put on stage shows for us. It was great, if you could get down there. I got down there, not as many times as I'd like, maybe five or six times I got into

Paris, but I got all over Paris. Paris has an excellent subway system they call the Metro. I don't know if you've been to Paris or not, easy to get around. Everything is marked for you. I'm here, I want to go there, press a button and it just shows you how to go on the Metro, "Get off here, take the other one, go." I got around. I felt safe anywhere I was in Paris at that time. Let's see, I've walked down the middle of the Champs-Élysées, from the Arc de Triomphe to almost The Louvre, right down the middle of the avenue, without a car coming by me, gasoline shortage.

SI: Sure.

TA: We did have one fellow, he was from Texas. He was a good radio technician, but he couldn't stand a good opportunity. Another fellow from Chicago and him decided if they could get a hold of a tanker of gasoline, aviation gasoline, maybe they could take it down to Paris and sell it; darned if they didn't get, not the great, big ones, but the smaller, half-sized tanker that carried aviation gasoline. They take the thing down to Paris and sold it on the black market. About a week later, all these taxicabs around Paris were going, "Bam, pop, boom." On that high-test aviation gasoline, those old pre-war engines were not used to that high-octane and they were sputtering. About a week after that, the Counter-Intelligence Corps was all around the airbase, trying to find out who happened to sell that tanker of gasoline. I stayed out of that, thank God. There was another thing. We had in back of the château--what do you call it, the monestary?

SI: I guess you would call it an abbey or something like that.

TA: Yes, okay. It was an open field and they parked wing over wing of C-47s [there] after the war. They didn't know what to do with them. They got them out there. One Sunday, we were on duty on a second alert, meaning, "Stay in your barracks, but, if we need you to fly, come running." We were back there and this kid from Seagraves, Texas, and myself and a kid from Chicago went out. We wanted to look at the planes, see any bullet holes there were. Finally, Jim (Doty?), the Chicago [native], said, "Boost me up, see if I can get in this plane." So, he pulled the door, because it was quite a ways up there. He pulled it. It was locked. He said, "I've got an idea. Let me get on the wings." So, we boosted him up on the wing and he went up by the pilots' [seats] and the window opened, just slid. It was an escape hatch for the pilot, in case he was going down. He crawled in there, went down and unlocked the door and we got in. We boosted ourselves up in there. We went in and looked around, see if any of the radio equipment had been taken or what-have-you. He was sitting in the pilot's seat. I looked up on the wall. Here's my radio compartment--on the other wall, in back of the pilot, was a medical kit. I opened it, looked at the bandages and the various things and scissors, and so forth--and two vials of morphine, two vials of morphine! I said, "Jim, look at this." He came, he said, "Holy mackerel." He said, "This stuff is worth something." I said, "Leave me out of it." We got out of the airplane. He and the kid from Seagraves, Texas, over a three-week period, got into every one of those planes and took those two vials of morphine out of there, went down into Paris and sold them on the black market. We were flying, at that time, mail and high-priority supplies to Berlin--the war's over now--Kitzingen, Germany, Nuremburg, where else? We went to Rome, Marseilles, whatever, main cities. So, they took that French money they got for this and they took it to Rome and they exchanged it for--they bought diamonds. No, excuse me, no, they bought *lira*. The *lira*, they bought diamonds. He carried a hammer with him and, when he had a diamond seller, he'd whack one of the diamonds, because they'd try and slip glass on him. This

way, if it didn't break, it was a diamond. He'd test it out. They got the diamonds. Oh, we were flying to London, too. You never knew where you were going to fly. He flew to London, traded them for British pounds. Then, every mail he'd send home, he'd send five or ten ten-pound notes, or whatever they were, and the other kid did, too. He got enough pounds back in the States--he took them to Windsor, Canada, traded them for US dollars--he had enough money out of that to buy a ten-thousand-dollar home in Chicago.

SI: Wow.

TA: He put it to good use, frankly. The other guy took it and put his sister through college with it, but it went to good use. I thought, "These guys are going to get caught, court-martialed and spend ten years in Leavenworth Prison for this," but there was a lot of that going on.

SI: I have heard about the black market often, particularly dealing with cigarettes, but this is the first I have heard about that.

TA: Oh, yes. Well, that's one story I forgot to tell you. The last two months in Scott Field, Illinois, we were flying. Therefore, we got flying pay. When it came time to ship out, I hadn't received my flying pay. So, when I got ready to get on the ship, they wanted to pay us and I squawked about, "Where's my flying pay?" Well, they say, "You accept it or we've got to hold up the whole thing." So, they held the whole pay up. I didn't get paid that month; got into France, didn't get paid. For six months, I didn't get paid, because of that. What am I going to do for money? Well, I didn't smoke. Every guy got two cartons of cigarettes a month, which were worth twenty thousand *francs* on the French market, black market. So, I sold my cigarettes for forty, gave me forty dollars a month. That was more than I was getting for my pay. I don't know what it was--no, I think it was fifty-five dollars a month or something for a PFC. Anyway, I lived on that money for six months, off of the cigarettes. Then, the price went down. It wasn't as good, only ten dollars a carton. One time, I'll have to mention this one more thing; these things come back to me.

SI: Sure.

TA: My uncle had business relations in France before World War II. One of the executives from the plant over there came over here and studied our methods at his factory. My mother had him to our house for dinner and all. He was appreciative and all that and we young guys, he talked to quite a bit. He was very fluent in English. When I went over to France, I had his address. I looked him up. Oh, he was happy to see me. Things were still rough this first year after World War II. It was really tough in Europe, all over Europe, France included. I was on detached service to Southern France. There was a base down there. It was ten miles from the Spanish border. I could look out the hotel [into Spain]. It was a big resort area, Biarritz, France--what a place to be stationed. I stayed down there and I could look out and I could see the ocean. You'd look to the south and you could see the Pyrenees Mountains. They jut out into the Atlantic Ocean for 150 miles. That was Spain, only ten miles away. One Sunday, one of the officers, he was a colonel, and a couple other officers got a whole bunch of us and, I don't know, he commandeered a big truck, a cattle type truck, with slat sides on it. We all went down to this French border and we bribed the Spanish guards to let us into Spain. So, we walked across.

They said, "Don't go out of this town, though," but the town had the shops open. There were butcher shops, there were clothing shops, there was everything. I went into one grocery store, here are all these oranges. I bought a bag of oranges like that and I bought a big tin of coffee and it was coffee from South America--it wasn't coffee from over there, because Spain was still free from the war--coffee and I bought some candy, too. Fortunately, it was cool weather. I took them back across the border. They didn't say anything about it. In fact, somewhere around, I've got pictures of it. We take it back across the border and, a week later, they shipped us back to Paris. So, here I am, going down the streets of Paris with a bag of oranges under my arms and a GI duffel bag, which I had two canned hams in it. I had the candy in there and the chocolate in there and the coffee. I took them back to this family and she was so appreciative that I got that for them. They had not seen oranges in six years, they hadn't seen coffee in five years and candy, she said, "We hadn't seen candy since," she didn't know when. The kids' eyes just bugged out. They had three children and they were kids that were twelve, thirteen, fourteen, that age. Anyway, yes, I did some good with my black market money there. [laughter]

SI: Yes.

TA: Okay, what else? That about covers it.

SI: Given your family background, had you learned any German?

TA: Only a few swear words.

SI: Okay.

TA: From my father. He knew a few, but I never learned German. Oh, one other thing--you've got me thinking of these things--when I got out of training and started a practice, I went in with a fellow named Yezbic, Y-E-Z-B-I-C. He was an Arab from the Detroit area. He was born in this country, but his parents were all Arabic. We did fine for a while, and then, he decided he wanted to go to South Florida and practice. So, he left me alone and I had another fellow from Ohio in the class after me come down and we went together for a while. Then, I joined forces with another fellow named Sakalai, who is Arabic. He had his family and other Arabs in doing paperwork. We had a fellow from Spain, a Spanish fellow, Garcia (Rivera?). He was in with us. We had an escapee doctor from Cuba and he was pulmonary medicine and us two fellows who were DOs who were here a long time, our ancestry. I practiced with a number of Muslims here in town. We had no trouble. They were great guys. They kept quiet about their religion and we kept quiet about our religion. There was no problem there. It's only that one or two percent that is causing the trouble and it's enough to give the whole bunch a bad name. That's what it amounts to. It's a shame, but that's the way things are going right now. I hate to say it. Okay, I don't think I can remember any other stories. [laughter]

SI: You gave me an overview of your career.

TA: Yes.

SI: You said you had two children around the time you went to medical school.

TA: Yes. One was eight and the other was eleven years of age. They went to school up there until the last year. My son graduated from a high school here, went to Florida State. He's up in Birmingham in insurance and has made twice as much money as I ever did. The other boy's in St. Augustine, works for 911. The third one works for CSX and has a good job. He's out on the tracks, actually, as a supervisor and he's making pretty good money, well over a hundred grand a year. The one in Birmingham is making fabulous money. My brother, I had to laugh, the professor had thought I was the one that would always go places, not my brother. My brother, when he got out of Rutgers, and then, the service, went to work with a pharmaceutical company called Pfizer. He was with them for thirty-three years. Pfizer had a program--here in Florida he was, in Jacksonville--Pfizer had a program that you could put ten percent of your savings into a savings account and they would match it, fifty cents on the dollar in the beginning. That went on for a number of years and he always maxed it in there. Pfizer grew from a little company into a giant. The stock split two for one, it split three for one, it split again for two to one. I'd always kidded him--he was the first millionaire I knew in the family--and he was. He was loaded and, unfortunately, he died before he could really appreciate it and use it. His wife had died before him, but he made his kids very wealthy. They're all married now and I don't have to worry about them. They're making their own way.

SI: It must have been difficult to make that kind of career change when you were raising a young family.

TA: Oh, it was. It was a big [challenge]. My wife, fortunately, got a fairly decent job with Allis-Chalmers in a town about five miles down the line from where we were. We had to live thirty-five miles outside of Chicago, because the school was in the worst section of Chicago, the ghettos of Chicago, the Southside, where all the riots and the killings are going on now, right there. I remember, in my junior/senior winter, I came to school one winter morning, cold as could be. We parked near the emergency room entrance and there stood an ambulance with the back door open. As we went to walk in, we had our white coats on, this cop says, "Hey, Doc, can you come over here and help me a minute?" I walked over. He said, "Will you pronounce this guy dead for me?" I looked in the back of the wagon and on the floor sat this fellow with the top of his head blown out. It had been a drug deal gone bad. We had quite a bit of that around the area, breaking into cars, stealing stuff, wounds in the emergency room, but it was a good lesson. You didn't walk. You always went in twos, if you could, from the school to where you lived, but we would just go a block, jump in the car and take off and have to leave. There were about six or eight of us that lived thirty-five miles south in South Chicago Heights. It was a fairly decent area, middle-class, whereas we were in a bad area down where the school was--fantastic for learning. I had seen things there that I've never seen since. You see, in the third and fourth year, you start picking up patients and that's not done in all schools, but, in our school, they insist you pick up patients beginning the third year, with a professor or--what do you call it?--an intern or a fellow in the program. You would go through the whole work-up of that patient and treatment of them--great way of learning. I saw patients I've never seen [since]. For instance, this one fellow, he was a Pullman porter, which they probably don't have any more, but he had what they call situs inversus. All his organs were flipped to the other side of his body. His heart was on the right. His gallbladder was on the left. I mean, everything was flipped. It's a rarity in medicine. Oh, I was to deliver this woman and I was on the OB service in my senior

year. The intern was there with me and I actually delivered the baby and there were two of them. It was twins. One came out all Oriental features, little slit eyes and that pale, yellowish complexion. The next baby came out, had the classic Negroid features. Those nurses, who were black, were laughing their heads off. They thought this was the funniest thing they could see. The next day, we went down and interviewed the girl, said, "What? How did this happen?" She was single, of course, eighteen. She had been at a wild party nine months before and she'd had sexual relations with two different fellows. One was Oriental and the other was black. Apparently, one egg came off and was fertilized by the black fellow and the sperm of the other was the Oriental and he got the other egg. There's a term for it. It's a medical term called superfecundation. I have stumped many an obstetrician with that name. [laughter] They don't know what I'm talking about. They've never seen it. It's very rare in humans. It's very common in dogs and some other animals where multiple males will line up to fertilize or attempt to fertilize a bitch in heat. One will look like a Dalmatian, the other one will look like a German shepherd. They have a lot of the features mixed in there, but it happened and I saw things like that. I saw Mediterranean fever. I saw parasites that you never see. I've seen three cases of roundworms and hookworms here in thirty-eight years. Up there, I must have saw eight and ten in a year. It was just wild. So, it was great training, but a terrible place to live, yes. That's the way it goes.

SI: You were there from 1966 to 1970.

TA: Yes, '66 to '70. Now, the school has been moved out of the ghettos of Chicago, out to the western suburbs, which is very nice, beautiful surroundings and all the buildings, but the training, I wonder if it's as good. The school had done this long before we did it here. They had put out outreach centers, seventeen of them, all around Southside Chicago, Whiting, Illinois. They would put their resident physicians [there], training them out in these outreach clinics and, the serious cases, they'd ship to the hospital. So, we were getting the bonus from all these outreach clinics, just like they're setting up around here in Orlando and every place else, the walk-in clinics. We were way ahead. We had, at one time, the third-largest outpatient setup in the City of Chicago, really helped the school tremendously, reputation.

SI: You said at the time you graduated is when osteopathic medicine …

TA: The breakdown had started. They were coming together, yes.

SI: You saw that happening.

TA: It actually had started a little before that, from this standpoint. These MDs were being taken in the military service and the DOs, all through World War II and afterwards, were staying at home making the big money, because there were no other doctors around. They were just loaded and bringing it in. The MDs started yacking at the [military], "They could at least do physicals," the DOs, and so on. So, they took them in the Korean War. They took a few of them in and put them in lesser jobs and found out they did a very good job at it. They actually had taken in an ophthalmologist and a couple, a few surgeons and they found they were well-trained. The thing that we didn't have is the sub-specialists, like the brain surgeons, neurosurgeons. We only had a few. I had further training with a neurosurgeon down in the St. Petersburg area. He

got his training in Japan before World War II. He went over there. He said, "I learned Japanese. I went over there." He says, "I learned neurosurgery over there," but there weren't that many. They began to take them in, and then, in '69, they started pulling them in more and more. That's when they decided, the teaching facilities at Walter Reed broke loose, and then, Georgetown University in Washington, University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins, and then, it broke down. Our class, they just tried and one fellow went to a cardiac internship and residency in Cleveland Clinic. That's a big institution. One went to Public Health. This fellow, a friend of mine, went to Walter Reed. Another one went to Johns Hopkins. Several stayed in Chicago and went to Northwestern, University of Chicago and were getting those sub-specialty trainings and they pretty well broke it down. I was the third DO accepted in Jacksonville on the Beaches Hospital and applied for Memorial, which is a former big hospital, and they accepted me in the following winter. Since then, there was a DO hospital, was on that and I was on St. Luke's, which is a big Catholic hospital, and the Baptists' downtown and that's the biggest six-hundred-bed hospital in town--got along fine. Nothing is as good as a referral. When you start referring to them, geez, all of a sudden, you become their friend, [laughter] when you hit them in the good side of the pocketbook, but that has broken down. Now, in Jacksonville, there are DOs in every single hospital, including Mayo Clinic. We've got three or four DOs out at Mayo Clinic right now. So, it's pretty well broken down, when you see that sign, DO. Now, you've got the medical school in New Jersey now. I don't know whether they accept DOs or not. They may have one or two in their residency programs. I don't know that, but, no, I think they've got a school in New Jersey, osteopaths.

SI: Yes, they might. [Editor's Note: The Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine, formerly a part of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, operates in Stratford, New Jersey.]

TA: I think they might have, because we learn the same thing as everybody else. The only other difference was the theory that man was never meant to stand upright and, when he does, he puts stress on his back and he gets abnormalities in his back, which we can help. We can't totally fix, but we can help, even better than a lot of pills, and, from that, it started. The Civil War was the big thing. In the Civil War, the guys, "Oh, a bullet wound in the leg--take the leg off. It's going to get infected anyway, septicemia." There was no aftercare. A doctor came out of the Civil War and he's the one who started the osteopathic profession of doing what I call physical therapy. He did massage and stretching exercises, all kinds of stuff. He had students come all the way from Scotland. This Scottish doctor was a well-trained surgeon and he took over the surgical end point, because Dr. Still, Andrew Still who started it all, said, "We can do so much with manipulation, but you still have appendicitis to worry about. You've got blocked bowels. You've got babies that won't deliver." He said, "You've got to treat them otherwise." So, surgery was a big point and he got in a big argument with a man named Campbell, who was one of his good students. Campbell said, "We can do much more with manipulation than you're doing." He said, "There's a limit to everything." So, Campbell pulled out and went to Davenport, Iowa, and started the chiropractic profession. So, it's an offshoot from the osteopathic profession. [Editor's Note: Dr. Abbey is referring to Daniel David Palmer, who opened the Palmer School of Chiropractic in Davenport in 1897.] The chiropractors have become much more well-known than the osteopaths. They're all over the place and they do good work. My theory is that no profession can last over a hundred years if it's really just a sham and

they have lasted. Now, sure, there are chiropractors that try to exceed what they should do. There are podiatrists who try to exceed what they train for and the same with osteopaths and the same with MDs. I've had MDs doing things they shouldn't have been doing, but it's the point [that] there's bad apples in all the professions, but there's room for all the professions now. Now, [where] we're having problems is the fact that--I was family practice--the family practitioner is quickly becoming a dinosaur, for this reason. The nurse practitioner and the physician assistant are taking over. They can write prescriptions, they can diagnose, they can refer. They can do ninety percent of what I can do. The only thing they can't do here is write narcotics and legend drugs, drugs that are restricted. So, the schools for nurse practitioners and physician assistants are really putting them out fast and furious. I had quadruple bypass surgery on my chest because of blocked arteries. The MD cardiac surgeon put in the bypasses, but his PA, his physician's assistant, stripped the big vein out of my leg, so [that] he could cut it up and make the bypasses around my heart. A PA could do it. I can't do it. There was a cardiac girl, she was practically running my cardiac physician's office practice. He was staying in the hospital, doing cardiac catheterizations on patients, where he made the big money, and he had her doing all the other work. They're taking over from the family practitioner. So, it's really a dying profession right now. You'll see them, but they're getting less and less and less. You'll find that the DOs are going to go into more specialties and the MDs, they've been doing it for a number of years. I was told by the admissions dean at the University of Florida Med School, he said, "We really don't want to accept fellows here that want to be family practitioners," and that was 1970. He said, "There's more restrictions." So, that, I started out delivering babies, I started out doing office surgery, assisting surgery, general surgery in the hospital and putting on casts. You know who got me out of doing these things? the insurance companies. When they found out I was assisting in surgery, my malpractice insurance went from twenty-five hundred a year to fifteen thousand. When they found out I was delivering babies, they added another ten thousand to it, to twenty-five thousand. When I was doing casting, they put another five thousand, so, thirty thousand dollars. Unless you were doing it full-time, you couldn't pay those fees. So, I had to drop them off. The only thing I continued was office surgery and putting on a few casts, but delivering babies was out the window and assisting in surgery, oh, and working in the emergency room. I worked the emergency room for two nights a month in one hospital, but I had to give that up very soon because of it. Well, that's about the story I can think of. You got any other questions?

SI: I was going to ask how you have seen medicine change over your career.

TA: It's changing.

SI: You kind of summarized it.

TA: Very orientated profession right now, yes.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add to the interview?

TA: I can't think of anything. Boy, that's enough yacking. [laughter]

SI: Growing up, particularly on the German side of the family, were there any Old World traditions kept up in your family, either in food or holidays or anything like that?

TA: No, there weren't. They were pretty well Americanized. Of course, I didn't know my great grandfather and grandmother; they would've helped. I know my grandfather would have taught me some, and grandmother. She was first-generation American and he was, too, born in New York, but I didn't [know them]. He died when I was about four years old and we didn't see her. There was a big argument in the family and my father and mother never had much contact with my paternal grandmother after that. When I was overseas, I mentioned it to my brother and I said, "It's crazy we've not had the value of knowing our paternal grandmother." Larry said to me, "When we get back, we get out of service, we're going to go over and visit her." She only lived four miles away in Rutherford, New Jersey. She died before we got home. So, we never got to see her in later years in life. I'd like to have known her, but I didn't know her. So, I didn't get any of the Old World influence, really. They'd all been Americanized by then, yes.

SI: Was it your grandfather or your father that was involved with the piano company?

TA: My great grandfather, butcher, made the money.

SI: Butcher, okay.

TA: But, my grandfather got with a guy named Staib, who was German, S-T-A-I-B. He knew pianos and they formed a company that made the action for pianos, all the hammers and the keys that hooked to the hammers. They had a five-story plant in New York City, in the Bronx, practically. I've got a picture somewhere of it and letterheads from them. They were doing real well, and then, they decided that, during World War I, they needed felt. Felt was used in uniforms, for the lining, it was used in many places. They tried to corner the market on felt. They did a pretty good job with it. All of a sudden, the war was over, nobody needed felt anymore. Then, the Crash came along and they were wiped out; so, not quite, but they lost it there. My father had no wealth behind him, and so, he just had to make it on his own and wound up as a machinist, a Class-A machinist. He was good at it and worked for a long time, Manhattan Rubber Company for about thirty years. We saw the Depression and we traversed it and made out okay.

SI: Did your mother ever work outside of the home?

TA: Yes, that's where my father met her. No, he didn't--he met her in school. They were from the same hometown, but she worked as a secretary in New York for about three or four years before she married my father. From then on, she stayed home, except to help out in World War II. She went to the Red Cross and made bandages and things like that, but she didn't work where she brought home money, no. She never did it. She was a stay-at-home wife.

SI: You were born in Newark. Was the family living in Newark at the time?

TA: No, we were living in Nutley.

SI: In Nutley, okay, the hospital was there in Newark.

TA: The grandparents helped put the down payment on a very nice house in Nutley and we lived in that until, as I told you, I was about eleven; no, fourteen. They brought me home to Nutley and that was in '25. I don't remember anything about that, the hospital or anything. I was delivered by a homeopathic physician, who didn't believe in a lot of medicines and shots and that type thing. It was all sugar pills, practically, but he was in on deliveries. He delivered me and my brother in Newark. Is this turned off yet?

SI: No, it is still on.

TA: I'll wait until it's turned off. In Newark, well, I didn't spend much time in Newark. Newark was a big Italian [town]. The North End was a big town of Italians there, a tremendous number of Italians, and some of those drifted over into Bellville and into Nutley. I only saw one black student and that was in high school. I was not in any of his classes. We only had one or two black families in the whole town of Nutley of twenty-one thousand. It was mostly built-up when I was there. There was very little open lots. One of them was, fortunately, right behind our house and we made it into a ballfield. We had a great time in there, but I remember, in childhood, Nutley was a great place, because we had these streams running through Nutley, which there were mill dams put up, from way back, before Nutley was ever a town. They had spinning mills there and they had a pond behind them. So, you had a great pond for skating, ice skating, and there were hills, great town for sleigh riding. Oh, we had great fun with that, ice skating and sleigh riding. You could get in those canals in the depths of winter and skate down the canals, like Holland, to the big mill pond and I loved that. There were several ballfields around that we could play in, but, with that big lot in back of us, we didn't have to go far to [play] baseball, football, as kids, little kids, anyway. So, I enjoyed my early childhood.

SI: Since your brother had gone there, was that the main reason why you chose Rutgers?

TA: Yes, and, also, I had that feeling in the back of my head, "I sure would like to work with animals." Here, sitting in our backyard, the Agricultural College, they used to have what they called Ag Field Day. I don't know if they have it. I'm sure they don't.

SI: Yes, we have it.

TA: Do you remember that?

SI: I will tell you about it after.

TA: And that started back in the '30s. We'd go down to those and that's where I got to know Rutgers as a fourteen, fifteen-year-old and he did, too. He said he wanted to go there, but he wanted to get into agriculture or agricultural companies, like big farm companies, like Allis-Chalmers or so forth, on their farming goods. Actually, he thought at one time of teaching, but, after the war, he wanted to get out and make money and get married, yes.

SI: It is interesting that Ag Field Day got you into Rutgers.

TA: Oh, yes, that's a great promoter. My grandson now just came back, and I came with him, from Mississippi State University. They have this kind of a program for juniors and seniors in high school. If they're serious about going to Mississippi State, they will defer the out-of-state fee for the kids from here to go there.

SI: Wow.

TA: He's all set.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Can I ask you one or two more questions?

TA: Yes.

SI: I forgot to ask about Pearl Harbor. Do you remember Pearl Harbor?

TA: Pearl Harbor?

SI: Yes, the day it was attacked. What do you remember about that? [Editor's Note: The US Pacific Fleet, stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by the Japanese on December 7, 1941. The next day, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II.]

TA: Nobody forgets that, no one who was there; well, what I mean by "there," you know, alive at that time. It was a Sunday. It was in December and it was cold, but, one thing, it was clear. My dad, he loved to take a Sunday drive. Gasoline, at twenty cents a gallon, was great in those days, so, even for somebody with not much income, [you could drive]. So, Mom and my dad and we guys in the backseat of our '34 Ford, we went out to (Little Bivus?). It's a nice, private airport out there where they had a lot of manufacturing companies. I can't remember the name of the area and we were driving out there. We came back home. It was about three-thirty and he turned on the radio and the news was on the air, "The Japs have hit Pearl Harbor." We said, "What? We can't believe it. They dared to try and bomb Pearl Harbor?" yes. At that time, they said there was "heavy damage and heavy casualties." We don't know the reports. Then, from then, the whole night on, the radio stayed on. I believe it was the next day, Roosevelt made his speech to Congress, but everybody remembers where they were. We had been kicked out of our home by that time. We were in an apartment living and we sat there and we couldn't believe it, just looking at one another. It shocks you to think that that's the way the war started. Now, we have it a different way, [laughter] but that was Pearl Harbor to me, okay.

SI: Were you shocked by the start of the war?

TA: Oh, yes. We didn't think we were going to get in it. We thought that we could supply England and, with Canada, Africa, South Africa, and Australia, New Zealand, they could wear the Germans down. They'd have at least a settled peace over there, and it didn't happen. The Japs kicked us in the war, and then, Hitler joined his ally four days later, but, yes, we couldn't

believe it at first. I can understand why they took the Japanese and put them in internment camps, because of what happened in Norway. When the Germans decided to invade Norway, there were about half a million Germans living and working in Norway. All of a sudden, they came out of the woodwork and showed the German occupying forces where the strong points were, where the Norwegian Army and airfields were, what equipment they had. It made it easy for them, "You can get around them by this bridge." Winston Churchill was the one that dubbed them the Fifth Column. Norway was, within a couple of weeks, taken by the Fifth Column. Right a few days after Pearl Harbor, a Jap submarine shelled the oil refineries along the beach in California, near Santa Barbara. Oh, man, we didn't think they could do that. So, that's when they panicked and said, "Look what they did in Norway. If they land in the West Coast…" At that time, if you've ever read Eisenhower's *Crusade in Europe*, we had two fully-staffed divisions ready to go in the United States. [Editor's Note: *Crusade in Europe,* General Dwight D. Eisenhower's memoir on his experiences during World War II, was published in 1948.] We couldn't have stopped them from putting a foothold in the United States and that's how they were thinking. So, they said, "The best route is, take all of them and send them into these camps." These camps, it was rough on them, but they at least had decent housing, not like our prisoners got in Japan, and they had plenty of food. [Editor's Note: Executive Order 9066 ordered the relocation of Japanese-Americans into internment camps. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 provided for reparations to internment camp survivors. Due to the large Japanese-American population in Hawaii, the government decided to impose martial law rather than attempt internment.] I got to know a German soldier when I was in Scott Field, Illinois, when we would take the laundry down to Cape Girardeau and they had Jefferson Barracks down there. That was a Civil War Army base and they had a big laundry there that did our laundry, most of it in Scott Field, not all of it. There are all these German POWs working there. They were from the Afrika Korps, the first ones that we carried [back], got a lot of them. A lot of them spoke good English and I talked to them, and so forth. I said, "How are you treated?" "By the Geneva Convention?" They were very haughty. He said, "But, I have to admit, we have food I'm sure they're getting better than in [the] Germany Army right now." He said, "We have our churches. We have rec rooms." He says, "If this is war," he smiled, he said, "it's rather nice," [laughter] but it was interesting. I ran into them guarding a bunch in Southern France. The war was over. You'd think they'd send them home, but there was no food that first year. I mean, Europe was starving. Roosevelt sent overseas to figure what they needed---ex-President Hoover, excuse me. He came overseas to see. I remember seeing him on the tarmac of Orly Field in Paris at that time. That was his fact-finding [tour], but they kept the prisoners. They said, "Why can't we go home?" We said, "There's nothing there. The cities are bombed out." I said, "There's no good medical supplies. There's no food and we're having trouble. It's easier to keep you fed here and you can use our K and C rations and whatever they are until we get another year of crops in Germany and France, and so forth." So, they were treated well. They really were, about as good in food and medical care, and so forth, as in the American Army, US Army.

SI: When you would fly these missions to deliver fuel or medical supplies, you would also be bringing back wounded. Did you have to help at all with them or do any kind of treatment?

TA: No, they had either a medic--they only usually had one medic--Once or twice, I saw a nurse. Boy, that was great, to see a female, [laughter] but, yes, once or twice, I saw a nurse. Most of the time, you see, in the C-47, they had these racks. It was actually like where you could

put a cot, a stretcher, on it and it was on a hinge and it flipped down against the wall and they had two levels. When they were going to take wounded back, they'd pull that up and it would lock. Then, you could put the stretcher on it. They'd put two stretchers on each side and they had one, two, three, four on one side, on two levels, and one, two, three on the door side. So, you could actually take fourteen back. A couple of times--I wasn't on the plane--but, when the things were getting heavy and they had more wounded, they would put somebody who could walk, like arm injuries or head injuries and could walk, they would sit them on the floor there, in there. I stayed in the radio compartment and they took over from there. I didn't have anything, any care, over that end.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add?

TA: Can't think of anything.

SI: I really appreciate all your time today.

TA: Okay, Shaun.

SI: Thank you for your service.

TA: All right.

SI: I appreciate it.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Jesse Braddell 8/25/2016
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 9/14/2016
Reviewed by Thomas E. Abbey 9/18/16