RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN L. ARCHIBALD

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SANDRA STEWART HOLYOAK
and
LYNN MARLEY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

G. DOROTHY SABATINI

Sandra Holyoak: This begins an interview with Mr. John L. Archibald in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on October 1, 1999, with Sandra Stewart Holyoak and …

Lynn Marley: Lynn Marley.

SH: I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. Archibald, for taking time out of your schedule to join us. We usually start off with a few questions about your childhood. Where and when were you born? Can you tell us about your mother and father?

John Archibald: I was born July 30, 1921, in Bridgeton, New Jersey. At that time, my father was teaching vocational agriculture at the … Bridgeton High School. My dad was a graduate of Rutgers, Class of '17. He majored in [agriculture]. He would have gone to Cook College, if he were contemporary. … He had been born on a farm. I always thought that his parents were quite extraordinary, in as much as probably both my Grandfather Archibald and Grandmother Archibald had, I would say, maybe, an eighth or tenth grade education. It just wasn't the thing, in those days, to continue on through high school. Perhaps they did, but, I don't think so. I know they didn't go to college, but, they were well-educated. My grandfather had a wonderful handwriting, wrote good letters, so did my grandmother, but, anyway, the thing that I think is so extraordinary is that they had two boys, … both of whom were sent to Rutgers. My father was the older one, and he did major in agriculture, and, subsequently, after [graduation], he served in World War I, obviously, the Class of '17 went right into the service, as our classes did, and was discharged as a first lieutenant in the field artillery. His service was completely in this country. … I think one of the main things he did was take care of the bodies [of those] who died in that terrible flu epidemic in … 1918, but, as you know, World War I was very short [for the United States]. He was out, and he then went to Bridgeton High School, where my brothers and I were born, and then, in 1926, he was asked to come to Rutgers as an associate professor at the School of Agriculture, so, we were college brats. We lived in the little village of Middlebush, just five miles west of New Brunswick, but, Rutgers was very much the center of our world, you might say. They had swimming courses for the college brats on Saturday mornings and we went to the Rutgers gym and went to the Rutgers concerts, the football games, sports, and so forth, and so on. My mother was a local girl. … I know my father had met her while he was a student at Rutgers. He lived with … his uncle, John Thompson, [who] was a minister at the Middlebush Reformed Church, and, at that time, with funds as they were, he lived in the parsonage and commuted, by train, into New Brunswick. … As a matter-of-fact, we returned to my mother's homestead, which remained in the family until my older brother died, last year. It was an old colonial house. That, more or less, covers my dad and mother. They would be over a hundred years old now. He was born on October 17, 1893, and my mother [on] July 21, 1896.

SH: Where was your mother's family homestead located?

JA: It's on Olcott Avenue, which is … commonly known as the back street of Middlebush. … When I was a boy, growing up there, it was just a two-street town, … the front street, where the church was, and the back street, just a village, maybe a couple of hundred people.

SH: Was your father's family originally from Bridgeton?

JA: No, my father's family was from Delaware County, New York, and he was born in Bovina Center, which was a farming community.

LM: Growing up as a college brat, do you have memories of Paul Robeson?

JA: I do indeed. My father and Paul Robeson were very good friends. He was a giant of a man. My father was a little smaller than I am, and I can remember going to concerts where Paul Robeson would sing, at the gym, and my father [would] take us backstage with him. … Paul Robeson would come down, he'd grab my father by the shoulders and say, "Archie," and practically lift him off [the ground], [laughter] and they had great mutual respect. My father had great compassion for Paul, for the fact that when the college team, football team, traveled, he could not room with the other boys because of his color, … you know, if they took an away trip and all that sort of thing. He always understood how Paul was disillusioned with … the life that was dealt him, in a way.

SH: Do you know the Miranov family of Middlebush?

JA: Very well, yeah, nine boys and a girl, I think. Yes, they were … dairy farmers and, in conjunction with my father's work, he serviced that farm. How do you know them?

SH: Our assistant director is currently working on an oral history project involving the Miranov family.

JA: Yes, great family. Now, is that Somerset dairy farm still operating?

SH: No.

JA: … They ran trucks.

LM: The family still owns the property.

JA: Yes, we played with the boys. [laughter]

SH: Our assistant director is quite enthusiastic about chronicling their family history, although she has gone through a number of trials and tribulations in trying to contact all of the children.

JA: I don't know how many of those youngsters would still be alive, because … they would be on either side of my age, and that would put … some of them in the eighties and some, maybe, in the low seventies, I'm not sure.

LM: I believe that most of them are still alive.

JA: Oh, it's a big family, and the irony of it was, they had all these boys, and then, the mother got pregnant, and I think she had twin boys or some such thing. Wasn't that the story? [laughter]

LM: How did the Great Depression affect your family?

JA: We grew up during the Depression, and things were tight, but, really, we were very favored. My father was paid, and … we were always broke, but, there was never any poverty, from the standpoint of not being able to put food on the table. I did have an uncle, on my mother's side, who lived with us because he had been discharged from Merck. Merck cut back and he would have done anything. He was a Rutgers graduate, as a matter-of-fact, … Garrett Voorhees, and he hoed our garden and all that sort of thing, just to make ends meet. That was very, very sad.

LM: Do you recall seeing the impact of the Depression on your friends and/or classmates?

JA: Just aware from … the newspaper, that sort of thing. We didn't have the media impact that we have now, so, in a sense, we sort of lived an insulated life, I would say. We had a garden, and a father who worked, and we took vacations, not elaborate vacations, like you do now, but, in the summertime, we would go to my grandfather's farm. My father would help with the haying.

LM: Where was your grandfather's farm?

JA: Up in a little town called Franklin, in Delaware County, New York. It is about 200 miles from here.

SH: Do you remember if any hobos ever came to your backdoor looking for food or offering to work for food, if your house was marked as such because of your garden?

JA: The only thing I remember is that we were marked for stray animals. People would drop off cats and dogs, and all the animals we ever had were strays, and, really, the best animals you possibly could have. We were lucky in the way we adopted them, [laughter] but, they were wonderful animals, and my father was very fond of animals. We had chickens. … He loved bees. … He had had quite an impact on Birdseye, you've heard of Birdseye, down in South Jersey, with the tomatoes, and various fruits, and that sort of thing, and, as a student at Rutgers, he had learned the importance of bees, from the standpoint of pollination. The farmers down there didn't know that, so, he had gotten into the bee business down there, … and he would take his hives from place-to-place, to fertilize the plants and so forth, and then, he kept that up, and, as a matter-of-fact, whenever there was a swarm, he would get a phone call. He had to … go pick it up, which he did, and we had, like, fourteen or fifteen colonies in our backyard. We had a considerable piece of property, and I remember, every October, on Columbus Day, we always extracted the honey, took about five, six hundred pounds.

SH: Your father left Rutgers, as a faculty member, in 1946. As a World War I veteran, did he ever discuss his feelings on the Second World War or the events in Europe leading up to the war in the 1930s?

JA: Oh, yes. Well, I think his main anxiety was [for] his sons. … He rode his bicycle to school, simply because he was so frugal with gas. He had a "C" coupon, those were the things that enabled you to get gas, because he was considered essential, at least essential to the point that

they gave him a little bit of gas, but, he would ride a bicycle to school. … I think the most endearing thing that my mother and he did for us was that, they both typed, and, each night, they would write a letter, "Dear Boys," and it was sort of an "information, please," you might say. If I had written to my parents, they would share this information with Bob and Bill, and then, if they had written to Dad and Mother, I would get their feedback, and we would get letters every day, if the mail were that reliable. Some days, you'd get six a day, and [then], nothing for a week, but, it was really something that held the family together, and I knew, pretty much, what my brothers were doing, and their welfare, and so forth, and the thing I sensed was the great anxiety, the great concern, that they had, and I think it really did shorten my father's life. You know, … he died right after the war was over, tragically.

SH: I was going to ask if you thought there was a connection.

JA: Yeah, I think so. He was fifty-two, but, of course, people died younger at that time, too.

SH: I was wondering why he left the University in 1946.

JA: Death, yeah, never retired.

LM: It sounds like he really enjoyed teaching at Rutgers.

JA: Immensely, yes. He actually had a position at … New Brunswick High School. … At that time, New Jersey was quite an agricultural state. In most high schools, particularly the rural ones, had a vocational agriculture teacher, … that no longer prevails, I don't even think they have industrial arts teachers now, but, most of the high schools in all these eastern states had an ag teacher, and my father, actually, was the person who, at Rutgers, trained those men to be teachers. In other words, they had a background in agriculture, but, they also got pedagogy, so [that] they could take over a class, and I don't think that department operates anymore.

SH: Did he ever tell you what it was like, as a professor, to watch the University change as a result of the war, the arrival of the ASTP students, etc.?

JA: Really not, no. He was more involved with just his students and he was either at New Brunswick High School or [in his office]. … His office was at the Poultry Building at Rutgers Ag School (now known as Cook College).

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

JA: No, no. She was strictly a home keeper. She had worked for Interwoven Stocking Company before she was married and I think they met in church, the Middlebush Reformed Church, and were married before … my father went in the service. …

SH: Did your mother ever discuss her experiences as a young woman during World War I?

JA: … Dad was stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and she went down there and visited him, and I think she was, obviously, happy to be with him, but, I can't say; … if she talked about it, it didn't register. Maybe, as a kid, I wasn't interested. [laughter]

SH: As an undergraduate at Rutgers, what were your interests and activities?

JA: I was just an average student, and I wanted to be an athlete, but, I just was too small. I did play 150-pound football and lacrosse my freshman year and realized [that] I just couldn't cope with both athletics and studies. I worked hard in college. I accelerated; as I told you, … I sensed, … when I didn't get in the Advanced ROTC, that the draft might be looking at me. I tried to get in[to] … another branch. I thought I might get into Naval Meteorology or something like that, but, I had no luck, because of a congenital condition in the left eye, just couldn't pass an eye test. … So, I accelerated, so [that] I actually finished up in college in September of '42, and … I got my degree on three-and-a-half years of school. …

LM: You accelerated once the three-semester program was implemented.

JA: That's right. They had a summer school, and then, I think, and I told Sandra about this situation, and I think it's one of the things that might be interesting, from the standpoint of young people reading about the World War II anxieties. Everybody was concerned about when his number would be called up and … I was born on July 30, 1921; mine was not called up. … I turned twenty-one and, just five days before I turned twenty-one, I was told to report to the draft board. I think you were supposed to be allowed two weeks or fifteen days, something like that. It was obviously … something fishy about it. [laughter] My father, having knowledge of the draft procedures and so forth, having worked with students and so forth, he immediately appealed to the Somerset County, that's where we lived, Middlebush, Draft Board, … stating that his son needed six weeks in order to finish his degree, and that it would be in conjunction with such-and-such War Department [protocol] that was automatically granted, and he couldn't understand … why I was being drafted, and, just a day or two before I was to report, he went up to the draft board, and he said [that] this was one of the most unique experiences he ever had. This sort of tough sergeant major-type guy, a civilian, an old man, an older man, was just sluing down these young kids, saying, "You're in the Army now, kid. Get lost," and my father stood in line, patiently. When his turn came, he explained the situation, and this guy, very briskly, said, "Well, we never got that letter," and my father said, "Well, what is your name?" and he said, "My name is," we'll say, "Mr. Smith." My father pulled out the return address card, Mr. Smith had signed the card, and then, of course, he was very upset, Mr. Smith was, whatever his name was, and he started eating humble pie and was saying that, really, he couldn't explain it. … It was an oversight and was a mistake, but, I would have to go to Fort Dix on the 31st, which I did. In the meantime, my father got off a telegram to Secretary of War Stimson. At that time, we didn't have a Department of Defense, and, when I arrived at Fort Dix, I picked up the troop train here at New Brunswick Station, it was a big, long train, and we all rolled down there, and, when I got off the train, I thought I heard somebody saying, "Archibald," but, I just thought it was my imagination. Well, anyway, I know, when I got to the point where they were throwing out the shoes for the draftees, because … they were just issuing out your uniform, … the guy says, "[Is] your name Archibald?" I said, "Yeah," and he said, "Haven't you heard your name being called?" and I said, "No." He said, … "Everybody would like to be in your shoes right now."

He said, "You're being given a furlough," and I was given a furlough for six weeks, so that I could finish college, and it was a very good furlough. I didn't have to wear a uniform or anything, because I knew, theoretically, I wouldn't know anything about military protocol and so forth. So, I think that's a story just to indicate [that] my father always suspected that this man had some friend who had put influence on him, put pressure on him, and my name was just drawn out at the last second, and I was slated to go so this other person's friend wouldn't have to go, and, as it turned out, it was all okay. As a matter-of-fact, I was then inducted in the Army. My date of service dated from July 31st, even though I didn't go to Fort Dix again until the end of September.

SH: That must have helped you later when the point system was introduced.

JA: Yeah, those months were valuable at that time. I hope I'm not rambling on too much.

SH: Not at all. Before we enter your military career, what were your hobbies and interests as a youngster in Middlebush?

JA: I loved model building, airplanes, boats, that sort of thing. I don't remember any other than that.

SH: Did you have chores to do around the house?

JA: Yes, I did. We mowed the lawn by hand and did the garden and we had a very good life, I think. … All my brothers and I feel we were very blessed.

SH: How close were you and your brothers in age?

JA: About fourteen months with my older brother, about two years with my younger brother, so, we were close. My older brother was Class of '41, my younger brother was, theoretically, Class of '45. He went in the Navy Air Corps and never did get any undergraduate work in. Actually, he got in one year, but, he blew it, so, he came back and accelerated. Now, I think he's, theoretically, Class of '48 or '47, something like that.

SH: Were there any subjects that you were particularly interested in at New Brunswick High?

JA: I always liked math more than anything else. I wasn't a particularly good student. … School was not difficult for me, but, I didn't have any great passion for school.

SH: Did you have a mentor?

JA: No. I think our parents were our primary mentors. …

LM: Did you chose Rutgers primarily because of your father's affiliation? Were you interested in any other colleges?

JA: I would like to have gone to another college, 'cause it was economics. We came for, I think we had a five dollar registration fee.

LM: Wow.

JA: [laughter] So, it was strictly economics and, as a matter-of-fact, I lived at home. My older brother lived on campus his senior year, and I was to live on campus my senior year, but, we just couldn't afford it.

LM: You entered Rutgers right at the time that the social life of the campus was being hindered by the war. What was it like to be here as students were trading their civilian clothes for uniforms?

JA: I took ROTC for two years and I was very supportive of that. I, as a matter-of-fact, wanted to go in the advanced and I liked Rutgers. I would have loved to have gone to Princeton or one of the other [Ivy League] schools, but, I just knew it was not practical, and, at that time, Rutgers was still small. I know my father mentioned that the faculty, at that time, … when I went, in '39, was bigger than the whole student body was when he was there in '17. So, it had grown, but, it was still a small school. … I think we took in 480 then, that September of '39, and I think … 150 of them were out by February of that year, but, they flunked out, didn't make the grade, for one reason or another, but, other than that, it was a good experience.

SH: In 1939, you played 150-pound football.

JA: Yes.

SH: In September of 1939, how aware were you of the war in Europe?

JA: I have not a good recollection, but, I don't think very well. … I don't think I understood it very well. Actually, I didn't get a realization of the plight we were in until Pearl Harbor Day. I was working on a term paper at that time, and I heard this thing, and, for the life of me, I couldn't place Pearl Harbor, … but, I soon realized the implications of it. The whole thing changed, right then and there.

SH: Was the war in Europe discussed at all in your ROTC classes?

JA: I don't think so. I can't say I have a vivid recollection of it, but, I don't think so, no. The one thing that brought it home to me, Pearl Harbor, was that … my older brother, who was Class of '41, … he'd gone, right from graduation, to Fort Bragg, for, supposedly, one year. Of course, as of December 7, he was in for the duration, so, that impacted on me and our family.

SH: Did you join a fraternity in your freshman year?

JA: Yes, I did. I was a DU, now defunct, but, we were all DUs. It ran in the family. My mother was a Voorhees and a lot of the Voorheeses were DUs, … sort of a family tradition. My father was actually Ivy Club, which is no longer. It was an independent fraternity.

LM: Did you ever have any encounters with Dean Metzger, such as getting into trouble over a fraternity party?

JA: How did you know? [laughter]

LM: I interviewed General Kroesen, who was also a DU.

JA: Yes. Well, actually, Dean Metzger was a DU, too, [laughter] and there was a curfew as to when we were to start the hazing. … The sophomores had started up, like, twelve hours ahead of time, [laughter] and one of the things we were to do was, the class was divided in half, and we had this mock war on either side of College Avenue, I think in front of the DEKEs yard, and one of us went, "Bang, bang," and the other one went, "Pop, pop," and then, we're all supposed to be dead, and Dean Metzger came down College Avenue [and] said, "Men, what house are you from?" and we said, "DU, sir," and he said, "My God, my own fraternity." [laughter] He took us into the living room and gave us a long lecture and that was the end of the sophomores; [we] were in big trouble. [laughter]

SH: Do you remember your own initiation as a freshman?

JA: Yes, I do.

SH: Can you tell us about it?

JA: Well, we were paddled by the upperclassmen, and … I think the most dramatic thing was that the DU House had a center staircase, and they ran water down that staircase, from the third floor right to the basement. I don't know how they ever got it out of the house, this great waterfall. [laughter] They dammed it up, … and we were skidding, sliding around on our butts, all over the place, swimming. [laughter] We were supposed to swim.

SH: Did you have to wear dinks and a green tie as a freshman?

JA: We wore the dink right from the day we arrived on campus, right.

SH: Really?

JA: Yes, yes. That wasn't for the fraternity, that was just because you were a freshman.

SH: Because you were a freshman.

JA: Right. That was the school.

LM: Did you have to recite cheers for the upperclassmen as they walked by?

JA: No, actually, the campus was very friendly at that time. You always said hello to everybody. That's something I think [came from] … the small college atmosphere and it was very pleasant. I thought that was good.

LM: Did you have a proclamation rush?

JA: Don't remember that, nope. … I have no recollection.

LM: The freshmen had to skinny up a pole to rip down the proclamation.

JA: No, I don't remember that, nope.

LM: I think they probably did that during your father's days at Rutgers.

JA: You know, talking about my father, on this business of rush and hazing, this may be a story that will ring a bell with you, but, I guess Selman Waksman was behind my father, I'm not sure exactly what class he was. At least they were both at the College of Agriculture, and Dad and Selman Waksman were very, very good friends, because of being colleagues, but, anyway, Selman Waksman was a very poor boy when he arrived at Rutgers. Nobody realized; he was living in an attic over in downtown New Brunswick, and, at that time, … when I was a freshman, I had to go to chapel, I think on Mondays, when you're a sophomore, you'd go on Tuesdays, and so forth, but, my father had to go to chapel every day. There was a much stronger tie, and they really hazed the freshmen in those days, and, when Waksman came, the thing they did was, I guess all the men wore a tie and jacket, they cut their neckties off. Have you ever heard this?

SH: Yes.

JA: Well, anyway, they cut Waksman's tie off, and then, he went into chapel, and, the next day, he came to chapel with his collar up, covering his cut necktie, and I think the next day, they took his shirt. So, the next day, he arrives with just the jacket, and then, they realized that the poor man only had the one necktie and one shirt, and they also realized he was practically eating bread and water in these attic lofts. … I think it's amazing how that man has turned the tables around as a great contributor, his discovery, … to Rutgers.

SH: That is a great story.

LM: Do you remember attending the Military Ball?

JA: I was sitting in the fraternity for the Military Ball. I had a date and I got an infection in the heel from running. You always had blisters, and I lived with a blister for a week or so, and then, all of a sudden, I saw a red blotch on my groin and up the leg and down the vein, and I know they told me that if it hadn't been for sulfa, I would have lost the leg. So, they had me [set up with] ice packs here, and hot water bags on the blister, or visa versa, and I was up there for three days, and thankful I got out alive. So, one of my fraternity brothers took over my date. I had ordered a corsage and the whole bit and they came up and visited me during the intermission. [laughter]

SH: That is nice.

JA: I was up in the Quadrangle infirmary at that time, just one floor, something like that, a good service.

SH: How much activity was there between the Rutgers men and the NJC campus?

JA: There was a lot of activity in-between NJC. We used to parole it, you know, travel about and look at the girls. …

LM: Did you ever get in trouble with the NJC deans for violating curfew?

JA: No, because I went home at night, so, I didn't really have any [trouble]. No, I can't say we did. In some respects, the NJC girls were not as choice as some girl from another college. … I think it was just a matter of supply and demand type of thing. … The Coop-ies, you would want to have some girl from another college, rather than from the Coop.

LM: Really?

JA: It seemed to be the way, yes.

SH: How did you get the girls here from the other colleges?

JA: They'd come by train. …

SH: Did they have a place to stay for the evening or did they go back at night?

JA: Sometimes, they stayed at our house. I know the date I would have would do that, but, I can't remember, really. They didn't stay at the house, no. That would be the last thing in the world that would happen.

LM: When you had official fraternity parties, did the men clear out of the house and find another place to sleep?

JA: Well, you see, I didn't live at the house, so, I really forget that aspect. Perhaps you're right, maybe they did. Maybe the guys doubled up in dorms. I think you're probably right. … That's probably what happened, right. The gals were upstairs, right.

SH: They had to be registered.

JA: We had chaperones, yes. The DU House had three floors, and … they had two dorms, a cold dorm and a … warmer dorm, a heated dorm, and … the men would take their choice as to which one they'd sleep in, but, never together. [laughter]

SH: On June 30th, you received your draft notice. Did you attend your graduation the following January?

JA: Actually, I didn't. My Aunt Harriet picked it up, my mother's sister, and she came down and picked it up. I was in basic training.

SH: You were given a six-week furlough to complete your studies at Rutgers. How rushed were those last six weeks?

JA: I wasn't rushed. … I had already enrolled, and I was in those classes, and, really, other than that day of July 31st, when I went to Fort Dix, I had no interruption. I came back, August 1st, I was back in class, and continued until whatever it was, probably about the 28th of September, and then, as I recall, the Army didn't take me down to Fort Dix. I think my father and mother did.

SH: Okay.

JA: … I was there for about three days. I just went through the Army General Classification Test. [I] was assigned to the Air Force, put on a troop train, shipped off to Miami Beach.

SH: Had you received any letters from your older brother at this point? Did he try to prepare you for what to expect?

JA: Bill was a pretty good writer, yes. He was still in this country though, at that time. … I can't tell you exactly what phase of his service he was in, but, he was through with Fort Bragg, I'm sure, and was probably in the Solomons Islands maneuvering area, it was down in Chesapeake Bay, and they were doing amphibious operations down there, invading that island, and landing amphibious troops, and that sort of thing.

SH: Was your younger brother drafted also?

JA: No, he actually got in … what they called the V-5 or V-12 program. He was a Naval cadet and I would say it was about a year later. … He did go through his freshman year, but, his attitude was, "Eat, drink, and be merry, tomorrow, I die," type of thing, and he just blew the whole year, for all practical purposes. …

LM: Was he a DU as well?

JA: He was a DU, yeah.

LM: Did he take any of his V-12 classes here at Rutgers?

JA: No, … I think his first assignment was at Colgate, and that was, … primarily, a muscle factory, and then, he went to Peru, Indiana, and Pensacola. He was in Atlanta for navigation, that sort of thing. He eventually became a carrier-based night fighter pilot and he actually spent most of the war training.

SH: Did you and either of your brothers ever meet while you were in the service?

JA: When I was in Louisiana, … I did not fly, but, one of my flying buddies flew me over to Mobile, Alabama, where he was. He was operating off a carrier … out of Mobile at that time and we spent a day together. With Bill, no, … the only time I saw him [was] if he came home before I was drafted.

SH: Were you sent to Miami for OCS?

JA: No, I was sent to Miami for basic training. … A number of resort areas, Miami Beach, Atlantic City, because of the housing and because of the lack of transportation, the Army, the Army Air Force, what have you, took those hotels over, and instead of building barracks, they billeted the recruits in those hotels. I was in a bunch of hotels on Miami Beach, right on Collins Avenue, a great location, right on the beach. We were … assigned a room. Instead of having two people in a room, we had, probably, six or eight double bunks a room. We had our own private baths, so, eight men probably used that one bath, and, at five o'clock, there'd be *Reveille*. We'd fall out in front of the [hotel], on Collins Avenue. There was no traffic. The place was abandoned, because they were afraid of the lights, and submarines, and all that sort of thing, and they did the roll call, and then, we would march off to breakfast, and then, we would go into basic training, muscle factory, … hand guns or whatever, you know, all that type of thing.

SH: Do you know where most of the people in your company or hotel room were from?

JA: I had … a very good friend I roomed with. He was a Princeton graduate. We … got to know each other on the train down. It took us about three days to take the train ride, because … the trains were very slow in those days. Vital stuff would be given priority over troops and … they were mostly college graduates. What had happened, when you are classified at the reception center, you're sort of programmed as to what you're going to be in the Army and … I was lucky to get in the Air Force. I did well on the, what do they call it? Army General Classification, AGCT, Test, so that … they considered me a good bet, and I don't know what they were going to train me for, but, … you know, you go through the basic training first.

LM: Were you happy to be assigned to the Army Air Force, that you would not be slogging through the mud as an infantryman?

JA: I really didn't think about it. I didn't know that much about the Air Force, as a matter-of-fact, but, once I got in it, I was glad, yes.

LM: Did you have the idea in your head that you did not want to be in the Army?

JA: No. … The Class of '43 took a very [heavy casualty rate].

[TAPE PAUSED]

We had the greatest casualties of any class.

LM: What was it like to lose close friends and classmates, like Malcolm Schweiker of the DU House?

JA: Oh, gosh. That was the one that struck us the hardest, because he was such an extraordinary guy. You've heard of him?

LM: He was a "big man on campus."

JA: Phi Beta Kappa. He was just a beautiful [man], yeah, a very good friend of mine, and I went out to his home one weekend. We played golf, very enjoyable weekend. … My brother, Bill, was on Okinawa when Malcolm was killed on Okinawa, … you probably knew that, and Bill had … invaded Okinawa, earlier, and they were still spreading out when Malcolm's group came in, and Bill had talked to him two or three days before he was killed. … After the war, … my brother, Bill, and I drove out to Pennsylvania and met with Mr. and Mrs. Schweiker. It was the saddest thing we ever did. It just broke our hearts, but, they … wanted to hear about their son's last days, anyway.

SH: That was a wonderful thing to do. What else stands out in your memory about going through basic training in Miami?

JA: Well, I felt very blessed that I was down in that [area]. … I was there from the end of September, October, November, December, anyway, during all the cold months. It was very pleasant, and we had time off in the evening, and we just bummed around with our friends, and I think we [were] just sort of waiting to get it over with. That was the primary thing.

LM: Are there any drill sergeants that you remember in particular?

JA: Some were, yes, but, … it was just one of those things that you put up with. Fortunately, … I knew a little bit about the Army, … having had the ROTC, so, you weren't one of these guys who was always out of step, and couldn't carry the rifle correctly, and so forth. So, it was somewhat of a streamlined process.

SH: Where was your next assignment after Miami?

JA: I was then made permanent party in Nebraska, Lincoln Army Air Force Base. … For lack of a better word, I was really a clerk/typist. That was my classification, but, I did payroll work and, [at] that time, we paid completely in cash. Most men would get thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents a month. … You got fifty dollars a month, and most men had a twelve dollar and fifty cent war bond deducted, and we paid them that [in] exact change. … I would line up all the money, and then, an officer would do the dispensing. Then, he'd have to sign it off, after I did the computing.

SH: Was there a slush fund for helping out those with special needs?

JA: No, I think the first sergeant did that, as I recall. I didn't do it.

SH: Were you given any special training for this assignment?

JA: Actually, the mission of that particular outfit was, it was called an STU, Special Training Unit, in Nebraska, and what had happened was that, in the process of drafting men, a lot of the men who were drafted did not have a basic, say, fourth grade, education, and, in order for the Army Air Force, or whatever, to use a man, they had to have this capability of being able to read simple directions, following simple directions, and so forth, and so, the Army and Air Force set up these STUs, and, since I'd been in teacher education, I think I got assigned to that, even though I did not do the teaching. I just did the financial work and our mission was to train these men. … They had some good teachers. … I found that rather interesting, inasmuch as I had never realized that a man could get to be twenty-one, twenty-three years old and not even be able to read and write. Now, some of them you could understand. We had a lot of Indians and they would sign their payroll with an "X." Then, we would have to witness it, but, then, you had the tough kids out of the slums of New York, you might say, who thought it was smart not to be a good student. Then, you had the kids from Appalachia. … Wherever there was poverty, you had this lack of education, and our mission was to upgrade them, and it was successful in some ways and unsuccessful in others. Interestingly enough, my wife did the same thing down in Texas, with the WACs, and I think her group was more successful than ours was. I think our major was more interested in his own career, and he was always drilling these guys, so that when VIP people came around to inspect the unit, he would want them to pass in review, and look like West Point, and this and that. So, we spent more time doing that, I think, than really [studying] in the classrooms, a bit of a pity.

SH: How would you rate the facilities at the Lincoln Army Air Force Base?

JA: Actually, … that was strictly Army barracks. We had upper and lower bunks, a footlocker for your equipment, a stove in either end of the [room].

SH: Had the base been built specifically for this purpose?

JA: That's right. Yes, it was strictly an airbase and we were rather near Lincoln. … If we had Saturdays off, we would go in to … see the Cornhuskers play, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

LM: The climate change must have been significant, going from Miami to Lincoln, Nebraska.

JA: It was cold there and this Air Force base was sort of in a defilade. You know, they obviously needed a flat area for a field. It was a B-17 base, and B-24, and you could just see that smoke, in the morning, hover over the whole area, soft coal. [laughter]

LM: A little different from Miami.

JA: Yes, yes, yes.

SH: Did you ever interact with the local civilians?

JA: Yes, I was … invited to meals. People would pick us up in Lincoln, very hospitable, very, very nice, salt of the earth, you know, strictly middle America.

SH: Did you attend church services while you were at that base?

JA: I'm sure I did, but, … I didn't go into Lincoln for church. We had a chapel on the base and I can't say I have a good recollection of that.

SH: Did you interact with the pilots in training at the base?

JA: Not at that time, no. … We just heard the planes. No, this STU was pretty much a school.

SH: Where were you sent next?

JA: … When that project was done, I was the surplus, and I was just floating around, and, all of a sudden, I realized I was doing permanent KP, and permanent guard duty, and MP work, so, that's when I applied for OCS and was accepted.

SH: You did not apply until that point.

JA: Didn't apply until that point, no. My father thought I should. I rather enjoyed being an enlisted man. I thought it was very democratic.

LM: How so?

JA: Being with the guys, you know, … not authoritarian, just one of the troops. I don't know, it was probably lame thinking, but, that was the way I felt.

SH: At that point, were you exposed to any veterans who had returned from combat tours overseas?

JA: No, it wasn't until I became an officer that I got exposed to veterans, and then, I was assigned to a fighter group that was made up completely of veterans, but, up until then, … I was just with recruits.

SH: Where were you sent for OCS?

JA: I did half of it at Miami, which was Miami Beach, again. That was the muscle part of it, the drill and the spit-and-polish, and then, the academic part I did at the Graduate School of Business at Harvard. It was very good. It was excellent. Actually, Hap Arnold, who was the commanding general of the Air Force, had asked the Graduate School of Business [dean], Dean (Lerner?), up there, to set up … what they called [the] Statistical Control Division. … When the war broke out, the Air Force was part of the Signal Corps, and, of course, it became a significant branch, and it had no control system. They … knew they had built 600 P-51s, but, they wouldn't have the vaguest idea where they were, and whether they were operational, what stage the motors were [in], you know, how many hours on, whether they had pilots with them, whether

they had mechanics with them, or whatever. So, the Graduate School of Business set that up, and then, we were trained to collect that stuff. … At that time, we would Telex them to Washington, DC, I guess, and they were compiled every evening.

SH: Did you have any say in going to OCS at Harvard?

JA: I don't think I had any choice. No, I guess I could have been a personnel officer or anybody who didn't fly, but, I got assigned to that. I think, maybe, that happened when I was at Miami Beach, in the basic part of it, … I think we were "ninety-day wonders," so, I think … the first forty-five days or something, I'm not exactly sure how long that training was. As a matter-of-fact, I think it was four or five months, but, … maybe I applied for it. I wouldn't have the foggiest idea what stat control was before I got there, yes.

----------END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE----------

JA: There weren't too many. Probably, they'd been going through the program for about a year. Our general classification number was called 6402 and many of the officers, when these young officers were assigned to them, didn't have the foggiest idea [of] how to use them. … Because the interesting thing is, generally, in the service, you're under A-1, A-2, A-3, or A-4, operations, personnel, supply, or intelligence, but, I was right off the commanding general, the commanding officer, I was a member of his staff, and some used you and some didn't. Some just said, you know, "There's your office. Get lost."

SH: Who was your commanding officer?

JA: Well, the first commanding officer I had was a fellow by the name of Fairleigh Ford, he was a brigadier general, and I worked with him, but, … I wasn't close to him. He let me do the job, and I did prepare for him a data book, which, well, gave him information about everything from, really, the amount of VD the personnel would have to whether we needed cooks, or radar operators, or whatever, and, on the basis of that, not the basis of my report alone, but, when they were all compiled together, they knew whether they could close down a cook's school, or whether they ought to open up another radar school, or aircraft propeller mechanic'[s school], what have you.

SH: How long were you at Harvard before you were assigned to Brigadier General Ford?

JA: I went through the chain of command. I went down to Tampa, which was the First Tactical Air Division, then, I went to Barksdale, probably three days there, went to Barksdale, … Alexandria, Louisiana, which was First Tactical Air Command, and then, I went down to Esler Field, near Alexandria, Louisiana, where I was assigned, then, to these fighter groups, and he was the commanding officer of a group, actually, that was made up of a number of fighter groups, fighter squadrons, and … the mission of that group [was], they had Army ground troops maneuvering in the Louisiana maneuver area. It was a godforsaken area, and they were out there in the swamp, … in tents and bivouacs, and we strafed them and gassed them, simulated. …

LM: [laughter] I am glad you clarified that.

JA: Yes, just to prepare them for the terror of a plane coming right at you, and, "Boom, boom, boom," and the gas spreading down on you, put the gas mask on, all that sort of thing, but, just training. They did that day after day.

SH: How long were you stationed at Harvard?

JA: … Three months, probably, maybe four.

SH: Did you feel that the training you received prepared you for the duty you were given?

JA: I thought that was the best training I ever had in my life. I loved it. I really ate it up. I did very well.

SH: Were your instructors at Harvard civilians?

JA: Oh, the regular business school professors, and they were marvelous, and the men there were so good. We lived in the Graduate School of Business dorms, again, though, in double bunks. Instead of having, say, two men to a room, we'd probably be four or six and we ate in a Navy mess. At first, we ate in the Graduate School of Business dining rooms, but, that phased out after about a month, and there was a supply school there for the Navy, and we ate at their mess hall, which was very good, but, the Navy and the Air Force were both at the Graduate School of Business.

SH: Were you allowed to go on leave during your stint at Harvard?

JA: Yeah. … Well, we'd walk over to Cambridge, actually, the grad school was in Boston, and get a haircut, that type of thing, and I took the subway into downtown Boston, some of the time. …

SH: Was this your first trip to New England?

JA: I'd been to Maine with my father and mother on a summer vacation once, but, other than that, that was the first time I'd ever been in Boston. …

LM: Were the regular Harvard students receptive to the military programs on the campus?

JA: We were really detached from them. … I don't know how many graduate students they had at that time. I was not aware of them. We were really a group unto our own. We, I think, had pretty much taken over the school. That's my opinion. Probably, I'm wrong on that, but, I have no awareness of that. We didn't conflict with our classes. … We marched to class.

SH: How strict was the military discipline at Harvard? You mentioned that you marched to class.

JA: Actually, it was a lot looser. They didn't want us strolling down the street, but, other than that, it was more academic than military. It was really a good set up.

SH: Did you have to stand for inspection?

JA: We did have roll calls, yeah, we had that, and I think we had bed checks and so forth, but, it wasn't like basic training or OCS.

SH: Were any of your classmates married?

JA: Yes, I think so. I'm not sure. I don't remember that they were. They were all young guys, like I was, yeah.

SH: Down in Mississippi …

JA: Louisiana.

SH: Louisiana, excuse me.

JA: That's okay; it's all the same. [laughter]

SH: You said that.

JA: [laughter] Well, I think so. I don't know for sure, but, I think so. There was a lot of activity down there during the war, because there was so much space.

SH: You noted that that was your first exposure to veterans.

JA: Returnees, yes.

SH: Returnees.

JA: Right.

SH: What were your impressions of the returnees?

JA: Well, I was really impressed with them. They were the finest men, and, eventually, I roomed with a guy by the name of Johnny Aiken, and he was a P-51 pilot. He was the fellow who flew me, in an AT-6, over to Mobile, Alabama, to see my brother, Bob, but, he had been … in England, and he had had three tours of duty, and he was the most blessed man I've ever seen in my life, to have lived through that, and he was an ace, over ace, over ace. He was a major. He had all sorts of Distinguished Flying Crosses, Air Medals, with clusters. He really was an extraordinary guy, and he lived in Aiken, South Carolina, … and I've often wondered whatever happened to him. He was a wonderful, wonderful hero, really, and there were a lot of good men, but, Johnny Aiken really stands out in my mind.

LM: Your training took you to several regions of the nation, the South, the Mid-West, and the Northeast. Did you notice any significant differences between these regions?

JA: Yeah, well, Florida, of course, even then, even though it was all blacked out, there were no lights in the hotels, … you had shades on all the windows, … but, it was a lot of glitz there. You could just see [that] the neon wasn't being lit up, and I lived in a little hotel called the Carlyle, which is now on the protected list, it's really charming, art deco, small, about three stories high, but, I've seen it written up in the *New York Times*, and, I guess, my wife and I have gone by it when we go down there. … I had never seen an area like that before. We did our basic training on golf courses outside of the beach and ran up and down over the hills and all that, not that there were many hills, … and then, the rifle range was into a sand dune, out on the beach. They just took us up there by truck. Nebraska, … I guess the thing I remember most about that was the remoteness of it, and the smoke, and the basic friendliness. Then, Harvard, I liked. I thought that was really [great]. That was probably the richest experience I had in my military career. Louisiana, … I think the Army built bases down there because … the area was so deprived. We had armadillos, and there were no fence laws, and you got the idea that, you've heard of Huey Long, that was all reflected. For instance, there were pigs running around on the roads, and a lot of our officers would be driving their car, and a pig would come out of there, no fences. If you hit a pig, you'd do a lot of damage to your car, but, the politicians sort of took the attitude, "You know, those cigar smoking people from the North come down here in their big cars and they drive around too fast." … It was sort of a clash there that you did feel, even though you were isolated from it, you lived on your own base, but, it was a funny situation. I did get to New Orleans, though, a couple of times and had good French meals and so forth. There was a contrast, but, … I hope that, more or less, answers [your question]. Those are my recollections now.

LM: The Army was segregated during World War II. Do you recall ever encountering any African-American soldiers?

JA: I'm not sure it was segregated. We had black men and we had Indians. … I didn't realize it was segregated. I can't say. …

SH: What were their duties or assignments?

JA: I met the Indians and black men mostly in basic training, and then, at STU, so, to answer your question, probably in menial jobs, I think, KP and MPs.

LM: Were the living quarters segregated?

JA: Not to my recollection, no. … I can't say I had any close associates who were black, but, to the best of my knowledge, they were not segregated. Maybe I was just so, you know, insensitive to it at that time, I didn't realize, but, I don't think so. …

SH: In the South, did you see any, "White Only," or, "Colored Only," signs over the water fountains and bathrooms?

JA: I didn't see that. I can't say that and I know that I did guard duty with them and MP duty with them. …

SH: What was a typical day like for you during your stint at Esler Air Force Base?

JA: Well, … our schedule was pretty much our own. We did have required physical education, had to go out and play volleyball, or something like that, at lunchtime. … I had a staff of men who would use the teletypewriters to send in the stuff. I think we had to have all that in at four o'clock in the afternoon, so, part of our task was getting the morning reports from each of the first sergeants and getting all those data [sheets] in. We had reports on the condition of the airplanes and the number of people sick, on sick leave, and so forth, and then, that stuff was typed off, and, after that, the job was, more or less, done.

SH: Did you work with any civilian employees?

JA: No, no. There were civilian employees on the base who were at the PX or something like that. I don't think they were even Army, but, you saw them, if you went over for [a drink].

SH: Were there any other military installations located near Esler?

JA: Actually, we had quite a few little satellite bases. The biggest one would be Alexandria. As a matter-of-fact, when Esler finally closed down, I was assigned to Alexandria Army Air Base, which, I think, is now the airfield for Alexandria, Louisiana, but, we had Esler and Pollack, and some of them were in Mississippi. … We had different equipment. You might have P-51s on our base, and P-40s on another, and B-25s on another, that sort of thing.

SH: Did you share information with those installations?

JA: We took the stats, statistical information, yes, but, I can't say I ever got out to Pollack or any of those other bases, Meridian.

SH: Were you allowed off base for liberty, say, to visit New Orleans?

JA: Yes, the General, Fairleigh Ford, had a C-45, it was a little, two-engine plane, and he would take trips for inspection, and he would ask me to go along, and I was, you know, delighted to ride along, just to see the countryside and so forth, and it was fun flying.

SH: Where did you go?

JA: Barksdale, … nothing international or continental. [laughter] It would be all Louisiana, one base to another, really, from one of his commands to another.

SH: What kind of facilities were available to you on the base?

JA: Barracks, yeah, it was barracks. It was very, very primitive.

SH: Was there an officers' club?

JA: We did have an officers' club.

SH: Was there a hospital or an infirmary?

JA: I don't remember. I'm sure we had a doctor there, but, I don't remember a hospital, never needed it, and I think, probably, we would have been shipped off to Alexandria for that.

SH: Since there were pilots in training at Esler, were there any training accidents while you were there?

JA: Yes, there were. Yeah, I remember, one day, for some reason or another, I think it was crosswinds or something, three P-40s came in and each one of them spun out, ground-looped. It was really strange. Nobody killed, thank God, but, … lost a lot of planes. [laughter]

SH: Where were you ordered to after your assignment at Esler was complete?

JA: After Louisiana, I went to Texas. I went to El Paso, Texas, … in the same capacity, except, by then, … either just before or just after the war ended, … I was declared, more or less, what would you call that? "essential." I was declared essential and I went, basically, into personnel work. I went into discharging, and, at that time, you probably don't remember a commentator like Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson, but, the great emphasis then was getting the men out of the service, millions of men, and if one base was a little negligent, not moving its men out, Drew Pearson or Walter Winchell was on the radio on Sunday nights and absolutely scared the living daylights out of every commanding general. [If] he said, "Biggs Field, in El Paso, Texas, is being slow in getting men out," there would be hell to pay.

SH: Wow.

JA: Really, … they did a good service and I think parents would turn these bases in and have them exploit the news. … "Get my son out."

SH: I did not realize that they could influence the military to such a degree.

JA: In the discharging, at that time, they absolutely did. They really had a great influence. Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson, I remember, we listened to them just to make sure we weren't identified. [laughter] … All day long, I signed discharge papers. We just processed them as fast as we could. They were shipped in and we shipped them out.

SH: You spent most of the war in Louisiana.

JA: Yes, that would be true, and then, probably, about six or eight months in [El Paso]. I can give you those exact dates, Sandra, if you want, but, I have these records, you know.

SH: It is interesting to hear how the media influenced your job.

JA: Yes.

SH: How much information on the overall progress of the war were you able to derive from the media at your post in Louisiana?

JA: Yeah, actually, not too much from the outside media, but, once I became an officer, there was an intelligence report. We had an intelligence officer, a wonderful man, who had been a college professor in history, and he would go over … both war theaters with us, every morning. He had big maps and … they would brief us, tell us exactly the status, as well as they knew. In other words, we knew what was going on in the other theaters quite well.

LM: Do you remember any scrap or bond drives in the local towns?

JA: Can't say I did, no. I knew my father was involved in that, in collecting metal, but, … I really was isolated from the towns. We were really stuck out in the boondocks.

SH: Did you feel fortunate to receive mail from your parents, since their letters contained so much detail?

JA: Yes, yes. It was very important.

SH: To keep up with your brothers.

JA: Right, very good, yeah.

SH: Did you feel that the media was accurately depicting the war?

JA: I must confess, I don't think we had newspapers on the bases. Our base was not one that was richly endowed with anything. You could probably get soap, and shaving cream, and stuff like that, and toothpaste, but, that was about it, Coca-Cola.

SH: You had no idea of how the war was being reported.

JA: No, I didn't. I was either dull and didn't pick it up or it was not accessible.

SH: Did your father and mother ever comment on what they read in the newspapers?

JA: Only as it related to my brothers and … I know there was great anxiety when we invaded Europe. … Actually, as far as my older brother was concerned, we didn't know about his invasions until they were history, and then, … I don't think even after they were history … was Bill able to write about that he'd been at Saipan, or Tinian, or Guam, or Iwo Jima, or whatever. … I don't think he was. It was after the war.

SH: Did your father mention if any veterans were returning to Rutgers towards the end of the war?

JA: No, no, he did not. He did keep in touch with a lot of these boys, a lot of these students, but, I don't think any of them returned.

SH: You were stationed in Texas.

JA: Yes.

SH: Your duty was to discharge soldiers.

JA: Discharge, yes, right.

SH: Did you ever have to personally handle an airman's discharge?

JA: Actually, the clerks did it, and … they needed an officer's signature, and I did that. I was really just a hand. I didn't know what I was signing. They were just stacks, and stacks, and stacks. My handwriting just got terrible, because I was just writing them so fast.

SH: Was your base ever mentioned in the radio reports?

JA: No, actually, we were blessed. [laughter] We worked very hard.

SH: How long were you stationed there?

JA: Probably about, well, the atomic bomb was … [in] September, wasn't it? and I was in the service until about April. …

LM: August 14th.

JA: August 14th, something like that, yeah, the first bomb, and then, the second one, yeah, right. Then, I think the *Missouri* signing was, I forget exactly.

LM: Three weeks later.

JA: Yeah, something like that, and I know my brother, then, he was in the Philippines, at the time, staging to go into Japan, and he did go to Japan. They took the troop ships right up and landed right where they were going to invade and, by then, he was a lieutenant colonel, and MacArthur asked him [to go]. … MacArthur wanted to build relationships with the Japanese, so, they sent a Navy, Marine, Army officer, Air Force officer, I guess, on little delegations, all around Japan, to visit these towns. The mayor would come out, and the little girls would present the flowers to these men, and they would just go from train station to train station. He did that, and then, he came home. …

LM: What were your perceptions of the Japanese and the Germans as the enemy?

JA: I think it's mellowed, probably. … Obviously, I was angry at the Japanese for bombing Pearl Harbor, but, I can't say I had any real rancor. I've developed some of it since then, having talked with friends who really went through hell in battle, but, I was strictly administrative, strictly non-combatant. The only way I could have gotten hurt would have [been] if a file cabinet would have fallen over on me. [laughter] That was the type of position I had and there were a lot of us. … I was lucky enough not to … get into the front lines.

SH: I am always impressed by the humility of the veterans that I interview.

JA: [laughter] Well, … this is very genuine, … I assure you.

SH: After you completed the task of processing airmen out of the service, what was your next assignment?

JA: That was it, and then, I went home. I actually did my own. … It soon wound down. Really, it was amazing how quickly we [processed them out].

SH: Was the base in Texas just as big as Esler? Was it as isolated as Esler?

JA: Yes. … We went into Tijuana, … Juarez, I should say, Juarez, every Sunday, saw the bullfights, miserable bullfights. They didn't have good bulls and we could pick up, oh, scotch and perfume, things like that, that you couldn't get in the United States, silk stockings.

LM: Tequila. [laughter]

JA: Didn't know about tequila. I was too naive at that stage, [laughter] but, that was always pleasant. Biggs Field was a strange base, inasmuch as, you see, back in those days, everything was propeller driven, and a propeller whips up an awful lot of grit and dirt. You had to be very careful on runways, otherwise, you'd get it in the engines, and all the runways were concrete or asphalt, of course, but, then, around all the runways, you had all these great stones, cobblestones, not cobblestones, but, heavy stones that wouldn't fly, because it was so dusty out there. You had terrible dust storms. … They would come and it would take the paint right off cars. I couldn't believe it, and so, it was sort of an interesting area.

SH: Did you get to meet any local civilians or did you stay strictly among military personnel?

JA: I was strictly isolated in the base, right.

SH: In July and August of 1945, did you have any inkling that the atomic bomb was about to be dropped?

JA: None whatsoever. No, I didn't know about it, no. … All I knew about was the status of the troops and that sort of thing, and it was generally just with … a line, and it was … US, or British, or whatever.

SH: How did you feel about the atomic bomb at the time?

JA: If I did, I really can't remember. Obviously, I was elated when we were winning and stressed when we were getting licked, but, it was very remote to me, 'cause it was all Europe or Pacific Theater, and a lot of it I didn't know about. … Since my wife and I have traveled, we've met Australians who were treated horribly by the Japanese, when they were captured, and filled in on that sort of thing, so, you do know more, and what you read, of course. Okinawa, I think, was a horrible campaign.

SH: When did you begin to consider your options for what you would do after the war?

JA: Well, when … the war was over, I had a job. I went to work for my father-in-law. I married a girl in Florida, … met her during basic training, and came back, and worked for him. … That marriage ended in divorce. She left me and I came back to my father and mother's home, my mother's home then, my father had died, and got myself settled down, eventually, went into teaching.

SH: What were you doing in Florida?

JA: … The company was building GI houses, which was a tremendous industry at that time. These houses had to be built for 9,995 dollars, under 10,000 dollars, and we had an arrangement where we built the houses, loaned the money, and had an affiliation with the bank, and this lumber company supplied the lumber to the contractors.

SH: Did your wife follow you to Louisiana or any of the other places that you were stationed?

JA: Just to Louisiana, yeah. She came to Esler for a few months.

SH: Were you able to get housing on the base?

JA: No, no. We had a house in town and she stayed for a few months, did not like it. … I rented a house.

SH: Did you have any children?

JA: I had a son, yes. He was born just after I was discharged. He was conceived, obviously, before, but, he was born July 11th.

SH: Did he live with you in New Jersey?

JA: He was for a while. He got estranged from his mother, and she wanted him to come here, and we bought a house in 1960, so [that] we could accommodate us, my wife and I, and he stayed with us for about three, four months, and it was a very tough situation, and he decided that he wanted to go back home. We have since become reconciled. He didn't want any part of me, then, for thirty years or so, but, we do see him, and correspond with him, and talk on the phone now.

SH: Wonderful. When did you return to New Jersey?

JA: I came back in November of '46.

SH: When did you decide to use your GI Bill benefits?

JA: When I went into education. … At that time, there was a terrific shortage of teachers and I guess it was through … my father's associates that I got this position in South Bound Brook as a sixth, seventh, and eighth grade teacher in February of '47. Actually, when I first got home, I did nothing. I worked on a snowplow. It was a very severe winter and they needed somebody to … operate the snow blade. So, I did that as sort of on an overtime basis, and then, got this position. … In the meantime, I was trying to figure out how to be a teacher. So, I was, you know, observing in the little elementary school that I'd gone to. … My sixth grade teacher was still there, Mrs. (Stiger?). She very kindly let me sit in. I tried to figure out how this all worked, and the teacher whose classroom I took over had lost control of the class, and they had the idea that a man, especially a veteran, would be just right for the kids, and so, I got this position with absolutely no [experience]. I had never done any student teaching. I'd just, you know, been in the School of Education, but, had very little pedagogy. So, then, I really liked it. … I will say this, … I took the class over and I had no trouble with it. It was just one of those things that was magic. You either click with kids or you don't, and I happened to, and so, then, I decided to take the GI Bill, and I went that summer, intensively, and then, I did it, you know, Saturdays and evenings, until I finished my Masters.

LM: At Columbia?

JA: That was at Rutgers. Actually, I got my Masters at Rutgers. I did some graduate work at Columbia, too. My wife had to go in there for some certification work, so, we went together, just so we could be together.

SH: From South Bound Brook, where did you move next?

JA: From South Bound Brook, I went to Franklin Township, which is really the township in which Middlebush is located, to a little school called South Franklin Pine Grove Manor. It's just over the border. Actually, it's much closer to New Brunswick than Middlebush is and I taught … sixth, seventh, and eighth grade there for one year. I taught a half a year at South Bound Brook, and then, … got a better position in Franklin Township. I guess I taught two years there. Then, I was offered a teaching principalship, if you can imagine, but, you see, … it's sort of a reverse discrimination thing. At that time, elementary schools were strictly matriarchies and they would do anything to get a man. So, I, just like some of the minorities today are getting some preferential treatment, I think, because of their color, race, or gender, I got preferential treatment. I was made this teaching principal [of] a little five-room school in Montgomery Township, which is in Somerset County, Belle Mead, Harlingen, in that area. We fed into Princeton High School, and I taught the eighth grade, and then, there were combination grades, kindergarten, first, second, third, and so forth. So, I think it was a five-room school and they were all bussed in from the farms around, but, basically, a farming area. It's quite different now and I was there for two years, really, one of the richest experiences I ever had, because I was sort

of an administrator, teacher, everything. I had an association with the Board of Education and everything else.

SH: How did you spend your summers?

JA: I worked for Thomas Cook. Do you know what that is? It's a travel tour outfit. Yeah, well, … I needed the money and I ran tours, out West, worked out of Chicago, on Pullman cars, primarily, running tours to Yellowstone, Glacier, California, Pacific Northwest, Yosemite, you name it. We went everyplace. It was marvelous. [I] did that for six summers, and then, they assigned me to a cruise around South America in '52, fifty-three days. We went down on the Moore McCormick Line, to Buenos Aires, all the ports of call, you know, Rio, and so forth, en route, and then, a Trans-Argentine Train to Santiago, Chile, up the Pacific Coast by steamship, through the Panama Canal, back to Cuba. Cuba was open at that time. That ship didn't call on the United States, we got off at Cuba, and then, the group was disbanded, and, after that, I ran summer tours to Hawaii, first to Alaska, for a summer, and then, I was running tours to Hawaii when I met my wife.

LM: Did you meet her on a tour?

JA: Yes. Actually, she wasn't on the tour, but, she was on the ship. It was the old *Lurline*. It was the original *Love Boat*. … [laughter]

LM: That was when you first caught the traveling bug. You have not stopped.

JA: No, we haven't stopped. No, she liked to travel and I do, too. ...

LM: You began teaching during the height of the Cold War. Do you remember leading the kids in the "duck-and-cover" drills?

JA: Yes, yeah, we did, yes, getting them down in the basement and all that sort of thing, yes. I'd forgotten all about that, but, you're right.

LM: What were your impressions of …

JA: Oh, we did it very seriously, just as we did a fire drill. Fire drills were done once a month, and those drills were done once a month, and we taught the kids just to be absolutely obedient, and immediately respond to the alarm, and go to the designated area, and there was just no ifs, ands, or buts.

LM: Did you personally fear a Russian nuclear attack?

JA: I really didn't question it. It was all thrust down upon me, and I presumed that it was valid, and that, really, went through my whole career. The last school I had, which was in Ridgewood, we had water in the cellar, and cots, and litters, and all that, first aid kits and other things, yes.

LM: Were there any problems with "American" children picking on children of Eastern European descent?

JA: No. We had a lot of war brides who had children in school, and, actually, they were all assimilated without the slightest hitch, and it was really remarkable. The kids did it. They would take these youngsters in and it was all concrete business of learning the language, "This is a book. This is a table," bing, bing, bing, and the kids, within a few months, were really just remarkable. The mothers might have had a little more trouble, but, the youngsters really learned. I think it was partly because they were elementary school age and just were like sponges. They were marvelous.

SH: I know that, during the 1930s, Rutgers and NJC professors aided their colleagues in Germany by taking in their children, even enrolling them in the University. Did your father ever discuss this practice?

JA: I was not aware of that, no. The only thing … I was aware of, now that you're bringing this up, is that we did have prisoners in the Louisiana area. They were not connected to our base, but, they were nearby, and … I knew about them, German prisoners, primarily. I don't remember any Japanese.

SH: I just thought you might know.

JA: No, I don't remember that, Sandra.

SH: I thought, perhaps, you might have remembered seeing some students with German accents on campus.

JA: It's a nice thing to have done. I didn't realize that.

SH: What aspect of education did you enjoy the most?

JA: I liked the elementary kids. … The last school I had, where I was for the last twenty-five years, was kindergarten to sixth grade, and it was in a very demanding [neighborhood]. I don't know if you know Ridgewood at all, but, it's a very good school system, I think, at least it was in those days. We had great success. The high school had great success in getting kids to college, but, our parents were mostly GI veterans, who were buying houses for the first time and wanted the best for their kids. They were wonderful, wonderful parents, high participation in the schools. I liked all aspects of that. I just thought it was a very demanding, rewarding profession. I loved it.

SH: Did you or one of your brothers return home first?

JA: My older brother came back first and he then went to work in about January or February. He just was sought after. He had a great record and he just made a choice of the company he wanted to go with.

SH: Did either of your brothers take advantage of the GI Bill?

JA: My younger brother took complete advantage of it. He accelerated at night, day, weekends, summer, and everything else, went through in about two years, very motivated then, a terrible student when he was an undergraduate, but, became very motivated.

SH: Do they still live in this area?

JA: My older brother died last January, a year ago, and my brother, Bob, has a home in Essex Fells and one in Palm Beach. So, I see … both brothers a lot. We had to take care of my older brother for a while. He had had a couple of strokes.

LM: He retired from the Army as a brigadier general, correct?

JA: Yes, he was a brigadier general, yeah.

LM: Did he ever comment on how the Army had changed over the years or made the transition from war to peacetime?

JA: Yeah, he really did. He became the commanding general for the Reserves in this area, so, he had to do the march down Fifth Avenue every Memorial Day, and it really hurt me that he was spit on, and jeered, and thrown crap at, and everything else, during the '60s. It was really a … period where many people were very ungrateful, not that he wanted to be kowtowed, too, or anything like that, but, he just didn't deserve that, and what can you do? and he also went through the business of having to contend with recruits. They were in the Reserves, by their own choice, and they really wanted to have an excuse not to be in the Reserves, so, they always did something that was [out of line]; well, they'd come with their fly open or something like that, you know, and just deliberately provoke something, and then, protest, and they would write their senator, and all that sort of thing. [laughter] It was just endless reviews and it was just kowtowing to, really, a losing situation. So, it was tough. I think, later, though, that was a little more rewarding.

SH: Were you in the Reserves?

JA: Only for the minimum period. I was required, I think, for five years, and I stayed in for that period, and then, I was given a [discharge].

SH: Were you concerned about being called back for Korea?

JA: Not really. No, I didn't think about it too much. I know some of my classmates did go back. Jimmy Chandler, I don't know if you've heard from him, he lives in Ohio, now, did go back, but, he was in the Army. He was a ROTC grad here, but, I did not. I was never asked to come back.

SH: Your son would have been old enough to serve in Vietnam.

JA: Yes. At that time, … I was *incommunicado*. I didn't know he was in the service, actually. … He went to a private school, when he went back, and we paid his tuition, and, when I was checking on the private school's report on him, and I realized that his mother had withdrawn him, and that was the last contact I could get, until he made overtures to contact us, through his daughter.

SH: As a parent and a veteran, what were your thoughts on Vietnam at the time?

JA: I must confess, I thought Vietnam was the proper thing to do, certainly at the outset, because, when your country calls you up, you respond. That was sort of my attitude. I think that was somewhat modified later, but, really, I was very supportive of the effort. I lamented the terrible cost, but, I thought we were fighting for something that was important.

SH: You were disgusted by how the veterans were treated when they returned from Vietnam.

JA: I thought it was deplorable, yeah.

SH: Have you retired from teaching?

JA: Twenty-two years.

SH: Do you still work for Thomas Cook Tours?

JA: No, we just run our own tours and the thing we've done since our retirement is, we have participated in what they call a home exchange program. I don't know if you've ever heard of that.

SH: Yes.

JA: … We've done that and the one we had in Switzerland this past July was our fortieth. We've done it all over the world and all over the United States and it's really been a very rich thing for us.

LM: Do you and your wife have a favorite destination?

JA: Really, we don't. We think that variety is the best. We loved Switzerland, we loved Australia, we loved South Africa, we loved Brazil, we loved Hawaii, we loved California, you name it, it's [great].

LM: How many countries have you visited?

JA: Well, we've visited most countries where there's a middle class. Now, it would be very difficult [to go elsewhere]. You see, the people who exchange homes, … they aren't indigent; at the same time, they're not wealthy. We consider ourselves middle class. We can afford an airline ticket, and … we have the leisure and an income, and all that sort of thing. So, we have leisure time, but, … I don't know if this is a fact, but, Nigeria, and Mozambique, and India, don't

have many people in a middle class. Actually, we did get an overture from India once, but, it was strictly an upper class person. We told them we were interested, but, we never heard again, but, it's, basically, Sweden, England, France, Germany, Spain, where there are many in a middle class.

LM: Have you ever visited the Middle East?

JA: We had one in Israel. It was a very good one. We got down to Egypt in the process.

LM: Near Elat?

JA: We got to Elat, yes. We loved it.

LM: It is beautiful there.

JA: You've been there? I think it's the most beautiful water I have ever seen in my life. We had a house in Tel Aviv for three months and it was really a very, very rich experience. My wife was into the classics a lot, so, we enjoyed the antiquities very, very much. The one thing that was interesting was, we got there just as the Intifada started. We were making the overtures with the people from Israel. The gentlemen who wanted to come was a very significant war hero in Israel. He had a brother in Trenton, so, he wanted to come to this area, and we told him we weren't Jewish and we didn't have a kosher kitchen. He said, … "We're not that devout," or whatever the word would be, and it made no difference.

LM: The majority of Israelis are not very observant.

JA: … Yes, right, and we really enjoyed it, but, we couldn't get over the hostility of the little Arab kids, and just the general bitterness that seemed to be so prevalent, especially in Jerusalem, that area. Zwei told us where we could drive the car and where we shouldn't drive the car. One of the places we shouldn't drive the car, because we had Israeli plates, was Bethlehem, Jericho. We'd have gotten a rock right through the window. [laughter] So, we had to take tours to those places and, hopefully, we're insulated. We had no incident, but, it was just rancorous, soldiers everywhere. When were you there last?

LM: I visited Israel in 1992, not too long after the Gulf War. Every hotel we stayed in had gas masks.

JA: Yes. I think we were there, probably, about '88. It was marvelous, never forget it, really never forget it, and the trip to Egypt was sensational. It was an Israeli tour, went right across the Sinai, saw all the burned out tanks, did the whole bit.

SH: Are these tours just for you and your wife?

JA: … The arrangements are made strictly between them and us. They either make the overtures to us, … well, we're listed in three directories, and we're just listed as a three bedroom, three bath house in the suburbs of New York. New York is our magnet. Nobody knows

Ridgewood from Adam, but, New York is a very powerful magnet, and we get eighty, ninety, a hundred overtures a year.

LM: Wow.

JA: From all over the world and it's just wonderful. The people from Switzerland wrote to us and we said, "Sure." So, some of them are either too short, not worth all the preparation and expense of a trans-Atlantic flight, or you just sense that it will be great. …

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 3/12/02
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 3/15/02
Reviewed by John L. Archibald 3/12/03