

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN W. BERGLUND

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with John W. Berglund on April 9, 1998 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

Scott Carroll: Scott Carroll.

KP: The standard question we first ask is if you could tell me something of your father and your mother?

John Berglund: My father was a fantastic piece of history. He lived to be ninety-three years old. In his lifetime, he saw the first heavier-than-air aircraft fly and the first landing on the moon. ... He was from Minnesota, Albert Lea, Minnesota. My mother was from South Jersey. She was born in, I believe, Philadelphia, although her family came from Bridgeton, Shiloh, Alloway, places like that. And I was born in Atlantic City.

KP: Did your father grow up in a Swedish community?

JB: His father and his mother were both born in Sweden. And in his home, he spoke Swedish. He denied that, later on in life, but Lynne and I studied Swedish, what, twenty years ago? To go to Scandinavia, we studied tapes and *et cetera*, and he corrected us a few times on our pronunciation or our grammar.

KP: Your father was a Baptist.

JB: Well, my great-grandfather John Berglund or Johann Berglund, left Sweden to get away from the damn Lutherans. That was part of the reason, I think. Enforced military service, probably, had something to do with it, too. Although, I think he had served his time because his name was (Emerson?) and he took the name Berglund. And that was something that happened in the military, because they all had patronymic names and it was a pain in the neck to the authorities, to have a whole platoon full of the same names. My grandfather, Magnus Paul Berglund, a Baptist minister, incidentally, he came to America at the age of eight and lived in a sod dugout on the prairies. And when I read a book like *Giants in the Earth* by Rolvaag, I identify, sympathetically, with that. Mother came from people with Scotch-Irish and Dutch, really, background. Her mother was a (Neukirk?), originally Van (Neukirk?). Her father was a Rudolph. And I used to think he was from Germany in 1850, but I found out later, that is, *her* grandfather, that he was the fifth Adam Rudolph born in Salem County. And he fought in the Civil War and was wounded at Manassas and was in the hospital at Alexandria and didn't spell very well, and wrote in his bible, "Lincen [Lincoln] was here." What else? My dad did all kinds of things in his life. He was a man, God bless him, who saw that the grass was always greener on the other side of the fence. He was, variously, a schoolteacher in a one room, log cabin, schoolhouse at nineteen, a surveyor, a painter, a printer, a publisher. He had a one man newspaper in Moccasin, Wyoming, where he was everything, social editor, reporter, janitor, *et cetera*. And he became a landscape gardener with ICS courses. And this is probably not germane but I love this story. In World War I, at the age of thirty, he enlisted in the 27th Division, which was a New York Division, and my mother [was] in Atlantic City, this young girl who was engaged to a sailor, God forbid. She looked over a list of orphans and she picked the

name of this Berglund, this harsh un-euphonious name, J. Leroy Berglund, out of the list, and a boy she knew. And, my dad was not an orphan, he had a living father, he just had a dead mother, but he got on the list inadvertently. And mother picked out two gifts, one token gift for this Berglund fellow, and one comb and brush set, which was sort of useless for my dad. But it was a nice comb and brush set. And she got the gifts mixed up and sent the nice gift to this J. Leroy Berglund. The comb and brush set is what she sent him. And he wrote her a letter, and, in spite of the fact that she was engaged to a sailor, he came and saw her before he went overseas. And he was in France for nine months in combat, came back and married her. And my grandmother always thought that I would be a complete nervous wreck because I was conceived right after the war. I don't know why she thought that.

KP: I was wondering how your parents met. Your father, with this sort of Midwestern Swedish ...

JB: He was working in (Bobikin Atkins?), which was a landscape/gardener company in Trenton, New Jersey.

KP: So he really wandered?

JB: Yeah, and when I was a kid, we moved, we lived, variously, in Toronto, Cincinnati, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Camden, which was the pits, and always back to Margate.

KP: What types of jobs did he have that led you to move to these very different places?

JB: He was a, he worked for newspapers as a business manager and then he worked for a savings and loan. He had a job all through the Depression, which, I think, is also hard to believe. He was a secretary of a building and loan.

KP: During the Depression?

JB: Yeah, and then, when I met Lynne, he was working, in fact, when World War II happened, he was working in Newark for the Homeowners Loan Corporation, HOLC, [and] later for the VA. And I went to see him, this is probably anticipating one of your questions, when Pearl Harbor happened. I was in Winants when it happened, and guys started yelling up and down the stairwell. And that night, The Corner Tavern was very busy. And we were singing, "It's a long way to Yokohama," and "It's a long way to go, where the yellow bastards grow," and et cetera. I went over to see Dad in Newark and said [that] I wanted to enlist and he asked me, he begged me, to wait until the semester finished. Well, Christmas time, in spite of that, I tried to enlist in the Navy as a hospital corpsman. And fortunately, they turned me down. I failed the eye test. And then the Marine Corps came around the college and solicited people to apply for OCS. And my wife doesn't like me to tell this story, because she thinks it reflects poorly on our clergymen, but I memorized eye charts to get into the Marine Corps. And if I'd been killed, it would have been my own damn fault. Right here, in the Quad, I took the first physical. I'd gotten all the things, letters from my clergyman, my doctor, and this and that, businessmen, the whole bit, but when I took the exam here in the Quad, I failed the eye part. My right eye was 15/20 instead of

18/20. And the doctor was a kind man, a Navy doctor, he saw how crushed I was and he said, "Go home and don't wear your glasses for the rest of the day and try it again tomorrow. We'll be here tomorrow." Well, if you don't wear your glasses for a week, you can strengthen it, but if you don't wear it for 24 hours, it weakens it. And the next day, when I came in, it was worse than ever. But the eye chart was in the room where you took your clothes off, and I did sort of a "Gypsy Rose Lee," I took my clothes off around the room and walked past the eye chart 'till I got D-E-F-P-O-T-E-C. I read it backwards and forwards with both eyes and I couldn't even see it. And today, when I'm in the hospital or someplace, the same eye chart is still there. And I tell the nurse, "You know, I can read that with my back to it." Then I got down to Quantico and into OCS, and I was there a few days and there was a notice on the blackboard [that said,] "Complete Form Y tomorrow." I didn't know what a Form Y was. So, I asked one of the old salts who had been in the Marine Corps for a while and he said, "It's a physical." I had visions that night, of my being put on the train under armed guard for fraudulent enlistment. And when I took the physical, the EENT room was the last thing on the list, and I looked through a half-inch crack in the door and there were ten half-inch lines on the chart. I figured the doctor would be too lazy to go past the first three and I memorized the first three. Now, I can't remember them, but I bet under hypnosis, I could recall, I think I could. But the doctor didn't ask me anything past the first three. So I was home free. I didn't wear my glasses for two years. I fired the M1 rifle, for the record, and made expert rifleman, which was a triumph of faith. I imagined where the bulls-eye was at 500 yards. And I stepped up off the final course, I had counted in my head, and I stood up and I said, "Shit." And the coach said, "What do you mean, 'Shit?' You made it." I had miscounted. I was three points over. So, at least once in my life, I was an expert rifleman. Next time, after I was commissioned, I tried the course again and I didn't make it. It didn't matter, though. As an enlisted man, you got either three or five dollars a month more, for an expert rifleman badge, but as an officer, you didn't get that, so. We got the princely sum of 150 dollars a month, as second lieutenants.

KP: Going back to your father, what did he ever tell you about the combat that he saw in World War I?

JB: He would never talk about it. And he wrote an essay, one time, for some reason, and I read the essay, and he told about being in a shell hole, surrounded by two or three rotting corpses of his own people, and then he saw a rose blooming in the, my dad had a profound religious faith, which is odd for a preacher's kid. You know, it's usually the other way. And his father was a fundamentalist Baptist. He wouldn't allow a violin in the house, or [even] playing cards. They were both instruments of the devil. But Daddy saw this rose and he wrote about it years later. That gave him hope and a belief that this terrible thing would be over. But, as far as, he went over the top at least three times. He was in the taking of the San Quentin Canal, which was a very well-fortified German position. But he never talked about it. He didn't talk about it like I do.

KP: Even after you yourself went off to war?

JB: No, and incidentally, he tried to get a commission. And there was precedent for that. He had been a sergeant in World War I. He'd been a first lieutenant in the New Jersey Guard, in,

probably, the '30s. Yeah, the '30s, 'cause I was a little kid going to Sea Girt, picking up empty rounds, you know, shell casings. There was precedent for him to apply for a commission, because the Marine Corps had a thing they called "Special Aviation Officers" or something like that. They commission men who were not normally young enough or tough enough to pass the training. And they were, the object was to put them in, as adjutants, in flying outfits, where they would have non-flying duty to spare some guy to fly. And Daddy could have been in that, but he was fifty-five, I guess, and they said, "Go away, don't bother us."

KP: When did he leave the National Guard?

JB: Yeah, I can't tell you. Yeah, yeah, or he would have been ...

KP: He would have been activated.

JB: Yeah.

KP: Your mother died, no, I'm sorry, it's your father's mother.

JB: Father died at ninety-three. Mother lived to be eighty-one, yeah, not quite eighty-one. She had some of the basic patents on cancer-(aphobia?), and she died of coronary disease at eighty-one.

KP: How did your family end up in the Margate, Atlantic City area?

JB: Well, my mother, as a girl, her mother and father had a rooming house in Atlantic City. One rooming house. And then later on, a restaurant, which was a very successful restaurant. It was where the trains came in, Tennessee Avenue. It was called the "Home Restaurant," and my grandmother did all the baking. She'd get up at two o'clock in the morning to bake, which may explain why she didn't live past her mid sixties. But, they had a cat named Mitsy, and remember the wire chairs you used to see in soda fountains? Mitsy was a kind of a placid cat, they'd put Mitsy in one of those chairs with a menu in one its paws and fake glasses on. I can remember that. And my grandmother, when she would make bread pudding, the bread in the bread pudding was yesterday's layer cake. They lived in Margate and, so that's why, I guess, we lived in Margate.

KP: It seems like your father made a conscious decision to leave the newspaper business and work for the savings and loan?

JB: I wish I could tell you. You know, you're a historian, have you ever heard the saying, "When an old person dies, it's like a newspaper burning?" Well, Daddy's gone, my mother's gone. I have an aunt whom I can ask some things, but not everything. She idolized my mother and father. She is my mother's sister. And I don't know why Daddy left and went in, but, when I met you [Mrs. Berglund], he was in HOLC, right? Or VA? VA. Yeah, in fact, this is, we bought a house, one time, and it was a bad decision to buy in that place, and we got out of it

because I said that my father works for the VA and he knows so and so and so and so. It's not who you know, it's what you know. Yeah.

KP: Was your father active in the American Legion?

JB: Yes, he was. I can remember him with, he had been a cowboy in his youth, among other things. I can remember him with fur chaps and a leather vest and a Stetson and a guitar, singing western songs. He could play any musical instrument. He could play the violin left-handed.

KP: It sounds like your father was very gregarious.

JB: Yes, and that's a funny thing.

KP: Because Swedes are often, Swedish Lutherans are very ...

JB: Oh, they're dour. Dour is the word, I always say dour. In fact, one of my professors at seminary went to Sweden for sabbatical, and he was Swedish-American and he came back, "Those people, those people." Because they advertise for friends, they don't have any friends. But, anyway, where was I, before?

KP: You were mentioning the fact that he was gregarious.

JB: Yeah. Well, he, all his life, he said [that] the people out West are [more] friendly and open. He said that the people in the East are not. And when he died and had a memorial service, you couldn't get a midget in there with a crowbar, it was so crowded with people. And he was quite a guy.

Lynne Berglund: He loved everybody and everybody loved him.

JB: Yeah. As I said, he had this profound faith that everything was going to be okay. A child-like faith.

KP: Really, very optimistic that ...

JB: Yeah, in fact, when I was here, I lost my religion. I argued with atheists in the dorms, classmates of mine. Reston and Steiner, Al Steiner.

KP: Yeah, I have interviews of those two.

JB: They were atheists. I don't know what they are now. But I lost the argument and I became an atheist because, really of theocracy, you know. And I saw the pictures of babies sitting in the ruins of Shanghai, bleeding. And I thought, "What kind of a God allows this?" Well, that's ridiculous. It wasn't God, it was man that did it. And I didn't want to ask my father, because I thought it would hurt him. So, I asked my maternal grand pop, Bill Rudolph, out in the boat, in the Inland Waterway. And he answered me with, "The Lord moves in mysterious ways. His

wonders are performed.” That was his explanation. He was an uneducated man. He had an eighth grade education, if that. And he retired a wealthy man, from that restaurant where he worked his hump off, and my grandmother did [as well], and he lost everything in the Crash, including their home. He told me, one time, he had 10,000 dollars in cash and went up to the bank to pay off his mortgage and the bank said, “Don’t do that Rudolph, put it back in the market.” So, to the end of his life, if you had offered him GM for five cents a share, he would have chased you with a club, to get out of there, you know. He kept his money in a box under the bed. He painted houses [while he was] in his sixties, and he made money. And then he married foolishly, for a second time. Oh, yeah. The man that came to dinner, my dad had a half brother, nineteen years his junior. Ralph Seymour Berglund, and he had been a real cowboy. I suspect Daddy was a kind of part-time cowboy, but Unc was ...

KP: He was the real thing?

JB: He made his bread, and we used to go to the movies when I was a kid, and we’d see a bunch of guys riding on the bad guys and he’d say, “I rode with that guy,” and so forth. But, he came East for a visit, when I was five years old, for a two-week visit. Fifty years later, they carried him out to the hospital, his last trip to anywhere. He died in Somers Point, New Jersey. But he was an auxiliary father and a surrogate grandfather to my kids and a pretty neat guy to have around. He was a diesel mechanic. He’d come home from work and wash off the grease and get some clean clothes on. And then he’d make drinks and those three old people would sit there and have cocktails and hors d’oeuvres. It was beautiful. And two years after he was dead, or a year after he was dead, Lynne and I entertained a New Zealand brigadier [general] who lived in Australia. I’ll get to that, too, because I served with a New Zealand, the 3rd New Zealand Division. But Brigadier Arthur Bullen, we entertained him, in this country, and his wife. Bullen knew that he looked like Colonel Blimp, and he lived it up. He was conscious of it. He had a monocle on a ribbon down in here. And we’d go to a restaurant and he’d ask for the wine list, out would come the monocle and do this whole routine with the wine list, and, in Hackney’s Restaurant in Ocean City, I mean, Atlantic City, there were black “superflies,” like that, watching this guy do this thing with the wine list and the monocle. But anyway, he kept looking for port, because an Englishman drinks port after dinner. Nobody had port. We got back to my mother’s house, and I said, “Maybe Unc had it in his closet?” Unc had been dead a year. I went in his closet and I found an unopened bottle of port. That made the day for Bullen. You should hear about Bullen at some point.

KP: If we don’t ask you, please remind us.

JB: Yeah.

KP: Did your mother work after she got married?

JB: Yeah, she worked for the Atlantic City Convention Bureau for years. Not as a B-girl, but as a stenographer.

LB: That was only part-time.

JB: Part-time. She was a legal secretary for a man named Lou Stern, I can't think of his first name. When I graduated from grammar school, I was the valedictorian. They didn't call it that, but I had a fifteen minute speech entitled *The Roosevelt Revolution*. And Stern, I think his name is, I'm not sure. Louis Stern, Louis Stern. He sent me a copy of a book called *The Roosevelt Revolution*, a history book, inscribed by the author.

KP: What did you say during this speech?

JB: I just enumerated all the alphabetical things that, this was 1934, so things weren't over with, you know. Things were tough, and I can remember looking out and seeing people, it was a hot night in Margate School and they were doing this, fanning. I thought they were throwing their programs at me.

KP: Your parents were both Democrats. What did they think of Roosevelt?

JB: I never heard, I never heard anything about it.

KP: Your father wasn't active in politics or part of the ...

JB: No, no. I can remember him, though he was, he had a stern moral code, when King Carol of Romania had a mistress named Magaa Lupescu, known as his morganatic wife, my father said, "Why doesn't he get married instead of having some slut?" And yet, in his later years, there were two gays living across the street from my mother and father. They were like this with my mother and father.

KP: Really?

JB: Just as close as ... Yeah, he never judged them.

KP: Really?

SC: Actually, I have a quick question. How educated were your mother and father?

JB: Daddy had one year at the University of Minnesota. Mother had dropped out of high school to help her family. But, she was a sharp lady, in spite of not having a formal education. Yeah.

LB: She was a Gray Lady for fifty years at the Red Cross, over fifty years.

KP: What else were your parents active in?

JB: Ventnor Community Church. Daddy sang in the choir of Ventnor Community Church. They were charter members, yeah. That church started in a storefront. I was one of the first people baptized. And, I guess, in the storefront, I was baptized. Later, it became a great big stone edifice, very impressive.

LB: Your mother was one of the Willing Workers, too. That was a group of women who did things.

KP: As part of the church or separate?

LB: No, that was a separate ...

KP: Separate organization.

JB: And they both played bridge, and even Unc played bridge, which boggles my mind. But he did.

KP: You grew up in a time when Atlantic City was still quite a resort community.

JB: Yeah, before casinos. Well, that's how I put myself through this place. I worked in the Steel Pier when I was fifteen and I got ten and a half a week for seven eight-hour days. Now, it wasn't hard work. It was, I still have the technique. We had long-handled dustpans and brooms and we'd go out on the boardwalk in front of the turnstiles and get the cigarette butts. The owner of the Pier was a man named Gravatt, and he'd look out of his office over Fralingers, he'd see a cigarette butt, he called Dick Endicott, who managed the pier, Endicott would call the front manager, Jim Rock, who was propped with this, and Jim Rock would say, "Billy," and then I had six or seven guys that I could tell to go get that cigarette.

KP: That was quite a chain of command.

JB: One time, they were goofing off, I only had two or three working for me, but they were goofing off in the broom closet, so I locked the door to teach them a lesson. And then I forgot they were there. And I went off, I was working a split-shift, I came back hours later, "Wait 'till Mr. Rock sees you. Wait 'till Mr. Rock sees you." The thing is that I put their lives in danger if the pier had burned, you know. And Mr. Rock fired me, but he hired me again in five minutes. I just went and hid.

KP: How many summers did you work at the pier?

JB: Just one, that time. But, then, I worked at Woolworth's on the boardwalk, which was the number two store in the country for five weeks of the year. I had the frozen malted milk counter. I started as an assistant at the frozen malted milk counter, and by dint of hard work and attrition, I rose to the head of the frozen malted milk counter. I got fifteen dollars a week and one meal a day, which was a far cry from, and for six days, a far cry from the pier. I lost that job because of my own stupidity, after four years. I could have gotten it back again, probably, but, then I rented beach chairs and stuff like that, you know. One of the ironies of my life is that I could have been a lifeguard. My father wouldn't let me try out for the lifeguards. They made twenty-five dollars a week. He said, "They're bums. All they do is flirt with girls."

SC: You didn't have a problem with that?

JB: No, I was willing to try. Twenty-five dollars a week. Well, then, the last summer, I used to make 100 dollars, net, for a whole summer, working in Woolworth's. Hard work. I used to eat ice cream all day long and lose ten pounds in ten weeks, because of the work I was doing. I would carry forty gallons of chocolate milk mix, up like this, and that was like thirty-five pounds in each hand, and I'd run from the back of the store up to the counter. But, the last summer, I wanted to change my major because I was floundering around. I was unclassified and I wanted to change it to bacteriology, which is really why I met this lady, Lynne, really. So I worked at the Graduate School of Banking. Do they still have that here?

KP: Graduates still come here.

JB: I made 110 dollars in two weeks. And, usually, only football players got these jobs.

LB: Didn't your mother do something for ...

JB: No, for the Graduate School of Banking? No, the New Jersey Horticultural Society, she did. But, we got thirty-five cents an hour, but the rest of the money was tips and commission on cleaning, dry cleaning and laundry, and we did their white shoes and their two-tone shoes. So, after that, making this magnificent sum, I went to work at the Steel Pier again, "late in life," as a, they didn't call it a "barker," but that's what it was. You wore a navy uniform and handed out brochures and you weren't supposed to say anything, but we used to, we made-up chatter, you know. "Hurry, hurry, hurry folks. You still have time to get in before the admission changes. Nowhere else can you see so much for so little. We have breezes, sneezes, and strip-teasers. We have the 'bags' of the ages on some of our stages," et cetera, et cetera, like that. The Steel Pier didn't like that, but we did it, you know. And then I went on a cruise in the *Kungsholm* at the end of that summer. What a summer.

KP: This was in the summer of 1940?

JB: '41.

KP: '41.

JB: I worked on the *Kungsholm*. My mother talked the steward on the *Kungsholm*, whose name was Erickson, into hiring me. That was a social job. I was trying to get a gigolo's job, but I didn't have, I couldn't play bridge, I couldn't rumba, and didn't have a summer formal. But I got a job as a steward in the crews' quarters, which came complete with bedbugs in my cabin. I slept on the deck for the whole trip. But it was a wonderful trip. And then, coming into ...

KP: Where did you travel to?

JB: Well, Cartagena, Columbia, Havana, the San Blas Islands, which are off the coast of Panama. And Panama. I said that, didn't I? I woke up in the dawn, sleeping on the deck with

my shoes as my pillow, under my mess jacket. And I saw my first thatched huts and palm trees in Cartagena. The pilot came on board, a very big, black man, very black man, with spotless naval whites on and no shoes or socks. And he was the pilot. And fifty-odd years later, we went back to Cartagena on a cruise through the Panama Canal. I couldn't recognize anything. So, I came back from that cruise and started here in my senior year and left before the year was over. I left when the, half of semester, I was told to go around and see all my professors. Instead of giving me incompletes, you know, they let me go. I remember I had to go out to the new football field, it was new then, and see the athletic director. And he said, "You're going in the Marine Corps? Did you pass the physical?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Take him and have him do this for a few minutes." That was to make-up the courses in phys ed that I had missed. So where are we?

KP: Did your parents expect you to go to college?

JB: Yeah. Because Daddy only had one year and, I think, he felt that he suffered because of that. And it was just a given.

KP: That you were to go?

JB: And I took technical [classes] instead of classical. In a sense, I'm sorry I never had Latin. I mean, I didn't know I was going to be a minister, forty or fifty years later, you know. Any Latin I know I picked up from reading theology. I knew Greek better than I know Latin, New Testament Greek. It was a given, and I took a state scholarship exam and I got a state scholarship. And because I tried to read all the books in the library, I didn't keep my state scholarship. I lost it after one year. I think that was a terrible thing to do to my parents.

KP: Didn't you win the state scholarship, really ...

JB: Yeah, because it cost 400 dollars a year, then. And I stayed on out of sheer stubbornness, I guess. But, you know, Wally Kaenzig, for instance, I don't know whether he's one of the guys, but a lot of those guys from farm backgrounds, they went to the AG School for three years, for ninety dollars a year, and transferred in their senior year to the University and got the degree from the University.

KP: I've heard other people say that.

JB: If I would have known it, I would have done it.

KP: Had you considered going to any other school besides Rutgers?

JB: No.

KP: Rutgers was ...

JB: I didn't even apply anywhere else.

KP: How well did your high school prepare you for college, when you look back on it?

JB: Very well, very well, and that's bad, because I coasted in my first semester, up here. I was able to coast through chemistry, from my high school chemistry, which was bad. And you know me, I coast when I can coast. That was Atlantic City High School.

SC: Where there any events in high school that stick out?

JB: I had a good math teacher.

SC: A good math teacher?

JB: Yeah. In fact, when I came here to Rutgers, I tutored, unofficially, I tutored some of my classmates through trigonometry and solid geometry. But, when it came to calculus, something happened. I lost it. And I had doubts of passing in both calculus courses. And I regretted that for sixty years, that I didn't grasp calculus.

SC: I understand that.

JB: I told Scott, that this was the physics building ...

KP: Yes, yeah.

JB: ... And I can remember a professor, I can't remember his name.

KP: Is he the one that used to talk about *The Grapes of Wrath*?

JB: No.

KP: No.

JB: But, he'd work a slide rule and he'd get ecstatic. We used to say that he was having an orgasm when he got the answer. "Turn the crank and there's your answer." Slide rules, yeah. I had two of them. Yeah.

KP: 'Cause Ralph Schmidt said that he has fond memories of this building, and he told me that there used to be a physics professor who loved *The Grapes of Wrath*. Whenever they wanted a break, someone would bring up *The Grapes of Wrath* and he'd talk for twenty or thirty minutes on *The Grapes of Wrath*.

JB: Students do that. Students do manipulate professors.

KP: What was the rest of your social life like, growing up in the Atlantic City area?

JB: Well, I'll tell you. The greatest sorrow of my life was that I wasn't able to dance, because a bunch of my colleagues did *The Big Apple*, on skates, on ice skates, and I wasn't even considered for that. I'm sure Peggy did, I mean, Bernice did and the rest of them. What in the world was *The Big Apple*? It was a dance. But, I never felt that I suffered in anything. I had a warm, comfortable social life with a bunch of friends. We used to get together and listen to a horror show called *Inner Sanctum*, on the radio. And it would open with a sound of a creaky door, "Good Evening, this is your host, Raymond," et cetera, et cetera. It was an excuse for a bunch of teenagers to turn the lights out, you know, and listen to this show. And we were very active in Christian Endeavor. Whenever I went, I went to the Ventnor Community Church and the Margate Community Church. In both cases, the youth group was called Christian Endeavor. And that was our social life, really.

KP: So, you did a lot of church-based, social ...

JB: Yeah, oh, but the main thing was [that] after the meetings, we went to somebody's house. And usually it was a woman in Long Port, Mrs. Fuss, who had three daughters, three lovely daughters. And she used to make hamburgers and stuff like that for us. I guess, she was the advisor, the adult advisor. I fished. I loved to fish. I never fished fresh water. I fished off the rock jetties and in the bay, off the bulkheads, and stuff like that. And as far as work, when I was thirteen, I gave up the beach. Until then, we had spent all day long, take a sandwich down in a brown bag, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, spend all day long on the beach. Why, I haven't gotten melanoma, I'll never tell you. I've lost two friends to that. Not friends from where I was, but other friends. When I was thirteen, Frank Martin and I, Frank didn't go here, we started cutting lawns, probably for a dollar and a half, for a great big lawn. And we'd be working there and thinking, "The beach is just two blocks away." And we kept on working. And we did all kinds of things. We did, we washed windows, put storm windows in, screens, and cultivated fields. I had two furnaces for one year that I took the ashes out [of] once a week. And I was getting fifty cents from each furnace. It was a dollar a week. I was one of the richest guys in high school. And we used to, we got trolley tickets from the school board and we'd sell them to the kids from the parochial school who didn't get them. We'd sell them for five cents and they'd save, considerably, on the trolley ride. Then we'd hitchhike. Entrepreneurs.

KP: Were you ever a Boy Scout?

JB: Yes. I went to the rank of Life Scout, but I didn't go beyond that. And I've had four sons, and not one of them ever made Eagle, and that's been a disappointment to me. But that's ancient history now. The baby is forty-two, is he?

LB: Forty-two, I think.

KP: Did you go on the Great Jamboree to Washington?

JB: No.

KP: Did you travel much as a kid?

JB: No.

KP: Did you go to any of the places that your father had been to?

JB: Parenthetically, Lynne and I went, drove our motor home on the interstate, past Albert Lea, Minnesota, which was where my Dad was born. We diverted into town and went to the city hall and I said, "My father was born here 102 years ago." They brought the book out and there was the record. And just, what, two weeks ago, in Waimea, was that Waimea, where you were shopping? Waimea Valley in Hawaii. I was sitting in the car while she shopped, and three white-haired people got in the car next to me, and one of the woman said, "Oof DA!", (like, "Oh, wow!"), which is a Scandinavian-Norwegian expression. And I said, "Somebody's from Minnesota." Well, we got to talking, and the man that was with the two women was the mayor of Albert Lea.

KP: Wow, what a small world.

JB: And he said [that] there are still Berglunds there. I'm sure there are.

KP: Did you join a fraternity in high school?

JB: No, they had them, but they were not approved. No, I wasn't.

KP: Growing up in Atlantic City, how conscious were you of what was going on in the world?

JB: Well, considering that I didn't get *Time Magazine* until I was older, I was quite conscious of it. Just from the papers, I guess. And radio.

KP: What about movies, did you go to the movies very often?

JB: Yes, we did. I remember the cliffhanger serials with a new chapter every week. We went to the Ventnor Theatre, usually. Lynne and I lived, in the summers, behind the Ventnor Theatre, later on, years later. Well, we visited my mother there.

KP: Did you ever see *All Quiet on the Western Front*?

JB: Yeah. And also, the Garden Pier in Atlantic City had a special feature of old movies and we used to go to that. Silent flicks, that were museum pieces, really. But I did see *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

KP: Did your father see it when it came out?

JB: I don't remember, no.

KP: What ...

JB: But, about being anti-war, when I was at Rutgers, I had a good friend named Charlie Swalm, he's dead for fifty-odd years. He died in the Canadian Navy, working for his Majesty on a ship off Normandy. But, while he was an undergraduate, Charlie's father was afraid he'd become two things, an artist and a communist.

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

JB: One day, Charlie Swalm asked me to impersonate him on a date. He gave me two dollars and all night, I didn't remember who Charlie was. And she had a wooden leg or an empty leg. She drank very much, lots of booze, and I was running out of money. I borrowed money from Governor Hoffman's nephew. I hope I paid it back. But Charlie Swalm took me to New York to a den of communists, in a warehouse, a penthouse and a warehouse. I can't even tell you what part of New York it was. But here were all these communist party members sitting around this room, and they were singing songs like, "There once was a union maid who never was dismayed," and, "The boss looks out the window and what does he see, but ten thousand strikers and they all agree, he's a bastard and he beats his wife." These were the singers, they were famous, in a way. They became famous, I think.

KP: Was Woody Guthrie one of the singers?

JB: Yeah, I think he was. And what I'm leading up to, was they all were talking about Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*. Are you familiar with it?

KP: Yes.

JB: The guy wakes up in his bed with his legs, arms, eyes, every bit of him is gone, except that he has a patch of skin here that he can feel the heat of the light when it hits him. And they're keeping him alive with, you know, artificial means. And he has a hole in his side for wastes to run out and so. And by a strange coincidence, he knows Morse Code, and he does a whole chapter, tapping his head on the pillow. "Put me on the table when the old men sign the peace treaties and so forth." It was a violently anti-war book. And this was before, this was when it was still a capitalists' war, before Russia was invaded. And so, these guys were all promulgating *Johnny Got His Gun*, wherever they could.

KP: And Charlie Swalm was, in fact, what his father feared he ...

JB: Yeah, and then he died for the King.

KP: When did he die?

JB: In Normandy.

KP: Yeah, when did he enlist? When did he go back to Canada?

JB: I don't know, but he was a Navy JG in the Canadian Navy.

KP: In the Canadian Navy. Did you stay with in touch with him after he joined?

JB: No, no.

KP: No. But, it sounds like you were close friends with him?

JB: Yeah, I liked Charlie and vice versa. I mean, after all, I did, a double, blind date for him. And I can't remember the girl's name.

KP: How many communists were there, and how many were left? How many left this world?

JB: Oh, that was funny. Right down here on the hill, in front of, on "Holy Hill," on May Day, I went to a rally, and it was two forces going on, the Stalinist, whatever they were called, and the Socialists, the Fourth International. They were, they were competing and fighting, not fist fighting, but fighting with propaganda. And one of the things that I had to smile [at], because I knew better, they passed out a piece of paper that said that guns from the ROTC were diverted for some capitalists' purpose. I knew the guns from the ROTC didn't have firing pins in them, 'cause I had carried one for two years.

KP: When was this May Day rally? Do you remember what year?

JB: '39 or '40. And I went to, I got an interest in a young lady. I won't mention her name, 'cause she's probably still alive, maybe even living in Highland Park, for all I know. But because of her, I went to a communist rally in Jersey City. The theme was "Get Earl Browder out of jail."

KP: So, if I may ask, was there some sort of romantic ...

JB: Yeah, I liked her and, I never, I mean ...

KP: It never developed?

JB: I was second best. There was an impossible guy named Henry Ernest Sostman, who had her heart at that time. He was known as "Jersey City Joe, the pencil factory Romeo." He had more affectations than anybody you can imagine. He spoke with a British accent, and he's from Jersey City.

KP: And he was a student here?

JB: Yeah, he was smart, he was clever. He wrote, and played music and all kinds of things like that. And this girl, who shall remain nameless, liked him. But, that's why I went to the communist rally, because she went.

KP: What was going on around the world at this time?

JB: Yeah, and I ran away to go fight Spain from here. I was carrying my radio and a bunch of other things, and I didn't get very far.

KP: Where were you ...

JB: I think I was flunking a course.

KP: So, you packed your things up?

JB: Yeah, I was going to go fight in Spain.

KP: And where were you going?

JB: I really didn't know. Get out and hitchhike, I guess.

KP: Why Spain?

JB: Well, I wanted to fight Franco. I was a, there was a British guy who was a brigadier in Spain, who was denied a commission in the British Army for premature anti-fascism. You've heard that, I'm sure. Fortunately, I didn't do that, I would have been denied a commission in the Marine Corps.

KP: But you found the cause of Spain very appealing. What about your classmates? You mentioned that there was the rally out here and you mention that you debated the question of God? But what about your other classmates? What percentage were Republicans, Democrats, socialists, communists?

JB: Well, I really can't tell you. For one thing, I was writing when I was here. I don't write now, but I wrote, I was published in *The Anthologists*, frequently. And well, you could just type a page from the phone book and put your name on it, they were so hard up, they'd publish it. I had a lot of short stories in *The Anthologists*, in poetry. So, the people I associated with were creative people. There was June Woolsey, whose grandfather handed down the decision that admitted Ulysses into this country, Judge Woolsey. And June Woolsey and Bill Symons, and these people were, they were bohemian, really, more than, I mean, June Woolsey was the first woman I ever saw take a shot of liquor and go "gulp."

KP: Was she NJC?

JB: Yeah, and she was a poet, too. And I was a poet. And I'm still a poet. I don't write much, but I'm still a poet.

KP: When I ask other people about this point in time, they mention that all they really paid attention to was football and fraternities.

JB: They were, they were, I wasn't, I'm not putting them down, but there wasn't any acuity about it. Maybe it's because we were children of the Depression, too.

KP: Oh, no. There's a very good reason for it. And, in fact, a lot of people have a hard time recalling world events. And they're very honest. "You see, we really cared more about the fraternity parties, or making enough money to earn our way through school." So, it's not necessarily criticism. So, it's partly why I want to pick your brain, because you have very distinct memories of who the people were who were very active.

JB: Speaking of the Depression, I read a book titled, which I'm sure you're very familiar with, by a sociologist, about the Depression, *The Invisible Scar*. What a title, what a title.

KP: It sounds like you agree ...

JB: We know it, we know the "invisible scar."

KP: Maybe could you just ...

JB: We keep more junk than you can imagine, "Because this might come in handy." I mean, that old corset, say, might be made into a birdcage or ...

KP: But, it's interesting, I mean, because you mention that your one ...

JB: My grandfather, William Rudolph, used to buy rubber soles for ten cents each in the Five and Ten, and put them in my shoes when I had holes in my shoes. And that's ...

LB: When you picked the coal out of the ashes.

JB: Coal out of the ashes. I'd empty the ashes across the street, I'd pick out the whole pieces of coal. I never suffered, although, I'll tell you what I did have. My contemporaries all knew that if they wanted me to get into a fight, all they had to do was take one of my articles of clothing. Take my hat and throw it around, I'd go berserk. Like the Viking berserk, because I knew what a tragedy it would be to my mother and father if I lost that hat. They made me feel that way, anyway.

LB: Now, you let your cats chew up all your hats.

JB: Yeah.

KP: We know some of the politics that went on on campus, but how did you fit into the social world of Rutgers? Did you go to many of the social events?

JB: Oh, yeah. I went to as many dances as I could swing. And I was madly in love with a girl named Bernice Connor, whom Lynne has met. She's an old lady now, she's not like my young wife. But, I remember washing dishes in, the cafeteria was in Winants, the Commons, or

whatever they call it. I'm washing dishes and looking across at the Zeta Psi House. I knew Bernice was over there, up for the weekend. And this is like a Steinbeck play, I mean, I'm doing, I'm working, doing dirty dishes, and the girl I love was over there. And later I saw her that night in some nightspot around here somewhere. It was quite an effort for me to go to a dance. I did go to a dance or two. And I would bring a girl up from, from, I can't remember her name, it wasn't Bernice, but I had to, I had to squirrel money away.

KP: Because you lost your state scholarship, it seems like it was quite a blow to you and your family.

JB: Yeah, and I worked, I did all kinds of, I did jobs through the employment agency. What'd they call it? NYA. Yeah, thirty-five cents an hour. Oh, taking the finish off a floor in somebody's home, with steel wool. I did a job I loved, [which] was over at Woodlawn. I was a kitchen scullion in Woodlawn. There was a black couple, who were the butler and maid and they would, I cleaned up the dishes for Grant Wood. I didn't meet Grant Wood, but I did his dishes, you know. Thirty-five cents an hour.

KP: And was this when Woodlawn was still a private residence?

JB: No. Jimmy Neilson had left it to Rutgers.

KP: Okay, so at that point it was ...

JB: Yeah.

KP: So, you had ...

JB: And I did the woodwork and I did, I scrubbed the woodwork with some substance. It was supposed to take all the black marks off, and, you wouldn't believe that would you, Lynne? I worked at The Corner Tavern. That was not through NYA. But I tended bar at The Corner Tavern for a dollar a night and all I wanted to eat or drink. I'd be drinking Green River until the boss went downstairs. He had a cellar he was very proud of. When a couple came in, he'd go down the cellar. I'd put the Green River away and get out the good liquor then.

KP: The Corner Tavern still survives.

JB: Does it?

KP: You can still, you can go there and they still have the mugs from the '40s, still hanging there.

JB: Well, that was the center of our social life, really. There was a place across town, but, the CI or something like that, over at NJC.

KP: I don't think that is there anymore. But the Corner Tavern still continues as a Rutgers' landmark.

JB: Yeah. When I left to go into the Marine Corps, I felt like I was a character in a Henry Fielding novel. I owed two people, my bookseller and my bartender. And when I was commissioned, I paid both of them. I had a tab at the ...

KP: The Corner Tavern?

JB: Yeah, and I had bought books at the, I don't know what the bookstore was called, but that was a focus.

KP: And you owed him money, too?

JB: Yeah, yeah. And he was a dedicated, hardcore communist.

KP: Really?

JB: The guy who owned the bookstore. And one of the kids in our crowd was the daughter, or the son, of Dr. French, who was the head of the English department, I think. And I told Mrs. French, one night, that I really applauded her "cuisine." She corrected me gently.

KP: You were very sympathetic to Spain?

JB: Yeah.

KP: What did you think of communism?

JB: I never, I never even flirted with the idea of, I think, maybe because I saw that the emperor had no clothes, really. And I don't consider that I'm an intellectual giant for saying that, because an awful lot of people didn't. But, I saw that thing in New York and Manhattan, when these guys were all talking about Dalton Trumbo's book, because at that point, there was a peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany. So it was a capitalist's war. Boy, did it change overnight, when Germany invaded Russia.

KP: Because the communists had been the first anti-fascists, did you sense that something was going to happen between Russia and Germany?

JB: Kurt, when I met Lynne, we didn't even begin to get to that, but I met her at work in Sharp and Dohme, which later became Merck, Sharp and Dohme. And I used to go to, this is Glenolden, Pennsylvania. Where did I live, down below, where The Banshee was? Remember The Banshee?

LB: I can't think of it. [Folcroft]

JB: Well, I lived close to Glenolden, and there was a tavern called The Banshee. And a union organizer cultivated me at The Banshee, because they wanted to get in research. They didn't have a foot in research. And I'm not saying, I'm not equating union organizers with communists, but as the House on Un-American Affairs probably would. I was very conscious of HUAC. Now, did HUAC exist then or was that later?

KP: There was the Dies Committee, that's what it was.

JB: Yeah, Martin Dies.

KP: But, the HUAC would be more post-war. But, you were conscious of ...

JB: Yeah.

KP: Were you worried during the HUAC period, that this would lead to where it did?

JB: Oh, I read Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*. I read that in Winants, in my dorm room. I had to say, "This is a book. It's only a book." I was getting like this. At one point, the local fascists said to other intellectuals, "Take the bastard out in the alley and shoot him." I remember that. That's a quote.

KP: What else were you reading?

JB: I read everything.

LB: If there's nothing to read, he'll read the labels on the soup cans.

JB: I read Rabelais in translation. I read *Gargantua*, I read *Pantagruel*. I didn't read *Candide* for some reason. But, I read *Tristram Shandy*, Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. And later on in life, I was a pharmaceutical salesman and there was a very dramatic, very egotistical director named Austin Joiner, who was a graduate engineer who [also] went to medical school. And he kind of liked himself, and he had a lot on the ball. He was a very brilliant man. He tried to make doctors out of us in two weeks, and to be pharmaceutical salesmen. And one time, he said, "Anybody in the class read *Tristram Shandy*?" I raised my hand. "Oh, you did, did you? Well, if you did, would you tell me about such and such and so and so?" And I stood up and I said, "Well, Dr. Joiner, the passage you're talking about was in medieval French, so I had a little problem with it. But, it was about baptism *in utero*." He never liked me for the rest of my time. Wise little bastard. I read, Richard Aldington, who was an English novelist. He wrote about the war. The First [World] War and so forth and so on. I read Hemingway, of course. I did a great big paper, which was probably dull, on *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. And I read everything I could get my hands on, but not things I should have read. I didn't read philosophy.

KP: One of the things I'm struck by is that you majored in microbiology.

JB: Yeah.

KP: But some ...

JB: That was to get out of college in four years.

KP: It sounds like you were the classic liberal arts major?

JB: I should have been an English major.

KP: Yeah, or History or ...

JB: I took one year of reading French, and my French is almost as good as my German, which I took seven years of German. When I go to Germany, I'm pretty good after a week, I'd say.

LB: But what about the grammar?

JB: Oh, well. Who cares about that?

LB: I have to have all the grammar right before I'm going to say it. He doesn't care, but he gets the message across all the time.

JB: We haven't talked about the war yet?

KP: Oh, no. We're almost there, but we'd love to get some stories from your time at Rutgers.

JB: Well, Rutgers is tied in with how I met Lynne.

KP: Yeah, that was one of the questions I'm curious about.

JB: Bill Lewis and I were on terminal leave at the same time, he from the Air Force and I from the Marine Corps. And, in our youthful arrogance, we decided to go to New York and see which medical school we were deigned to honor with our presence as students. We didn't know how bad it was. But, I, parenthetically, I applied at four medical schools and only Temple sent for an interview. And Dean Parkinson looked at my transcript, which I know he had studied already, and he said, "You couldn't get into medical school with these grades. You wouldn't last if you did." Well, what was I there for, you know? He'd already looked at them. He wanted to know what I'd done for the last four years. [When] I said "I was in the Marine Corps," he snorted. Well, if I wanted to go to medical school badly enough, I would have managed it. But, anyway, Bill Lewis and I were broke after a night in New York. And we got off the train in New Brunswick, because he had a checking account and we wanted to cash a check. And going across the campus, we met a guy we both loved, Bill Lamont. He was a wonderful professor, wonderful. He could make you love the subject. He communicated that. And we had *Old Home Week*, and he said, "Did you, have you registered at the employment agency?" We said [that] we didn't know there was one. So, we both went over and registered at the employment agency. And in less than two weeks, I got a postcard telling me to go to Sharp and Dohme in Glenolden,

Pennsylvania, and see William A. Feirer who was a Rutgers graduate, Rutgers alumnus. And Dr. Feirer was her [Lynne] bosses' boss, he was head of research. And he hired me. And I met Lynne that ...

KP: Well, what were you doing?

LB: Well ...

JB: She's a microbiologist.

LB: I was in research in bacteriology. I was a med tech.

KP: At ...

JB: Sharp and Dohme ...

LB: I graduated from Temple.

KP: Temple ...

LB: As a medical technologist. And I went to work, right from Temple to Sharp and Dohme. And I went, I had been working there for a year when he came, year and a half.

JB: And she wouldn't go out with me. Wouldn't think of it. I used to, there was a slippery floor at the time clock, and I'd get up a head of steam and slide across the floor when she was punching the time clock. I'd say, "I'm gonna make you the mother of my children."

KP: And you were a little skeptical at first.

LB: Yes.

SC: He was a little aggressive?

JB: And she was living with two other girls in an apartment in Glenolden.

SC: So, how did you finally win her over?

LB: Persistence, I guess.

JB: Well, yeah.

LB: I weakened.

JB: Yeah, she weakened, yeah.

KP: Well, it obviously worked out.

LB: Yeah.

KP: At least to this point.

LB: We went out at the end of January, we were engaged in April and married in June.

JB: Her mother said I was too fast a worker. And every time, we went and told her mother she was pregnant, she said the same thing. And incidentally, I went to seminary thirty years later, I was '42 at Rutgers and '72 at seminary. Lynne went back to work, we had three kids in college. She went back to work with Merck, which is Sharp and Dohme.

LB: I worked in the hospital first.

JB: Yeah. And stayed there for seventeen years at Merck.

KP: It's jumping a little ahead, but when you went back to work, had you been out of the workforce for a long time?

LB: Twenty-three years.

KP: And then you went back?

LB: Scared to death. Scared to death.

JB: Kurt, she used techniques that were never even dreamed of when we were undergraduates.

KP: Oh, I'm sure.

JB: Paper chromatography, for example, and electrophoresis and mass spectrometry. These things weren't known when we were undergraduates.

KP: I want to ask some questions about Rutgers. One question I always ask a member of the Class of '42 is if you remember Vinnie Utz?

JB: Yeah, I remember reading the news about his going back into the fire to rescue somebody and, I think, they both perished. He was a hero. I didn't know him.

KP: Yeah, you didn't know him very well here?

JB: No, no.

KP: What about chapel? How did you feel about having to go to chapel?

JB: I detested it. But we had to. It was compulsory.

KP: Yeah. Why did you detest it so much?

JB: It had, but I was an atheist at this point, when I was here for a while. Then I became, I better finish that story very fast. In a tree observation post in Bougainville, which I would like to talk about at some point today, one of my enlisted men asked me to explain evolution. And, always glad to oblige, I explained evolution, 110 feet up in a tree. And as I did, it occurred to me that the whole thing was so orderly and planned and had to be the product of a supreme intelligence. Now, I didn't realize I was making what the philosophers call, "the argument from design," which they say is fallacious. But, I, -- bang! I said that there's a God, but I became a deist in effect. And I didn't become a theist until, when I was thirty, I guess. I had a conversion experience all by myself, completely alone in the house. I prayed to God, I wasn't, hadn't been sure would listen or pay any attention, and I felt the answer. Who's the guy that does all the work with chickens and ... Skinner. B.F. Skinner would say, "I not only asked the question, I answered it." But I don't believe that. And also, as far as "the argument from design" one of my sons is a very, very brilliant guy, in a quiet way, and he and I both agree "the argument from design," you just say, "Well, nobody designed the designer, he always was." So, that's the answer to that. But, I didn't like chapel.

KP: You didn't like it.

JB: And it was stuffy.

KP: Do you have any stories about Dean Metzger?

JB: Yeah, exactly. And I must tell you a story about that. I bought some firecrackers over on Easton Avenue from a Chinese laundry. Big, fat cannon crackers. And I was lighting them around the dorm, outside guys' windows and stuff like that. Nasty little bugger. Somebody said to me with a perfect straight face, "Dean wants to see you about those firecrackers." I said, "Oh." I charged on down to the Dean's office, went in and told the secretary, "He wants to see me." He didn't know anything about it. And I sat there confessing and saying I'd never do it again and so forth. He probably had a hard time keeping a straight face.

KP: I've been told that he was a very stern Calvinist. He could have almost come off a movie set as a stern Calvinist minister.

JB: Right. Central casting. Yeah.

KP: People also say that Clothier had a different type of personality.

JB: Oh, he was like God.

KP: Really?

JB: Yeah. He was a handsome man to begin with, [with] silvery hair, as I remember, and he was just distant, [like he was] on Olympus.

KP: You never joined a fraternity?

JB: Yes, I did. I joined Theta Chi, but I had to de-pledge because I lost my state's scholarship.

KP: And you couldn't afford to ...

JB: No, I couldn't afford to stay. So, theoretically, I was pledged.

KP: Yeah.

JB: I did not go through initiation. But I was never a Scarlet Barb.

KP: Really?

JB: I just didn't feel that I needed to be a Scarlet Barb.

SC: Did you stay in touch with the brothers that you had met at Theta Chi at the time?

JB: No.

SC: No.

KP: Do you remember any of the traditions that were around when you were here?

JB: Ridiculous, but I remember, yeah.

KP: Because there was some question ...

JB: You had to carry a book, too, at all times. I think it was the rulebook, or something like that. And you had to wear the dink, and it was very mild hazing. It's laughable, compared to the Citadel or some of these places you hear about where they physically abuse people. But I wouldn't do away with it, the mild aspect of it.

KP: Did you have any classmates who died during the war?

JB: No, but one that died since the war. Bill Quinn. I loved that guy. I mean, we were roommates, and here was a guy that worked in the summer, like I did, but the money he made in the summer went to keep his widowed mother and sibs. And he and I both worked for NYA and anything else, greasy spoons and stuff like that. And, at that time, I think it was on Bob Hope, there was a parody of two debutantes, Brenda Diana Duff Frasier and Cobina Wright. And on Allen, no, it was Fred Allen, "Allen's Alley." This voice would be heard, "Say, Brenda." "What is it, Cobina?" And Quinn and I used to do that. We lived in a rooming house and when we'd

come down the street, ten o'clock or eleven o'clock, "Say Brenda." "What is it, Cobina?" He was a neat guy and the way he, I, it may have been Vinnie Utz that told me.

LB: It was at one of the reunions.

JB: Yeah, it was a jock, a football player. I said, "Where's Bill Quinn?" He said, "Oh, he's in the hospital dying." That's the way I heard about it. And he was Mr. Alumnus, really. I don't think he was even in the war, probably.

KP: Yeah, I don't think so either.

JB: Yeah. He was in my wedding. He was an usher in our wedding.

KP: You were ready to fight in Spain at one point. How did you feel about America's role in the European conflict? Did you even consider enlisting or volunteering?

JB: Yeah. I've always been, for my sins, I've always been a liberal. And I married a girl who was the daughter of devout Republicans. I used to say [that] her mother and her aunt, her father was, he could see both sides of the coin, but her mother and her aunt, I loved both of them to pieces, I used to say [that] if they went into a polling booth and Jesus was on the Democratic ballot and Satan was on the Republican ballot, they'd stand there paralyzed. Right?

KP: Had you thought of enlisting in the Royal Air Force?

JB: No, I didn't.

KP: I mean, it sounds like you ...

JB: I probably felt that I was out of things because of my eyes, because of my right eye, really. And I never considered the Royal Canadian Air Force. And yet, there were a lot of guys on campus taking civil air patrol. Bryce Gray was one of those. Have you talked to Bryce Gray? I think he's dead, I'm not sure.

KP: Yeah. I know Tom Kindre and some other people have talked at length about that. But, did you try to get in the ...

JB: No, no.

KP: Did you apply to stay in advanced ROTC?

JB: Yes, I did. And I got turned down by Major Malone, who said that I was not officer material.

SC: Did you go back to him later in life?

JB: He was a New York lawyer, and I didn't endear myself to him. There was a problem where, these are all World War I problems, you know. You're out on patrol, you see that an enemy balloon has spotted you and artillery fire starts coming in on you, and what should you do? Well, the school, the textbook answer is, "Tell your man," they call him the breakaway man, that he had to go back and report. I said, "Pray." They took a dim view of things like that.

KP: Well, 'cause Ralph told a story about, I mean, he got to mix in ...

JB: About the mortar, yeah, that's a true story. He dropped a round in the three-inch mortar and somebody had put increments in it. Increments is the thing that makes it go, travel. They're like film packages, increments. And there was a shotgun shell, doing like the increments. And the thing went up and hit the concrete ceiling and shattered people with concrete. Fortunately, it didn't have an explosive charge in it. And he was called "Mortar Malone" after that.

LB: You didn't tell them about the building across the way?

JB: Oh, yeah. The engineering building, I think, on a dare, I went out the window, up on the fourth floor, and walked on the ledge from one end to the other and into the arms of the professor, when I went in the window, finally, where he was.

SC: Do you know the name of the professor?

JB: No.

KP: Do any of the professors stick out, in your memory.

JB: DeRegt, who, legend had it, he only had a master's degree and he had spent forty years trying to find out why mercury was not amphoteric. It should have been amphoteric, but it wasn't. That was what we believed. Reiman, or something like that, in chemistry. I told you, Lamont. I had many German professors, but I can't remember them. When I left, I had to go around and get signatures, signing me off, and I was reading in a seminar course, I was reading Faust, and the whole class was supposed to be, in German. The professor was lazy, it wasn't all in German. But [when] I went around to see him, he said, "Don't be like the fellow who came back to college and said, 'How did that Julius Caesar ever come out?'"

KP: Do you have memories of Vince Kramer before the war?

JB: Meeting him in Auckland, New Zealand, yeah.

KP: What do you remember about him?

JB: On campus?

KP: On campus. What do you remember about him?

JB: He played football, that's all I can remember. And I knew him. I didn't know many football players, really. I was out for a 150 pound crew. But I couldn't row because I was on scholastic probation.

KP: So, you never got to really ...

JB: No. Never got a letter, either.

SC: Did you follow other Rutgers sports at all?

JB: Well, I used to park cars at the football games. Good money. And that job, I got through the Graduate School of Banking. I was amazed that I got that, because, usually, only jocks got that.

KP: There was a real pecking order on campus, with different groups unofficially competing against each other. Athletes, fraternities, commuters, people who lived on campus, and stuff like that.

JB: Oh, that's true. I don't remember, consciously, looking down my nose at commuters. But, I guess, I must have, at some point or another. I was living on campus, roughly on campus, close to campus. I lived in the dorms for two years, I think. It was more than that, I lived off-campus for one year, 'cause I lived in Winants my last year.

KP: Your last year. You mentioned earlier that that's where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor.

JB: Right, in the dorm.

KP: And you, despite what your father said to you, you wanted to enlist?

JB: Yeah, because I had pre-med, I was pre-med. I thought, I was pre-med. I don't think anybody else thought so, but I took the medical aptitude test. Never knew how it came out. But I took it. I think I aced it, really. And I'll tell you one thing, also. I took Animal Parasites, and the final exam was a whole bunch of slides. They were lousy slides, but that's no justification. I failed. I couldn't identify [them], [so] I thought I shouldn't be a doctor. I didn't realize how many doctors would fail the same thing. That's why I wanted to be an HA deuce, Hospital Apprentice Second Class, because I had pre-med.

KP: But you ended up ...

JB: An artilleryman.

KP: By default, in some ways.

JB: Yeah.

KP: Why did you join the Marine Corps as opposed to the Army or the Air Force?

JB: Because the Marine Corps came around looking for officer candidates. And then, when I got finished, we had ten weeks of OCS. Originally, it was three months, but they cut it back because they were losing so many second lieutenants. But ten weeks of OCS and then you were commissioned, but you weren't allowed out by yourself without a guardian or chaperon. And ten more weeks of reserved officers class. Then you were considered ready to go into society. But I applied for a parachute, paratroopers school, and they put me in artillery school, because of my math at Rutgers. And I loved artillery. I didn't know anything about it, but I loved it and I still love it. I could go out there right now with a 75mm pack howitzer and hit anything you wanted.

KP: I shouldn't digress. But I gave a briefing at the National Guard Training Center.

JB: Did you?

KP: They were thinking of doing some oral history. Anyway, they now can do a lot of sighting on computer. They briefly configure a room and, I think, you would probably enjoy plotting the ...

JB: Yeah, I would. Well, I've seen some of the niftiest field expedience for teaching people without burning power. Because, now, fifty-odd years ago, if you fired a hundred pound, ninety pound shell, that cost the tax payers ninety dollars. A 75mm shell was twenty-five dollars and so forth and so on. Well, they had at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, they had a thing made of chicken wire, with little sponge trees on it, little wooden houses and stuff. Underneath the chicken wire, there was a device that could go this way, or this way, with a guy working it. And two bottles, one of ammonia and one of, something to make ammonium chloride, which is a white vapor when you squeeze a bulb. And you'd give a command, a fire command, and they'd move this device according to your fire command, squeeze the bulb and a puff of white smoke would come up and that was your round, and you had to adjust from there. I've seen little things, not much bigger than this [distance] between you and me, with a device for, like a pinball machine, really. I've seen a Baker battery, which was fabulous. It was outdoors, and they had a trench with these little guns about this big, that fired ball bearings. And they had a sight, a regular sight on them, and they had artificial terrain, sculptured out of the ground, rivers and hills and so forth. And when you fired, it got to be dusty terrain, when you fired a steel ball bearing, it makes a big puff of dust, you know, when it hits. All these neat things to teach people. But, I'd like to see the computer ...

KP: Yeah. It's in Fort Dix and I was, and they let me do some of the other computerized training. Before talking about your work with artillery, could you talk about when you reported for duty? You didn't graduate with everyone else.

JB: I had a broken heart, so I went into the Foreign Legion. The same girl that I mentioned before, I think it was she, because she was tied up with Henry Ernest Sostman, I said, "Take me." I wrote a letter to the Marine Corps, I said, I was supposed to go in June, I think.

KP: So, you would be allowed to graduate?

JB: Yeah. And I said, I said, "Take me, anytime. The sooner the better." And the answer I got was my orders. And you don't argue with orders, you know. So I got down there in March, in Quantico.

KP: They allowed you to graduate?

JB: Yeah.

KP: But, you didn't attend graduation.

JB: Yes, I did. I was on the program as "in absentia." But I came there and I wore my cap and gown over my khaki, PFC's uniform at OCS. And my mother and dad were there, and, at the end of it, I handed my mother the diploma and said, "This is yours. You earned this." And I went back to Quantico. I had to get special permission to go outside the 500-mile radius. But, I did go.

KP: What do you remember best about your first few weeks in the Corps?

JB: Well, I remember marching out to the rifle range with a nasty little corporal, saying, "Stop bouncing around that first platoon. Goddammit, Berglund, do I have to ride on your shoulders to stop you from bouncing?" And my ankles point out, my feet point out this way, I was, later on, called "Ten minutes to two," in the Marine Corps. But, at that time, I was not called that. But I did bounce, I guess. They tried, and now I know how ineffective it was, because we didn't go to boot camp. Later on, classes did. And the Marine Corps has a devout belief in boot camp, that this is what really makes a Marine. And when they get there, you see some corporal, who's eighteen years old, and after a little while, you'd think he was on John Paul Jones' ship, the *Bonhomme Richard*. He was there at the battle with the *Serapis*, because he's salty and he's telling you all these things. They tried to make OCS the same. But, they couldn't. Circumstances were different. They did tell us that twenty-five percent of the class would bust out automatically. And I know two guys in my platoon, who were so confident that they were doing all right, they did not go see the second lieutenant in the middle of the ten weeks to say, "How am I doing?" They busted out. And guys that busted out at that point could ...

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

KP: This continues an interview with John W. Berglund, occasionally joined by his wife, Lynne Berglund, on April 9, 1998 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

SC: Scott Carroll.

KP: And you were saying that if you busted out, they ...

JB: You could choose your duty or you could go to civilian life and be drafted. Or you could choose your duty. And I know guys that chose London Embassy.

KP: What did they do?

JB: Well, they guarded the embassy for the rest of the war. They wore dress blues and stood at attention for so many hours a day. And had plenty of young ladies to talk to, which was a concern of Marines in those days.

KP: What do you remember about the officers?

JB: Well, for instance, if you, they would call you and say, "Everybody down below." Not downstairs, "down below." They used Navy terms, you know. This was a bulkhead, this was the deck, this was, I forget what a door was called, but stairs was a ladder, stairs were ladders. And if you didn't shut your locker, the guys would come in and rip everything out and throw it on the floor. All your neatly folded underwear, four inches wide, socks, you know, all that stuff, because they wanted to ...

KP: So, you were to be neat in the Marine Corps, which, I take it you're not ...

LB: He lost it all.

JB: No. It's a natural reaction. I wasn't neat before, because Bill Lewis moved out after living with me, because he said I was too sloppy. Somebody else I remember very well is Joe DeMasi.

KP: Oh, yes. We've interviewed him. He's still in practice. He's an attorney.

JB: Yeah. Well, Joe DeMasi bought a new Plymouth when he was an undergraduate, a brand new car, with dice winnings. And I watched him throw the dice against the baseboard. So, they couldn't be rigged or cocked dice and he always won, unless I bet with him. Getting back to OCS. The night before I graduated from OCS, it was raining and I had to take some books back to the library. I don't know how I had time to read books, but, I did. Well, I always had time to read. But I asked one of these second lieutenants that was on duty, "Can I wear my raincoat to the PX?" It was an officer's raincoat. "No," 'cause I was not yet commissioned, I was a PFC, so I couldn't wear the raincoat 'till the next day. They tried, as I said, they tried to make it as nasty as they could, but they really couldn't. And looking back now, a lot of it was enjoyable. And I was in better shape than I've been ever before in my life, or since. I weighed 150 pounds. When I was here at Rutgers, I tried to get down to 155 pounds for crew, and I couldn't do it. I'd get to 160. When I finished OCS, I weighed a 150 pounds of pure wildcat. And I learned something. When you're out there in maneuver area, in the woods of Virginia, in the heat and humidity, mosquitoes and ticks and everything else, and the order is given, "Fix bayonets and charge," and you've been completely wiped out, when you fix that bayonet, you become charged and you charge and you run.

KP: I've gotten the impression from people I've talked to who were in the Marines, that the Corps, more than any other service, really does create a strong bond amongst its soldiers.

JB: That's the purpose of it.

KP: Yeah, there really is a bond. And it even extends beyond rank, which is rare in the other services.

JB: I was given a card in Hawaii, which we'll get to later, but I wish I had it with me. It's that plastic card that [said,] "What you have cannot be bought, it can't be purchased, you can't give it away. You are a United States Marine," and stuff to that extent, you know. They make, as I said, this kid would make you think that he was on the deck of the *Bonhomme Richard*. After a while, you think you were on the deck of the *Bonhomme Richard*, and you heard John Paul Jones say, "I've not yet begun to fight." And some salty leatherneck up in the main top, with the musket trying to shoot, leans over and spits tobacco and says, "There's always some son-of-a-bitch that doesn't get the word."

KP: How effective was OCS in making you an officer?

JB: OCS fits you to become a good buck sergeant. Now, I'm not being sarcastic. That's [where] they make you a squad leader. Then in ROC, they make you a platoon leader. And most of them become infantry platoon leaders. There was a guy in my platoon named Cooke from West Bygod, Virginia. He'd say, "All I want to do is get through this and get my rifle platoon." And he did, and the first day of combat in Bougainville, he got killed. But OCS was good, it was good training, and ROC was good training.

KP: Who else do you remember from OCS?

JB: Oh, Buck Koenig, who's my friend to this day, except I never see him or hear from him.

LB: Yeah, you do.

JB: At Christmas time. He was my, he was in my platoon at OCS, and Bo Kral, Bohumal Kral, that's a bohemian from Wisconsin. Carl Senge, all these guys I knew in the Pacific, as well as in OCS and ROC. And most of them went to artillery school, too, the ones that I remember the most. I was in artillery school when I got the flu, which the Navy calls "cat fever," catarrhl fever, acute. And I landed in the hospital at Quantico and I had to drop out and go in the next class. But, in the meantime, I went to duties, and we took equitation in those days, because artillery was considered a pack. You had a pack howitzer. You could break it down and carry it on mule-back, six mules or twelve Marines. And while I was in the hospital, they had advanced to the canter and the gallop, and I hadn't. And I got on the horse and we go out in the little creek area and they said they could see daylight between me and the saddle at all times.

KP: You had mentioned that you originally wanted to be a ...

JB: Paratrooper.

KP: Paratrooper.

JB: That was because I read so many romance novels when I was growing up. G. A. Henty, *By Pike and Dike*, with Clive in India, historical novels for boys, you know.

KP: I'm curious about the selection of Marines, because, before World War II, they had a sort of salty image. You pictured someone who was brave and courageous under fire, but was sort of dirty and rugged and someone you wouldn't want to be hanging around with.

JB: And they had served in China, too.

KP: Yeah, they served in China and they'd been sent to Tahiti.

JB: If you read the book and saw the movie, *The Sand Pebbles*, which is not about the Marines, it's about the Navy and the Yangtze River, but if you read that, you can get an inkling of what it was like to be a Marine. And W.E.B. Griffin, the novelist, he's fantastic. He catches the sights, the sounds, and smell. For instance, he's talking about Guadalcanal, I'd swear he was there, but he wasn't. But he's caught, and China, China Marines, he's got that in his books. They probably, they were very small. They were down to around 12,000 before World War II. When I was commissioned, there were already 10,000 officers before me, when I got my file number. But they went up to six divisions. I don't know how big they are today.

KP: Yeah, the Marines grew much bigger and much faster than the other services.

JB: But, the guys, now, an old gunnery sergeant named, "Chutie" or something like that, with a middle-European name, he was Asiatic. He had been in China with the Marines and he taught me [how to keep warm] in the desert. It was very cold at night in the desert. And he taught me how to dig a hole, six feet, by three feet, by six inches. And you put three inches of red hot embers in and then sand on top of that, put your bedroll on that, and man, you're hot all night. We used to say, "So and So is Asiatic," because they'd been in China service. A lot of those guys, though, were captured at Bataan, the 4th Regiment was captured and imprisoned for the rest of the war, and they were all Asiatic Marines. They, in the years between, in World War I, a regiment fought in France, a part of an Army division. General LeJeune, I think, was connected with that. Or "LaGerne," as his widow said. But, they were involved in Nicaragua and Haiti. My colonel, he was my colonel twice, once in the South Pacific and once in the Northern Pacific, he was in two different outfits. He had a Navy Cross that he got from Nicaragua. And if somebody made the mistake of asking him what it was for, the Colonel [said], "Perfect Sunday school attendance." And there were a lot of warrant officers who rose to the rank of master sergeant and then were given, they were warrant officers, they weren't, they were between fish and fowl, you know. They weren't enlisted and they weren't commissioned, but they went to the officers' club and they lived in officers' country. And they had all, they were salty guys, that had been through the ...

KP: So, you ran into your share of old salts?

JB: Yeah, oh, absolutely. And not only that, I ran into my share of being "Damn Yankee," for, I never knew it was only one word, until I got in the Marine Corps. All these guys, I said, the reason there were so many Southerners in the officer corps or the Marine Corps, is 'cause they couldn't get jobs in civilian life, you know. My colonel was VMI, in Washington and Lee. He's a brigadier now, he's still alive. We heard from him. How many years ago was it? Five years ago, we went to an elder hostel in Virginia and he was still thriving, as a brigadier general in retirement.

KP: You've mentioned that you really took to artillery.

JB: And I was good at it.

KP: How long would you train on artillery rounds?

JB: Ten weeks.

KP: Ten weeks. But you got sick?

JB: Then you kept going. Incidentally, the man I relieved, I didn't know that at the time, in the 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, there was a guy named Roosevelt, James Roosevelt.

KP: Really?

JB: And I heard stories of how he was late coming out to OP one morning and Colonel Letcher said, "Where were you, Roosevelt?" "I had a phone call from my father, sir." I met him, he was then with the Raiders. He'd left the artillery and was in the Raiders. And he was in my BOQ. And I met him in New Zealand, I had a date in New Zealand, with a girl named "Furious." And I said, "Would you like to meet Colonel Roosevelt?" "Oh, could I?" So, I went over and I said, "Colonel, we met in the BOQ at Camp Pendleton, remember?" I said, "I got a young lady that wants to meet you." He was a nice guy.

KP: Did he get any special treatment?

JB: No, not from Buzz Letcher. Buzz Letcher was my CO. Buzz Letcher wouldn't give the Pope special handling. He used to say, now this is the old Marine Corps, although he was a product of officer, officer class completely, you know, VMI and so forth, he said, "If an enlisted man gets drunk and smashes a jeep, I'll give him thirty days bread and water. If an officer gets drunk and smashes a jeep, I'll do my best to see that he gets a dishonorable discharge, because he has greater responsibility." The officer has responsibility.

KP: He believed that officers should be held to a higher standard?

JB: Yeah, yeah.

KP: Usually, it's the other way around, where the enlisted man gets into more trouble than the officer.

JB: In the Marine Corps, you don't eat until the enlisted men eat. I don't know whether you knew that or not, from your contacts with these guys.

KP: No, I've gotten a sense of that. I've come to have a new found respect for the Corps, because I've sense that the Army didn't really work out that way, except maybe in some of the elite units. I've heard from some people who were enlisted men in the Marines, that the officers really looked out for them.

JB: It was.

KP: Could you give me a sense of what happened when your were training?

JB: And I left in the fall, because I really had thirty-five weeks, because of the flu. And I left to report to my first FMF, that was Fleet Marine Force, that was the real Marine Corps, as opposed to Marine Corps schools. I had to report to my first FMF outfit, which was 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, in Camp Pendleton, California. And I don't think Lynne's ever heard this story. I had a keychain, it went from here to my pocket. Colonel Letcher sent another officer over to tell me one night, at dinner, that we don't wear jewelry in the Marine Corps.

KP: And from Camp Pendleton where did you go?

JB: New Zealand.

KP: New Zealand.

JB: Well, we did, we fired down at Camp Dunlap, in the desert, near the Mexican border, in the Imperial Valley. We fired artillery there. We fired it in Camp Pendleton. I'll tell you a story about that, too. The first night I was in that camp, I was sleeping peacefully in the BOQ. Ten o'clock or eleven o'clock, [someone] knocks on the door, "Lieutenant, you and the other new officer reporting in today, you're assigned to fire-fighting detail." And I had to get into a truck with a bunch of guys, go out in the valley, Los Pulgas Canyon, which means the "cooties" canyon, and fight fires, which had been started by my outfit that day, and I had never seen this canyon in daylight. And that night, I rode with a civilian fire warden and a salty, old Marine fire warden in a jeep, along hard back ridges, with fire breaks, with a 500 hundred foot drop on each side. And I'm in the back seat of the jeep with a lid on it, and I'm like this, "How am I going to get out of this?" 'Cause this old salt is driving and says, "We're gonna watch that one over there." I lived through it. We fired at Camp Dunlap and we practiced naval gunfire. The only difference about naval gunfire is [that] instead of the artillery, [where you] say, "On the way," when they fire, the Navy says, "Salvo." And just before it hits, or should hit, they say, "Splash." And we learned to direct the fire. You don't use the same methods you used to, spotting and sensing. For instance, I get a round out here, I'm trying to hit that, I'd say, "Up 500, right 300"

or something like that. But the Navy would say, "Short 500, left 300." That's called sensing instead of spotting. But you get the same results in the end.

KP: But if you don't say it right, it won't work.

JB: And you might get hit by your own round.

KP: Yeah.

JB: I'll tell you a story about that, that'll curl your hair. You don't have much left but it'll ... You trained, always. Now this leads, this segues into Guadalcanal. Our S-3, who was [from] Mississippi, but in spite of that, a very nice guy, Pee Wee Owens. He called all the officers in and he said, "There's not one of you who can do any job that's being done by an enlisted man in this battalion." And he said, "You should be able to do it, because most of you are Yankees and you can talk." So, what we did was, we did service of the piece, which is serving gun drill, you know. Instead of enlisted men, you've got four officers on the gun. And we also did sound ranging. We went down in the creek in the jungle and along the stream, rainforest, very thick rainforest, we made bombproof or splinter-proof shelters into the wall of the creek with sandbags and logs. They were pretty flimsy. And then we proceeded to fire 75 mm shells, white phosphorous, which is not quite as dangerous as HE, at our own positions to learn how to spot by sound. You'd get a round out there and then you'd pull it in, until you heard fragments crashing into your shelter. And when that day was over, we were all hooked up on the same phone line, (Pee Wee Owens?) called the roll, and when it was done, he said, "Phew!" I'd been through Bougainville, and I did sound ranging in the jungle. I was selected by lottery to go back to the States and form the 5th Division. Now, I didn't get in the 5th Division. Instead, I got selected to go to Fort Sill to take a sound and flash ranging course. And because of that, I landed in corps artillery, Fifth Amphibian Corps on Hawaii, then, and *en route* to Iwo Jima. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

KP: Could you explain to me where you are in the table of organization, how you fit in?

JB: Well, in a firing battery, you have a battery commander, and the job calls for a captain. It usually is a captain. You have a battery exec, who was a first lieutenant. Then you have battery officers who are forward observers. That's what I was. I was a forward observer for a long, long time. And I loved it, I loved directing artillery fire. We had to be, we had to do battery officers' jobs, like learning to lay the four guns parallel with an aiming circle. You lay off angles with a circle so that the forward tubes are parallel. And they'd better be pointing the right way, or you're going to kill somebody whom you don't want to kill. That's happened, too. But mostly, I was a forward observer. I also had ancillary jobs like motor transport officer. And I had a guy in charge of my motor transport that was a terrific guy in combat and a horse's ass in peacetime. He'd always get busted. He'd get drunk, get in a fight and get busted. But, in combat, he was a good man. I can remember when I was officer of the day in Guadalcanal, making the rounds. And because I was motor transport officer, these guys all know me. And I went down past the place and one of them said, "Come on in here, Lieutenant." They had made corn liquor out of corn meal. It was horrible. It was paint remover. But I had to take a drink of it, you know.

KP: How many people were in a battery?

JB: People?

KP: Yeah.

JB: Now, this is off the top of my head, I'd say about 150 in a firing battery. In those days, you had four pieces. Now they have six, I think. And there were twelve men to a gun, plus you had clerks and local security and motor transport and communicators. That was very important. Linemen.

KP: As forward observer, how far forward would you go?

JB: Well, I wasn't in front of the infantry. I was with the infantry.

KP: Yeah, but ...

JB: And one night, I had a very embarrassing episode. I was with the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, I was in direct support of them. And we stopped along a river, a little creek, Piva River. And I was firing what is called "normal barrage" and "emergency barrage." I was registering in front of us with smoke. Again, because it doesn't kill as many people as HE does when you miss. And I was standing there with Captain Bastion, who was the company commander, and he was a nervous wreck, anyway. And I was firing out there and I pulled it back, and it may have been a faulty round, because we were using ammunition that had been in a terrible fire in Guadalcanal. This was in Bougainville, in combat, but the fire was at Guadalcanal, at Hells' Point ammunition dump. And you could hear the faulty rotating bands, they go, "whitchy, whitchy, whitchy," when they were over your head, and stuff like that. But anyway, this one round that I called for out there, I waited, and all of a sudden I hear a dull pop, then [it landed several] feet in back of me, over here, right in Captain Bastion's foxhole. And fortunately, he was standing with me. But, I left the area shortly. And that night, I had, the password and counter sign were "Silly" and "Helen." When challenged, you would say "Silly," and the challenger would say "Helen," because the Japanese couldn't pronounce "L," theoretically. And I had to go along our lines, along this river, for 500 yards to my hole, in the dark. And every ten feet, I heard the bolts snap back, "Halt, who goes there?" And I had this kid from Goose Creek, Texas, who stuttered. He didn't stutter that night, "Silly," "Helen," "Silly," "Helen."

KP: How did you make it from California to New Zealand?

JB: In a Liberty ship, at a dizzying ten knots.

KP: And did you go in a convoy?

JB: No, we had no convoy. The ramp, the fantail was going "bum ba, bum ba, bum ba bum." I met a girl that danced that way later on. No, we had no convoy, and, later on, jumping ahead,

when I went to Iwo Jima in an LST, with no convoy. In fact, we convoyed a convoy boat that was hurt. We convoyed that for a while, until it went back to Pearl. And I had, at that time, we had four 155mm howitzers in the hold, and I said to the captain, who was a Coast Guard, JG, I said, "Let's get those howitzers up on the deck and at least we can shoot back at the submarines." He didn't.

KP: As a forward observer, would you work alone or did you have any support?

JB: I had a team. I had ...

KP: How big was your team?

JB: At the most, six men. Most of them were communicators, but one was a scout corporal who was supposed to take over when I was killed. And I taught a guy named Merle Connolly to be a forward observer in New Zealand, and later on, he got a field commission as an air observer. And later, still later, Lynne and I were in, was it Forth Worth? San Antonio. San Antonio, and then the, what's that big movie screen?

LB: IMAX.

JB: IMAX movie screen, we saw *Davy Crockett* ...

LB: *The Alamo*.

JB: *The Alamo*. And Merle Connolly was playing the roll of Davy Crockett, this guy that I had taught to be a forward observer, all those years before. I taught him with, I'd put a tin can out and I'd say, "Throw a rock out there." And he'd throw a rock underhanded. And then I had a carbine cleaning-rod that was this long. I'd say, "This is 200 yards, scale." And I'd ask him to give a command and I'd go lay it out with the carbine cleaning rod. And I taught a number of guys to be forward observers. But, my team included so-called "scout corporal" and then radiomen. We had radios that were, I guess, they were state-of-the-art, but the art was Dark Ages art. They were good for lining a foxhole. One of them was effective at distances like we are in this room. And there was another one, they did with a generator, you know, and a treadle to make it go. Sometimes, they worked. I can remember on Bougainville, I had moved something that I shouldn't move and I was trying to call, and I was going, "Marlin from Marlin Baker One, come in." And eventually somebody said, "You don't need a radio, they can hear you back there." I had a tree observation post on Bougainville, which I occupied for at least a month. It was a ten-foot wide trunk at the bottom, it was on a hill called "Hill 600A." And the first platform was 110 feet up, then there was another little platform twenty feet above that and he used a bo's'n seat and pulley to get up there. And when you came down, the guys, that had the ropes snubbed around the root, would let it go. I had to burn the inside of my field shoes black on that rope, going down. Because before you hit the ground, they'd snub it. That was called "the twenty-five cent ride." And one time, there was an earthquake, my first earthquake. And I was in my jungle hammock when the earthquake hit, and I was tied between two, between two saplings. I was like a beanbag. And my first thought was, "It's a Japanese secret weapon. No,

it's a hurricane. No, no wind." So, I dove out, I don't think I unzipped it. I dove out. And when I got on the ground, I felt the ground shaking and I knew it was an earthquake. And I had a very expensive azimuth instrument up in the tree, with a rope through the tripod legs. And I hollered up to the enlisted man that was on duty, and I said, "Watch that instrument." And this is going back and forth in a six-foot arc, you know. "The hell with the instrument, Lieutenant. Get me out of here." And later on, when I was back in the rear area, sleeping on the airstrip, and there was an earthquake and these young flyboys were, "Oh, what's that, what's that?" I said, "It's an earthquake. We have them all the time."

KP: How much time did you spend in New Zealand?

JB: Four months.

KP: Which is a long ...

JB: Oh, it was lovely. And I told Lynne about it for thirty-five years. And we went back, how many years ago, now? Twelve?

LB: '86. The day after I retired, we left.

KP: Because now, in New Zealand, the men were in the service, and here you were, Americans, overpaid and ...

JB: Yes, we were. And later on, when I served with the 3rd New Zealand Division, which I will tell you about, Arthur Bullen took me up to the brigade mess at night. They were drinking, the poor devils didn't have any tea, they were drinking Ovaltine and stuff like that. And he says, "This is Lieutenant Berglund, he's one of the chaps that's been dating your wives back in Auckland." That tree op, (observation post), I was there for a long time and a lot of people, a lot of brass came up to see. All you could see were treetops, so, really. When I fired a normal barrage or emergency barrage, I'd ask the infantry, by radio, to light smoke grenades, color smoke grenades, so I could find the front lines.

KP: What was an average day like in New Zealand, in terms of training? Was the training rigorous, or were you guys just making time?

JB: Oh, no. We trained with, we had to be careful. There was one place we fired, and Lynne has been there, too, on the shore of the Tasman Sea. And there's a great big, giant sand dunes three to five hundred feet high, perpendicular to the coast. And we'd go up those, to the OP everyday, like that. And there was a colonel, a World War I colonel, who was watching the farm for his son who was fighting in the Middle East. And we couldn't go past his house without the colonel dragging us in for tea, coffee or beer, when we went by, you know. And at the end of the day, we'd go down through the sand dunes, gullies and creeks and stuff, to a black sand beach, bathe in the Tasman Sea and take a shower in the waterfall afterwards. That's where we fired and had big maneuvers with lots of buried charges to simulate artillery fire, you know. And we only killed a couple of cows, I think.

KP: Were the New Zealand women receptive of you?

JB: They were. They were. They were a gallant bunch. And they ... almost all had bad teeth and false teeth, which we thought was from either a deficiency in the soil, or the fact of eating sweet cakes twice a day at tea. Whipped cream tarts, you know.

KP: What else surprised you? It sounds like you have fond memories of this particular place.

JB: I loved New Zealand. Yeah.

KP: I gather that these places you went to were much different than the ones you had been to before.

JB: When I went there, Kurt, I thought, my impression, before I got there was, *White Cargo* in the movies, with natives beating drums at night in the jungle.

KP: In New Zealand?

JB: Yeah. I didn't know anything about it. And here I found this beautiful, bucolic country, [where] every animal was a beautiful animal. I never saw a scrub animal in New Zealand. And it was a classless society. It was all middle-class, triple distillation of middle-class. There were six millionaires. And the other end of the scale was the longshoreman in Auckland. And one night, I had MP duty. I had to take back people that missed the train, and one of the other MPs, who was a Navy MP, beat a prisoner who was causing a lot of abuse. He didn't deserve to be beaten, but, the story was, later was that he fell off a truck, you know. But I looked around when I saw this guy hit him and there was a longshoreman out there ready to kill us. They were leftists, you know. He was dragged out from behind a phone booth on Queen Street, drunk as a skunk, this guy I'm talking about.

KP: The guy that was being beaten up?

JB: Yeah. They used a fire-hose to get him out of there. As I said, it was a classless society. Beautiful. I enjoyed every bit of it. We found [that] after we'd been there four months, that we were drinking un-pasteurized milk and nobody knew it. The division surgeon found that out when he went to visit a creamery. And talk about arteriolosclerosis. He found pipes, down to a knitting needle diameter, left with old butterfat in the pipes. And they said, "We don't get sick." You know, the New Zealanders.

KP: You said people were getting sick in your unit?

JB: No, no. No, we drank it for months, un-pasteurized milk. But, I want to tell you a story about [that]. There was a Lieutenant Walker, a New Zealand officer, who was attached to us in this sort of a vague way. And he'd been up in the Solomons for seventeen years, as a plantation manager and a gold miner. There's gold in the Solomons. And Colonel Letcher was strictly a

hunting and fishing and shooting type. Buzz Letcher. And I overheard this, he said, "Walker, how's the hunting, fishing and shootin' up there in the islands?" We were going to go fight, you know. He wanted to know how the hunting, fishing and shooting was. Walker gave him some kind of non-committal answer, and he came over to this junior officer, where we were, and he says, "Hunting, fishing and shooting, crikie. His name ought to be Lord Letcher, not Colonel Letcher." And he did, he killed a crocodile on Guadalcanal, skinned it, and packed it in salt, and shipped it to his wife. It got lost and the salt didn't work. And he asked me to go pig shooting on Hawaii, wild boars.

KP: So he really did like to hunt?

JB: Oh, yeah, and fish. I can remember him fishing in the Tasman Sea, surf fishing. And he also did fresh water fishing. He never went downtown. His father-in-law was a brigadier general. When the general said, "Buzz, you come to town," he went. But, the rest of the time, all the junior officers were running [their] legs off to get into Auckland, you know, not Buzz.

KP: So you found New Zealand very bucolic?

JB: I met a New Zealand aviator named, Lucky Smith. He was called Lucky Smith because he was the only survivor of his draft that went out to fight in the Battle of Britain. And he was back in New Zealand doing instructor's stuff. We visited him at a little airdrome called Onarahi Airdrome, which was grass. The field was grass, it was like something out of the '30s or '40s, World War I, really. We spent the afternoon drinking beer, shooting the beer bottles. I had a .45 revolver, and we were shooting the beer bottles out back. And Lucky Smith took each one of us up, one at a time, in a Hawker Hines, which was a biplane [with] open cockpits, that was the prototype of the Stuka. I heard, the Germans made the Stuka from that. And he flew between two rock promontory on a cliff, he flew between two trees, so the branches were over our heads, and he flew along the ground, and I had an altimeter in my seat where I was, which said, "zero." And he was going "Swoop, swoop, swoop," over sand dunes, like that. And every time, and he did slow rolls and stalled at the top of the roll, and I'm hanging in the straps. And every time he did it, he'd turn around and grin. So, I'd grin back. I wasn't going to let him know I was scared. And he was killed about a week later, or two weeks later, dropping pamphlets over Wellington, for war bonds. Lucky Smith. And we went to a dance, through Lucky Smith, and there was a Colonel Ray Christ there. I didn't know Ray Christ from a general, you know. And for some reason, he was a heavy drinker, and he said that Buck Koenig and I were drunk. We hadn't had a chance. We probably would have been, but we hadn't had a chance, you know. And he said, first he said that we didn't have field scarves. So, we went out and got field scarves and came back. And then he decided that we were drunk and he had us thrown out. So, the next day I went to Colonel Letcher, Buck and I told him about it and he said, "Well, you ought to press charges. I'll back you." He said, "Remember, you never know whose going to be your commanding officer." And he was a light colonel and we were first lieutenants. We looked at each other and said, "Let's forget it." In a couple of months, Ray Christ was our commanding officer and got to be a good friend. And we used to, in Guadalcanal, we used to detail a lieutenant every night, to take him home from the club. I'd rather crawl through ditches in some cases.

KP: Because he had a little too much to drink?

JB: Yeah, but he was a good officer. In spite of that, he was probably, there's a lot of drinking in the Marines.

KP: I got the sense that the military almost encouraged people to drink.

JB: Exactly, and play slot machines. There was a guy named Barnes. We called him Buck Benny, not to his face. He was, like, he was one grade ahead of us. He was a battery commander. And rumor was that Benny Barnes took a footlocker full of booze ashore, at Guadalcanal. So, I met him in the Korean War, I was called back into the Korean War, and I met him. We were in the men's room at Paradise Point, and I said, "Colonel, is it true that you took a footlocker of booze ashore at Guadalcanal?" He says, "It wasn't one footlocker, Berglund. It was two." Then he told me [that] they were after him to quit drinking. In other words, he was getting cirrhosis. And you'd take a physical, you know, and he wasn't passing it. He probably had liver damage.

KP: After New Zealand, what happened next?

JB: We got on ... the Madison Line ships, no, the President Line, *President Madison*, I think it was. And this is a little known fact that I'm very proud of. I loaded the number four hold of that ship, all night long. Buck was supposed to take a shift, but he had to say goodbye to his lady friend, so I took his shift. I put more gear in that hold than it ever had before. And I was just following my nose.

KP: And did you load it correctly and all?

JB: Yeah, and I used slings and hoists and stuff like that. Then we went up to Guadalcanal. And here's a heart-breaking story. Before we went, they took all the sidearms of all the guys. You're not supposed to have sidearms, but everybody had them. They're Marines, you know. And they put them in a box. And I'll bet you, there were 115 pistols of various calibers and sizes in there. And at Guadalcanal, we had to off-load in the dinghies to get ashore, landing boats. And the first sergeant, he was going to do it so he was sure it was done right. I was watching him, he took that load of pistols with another guy helping him, and he proceeded to put it in the sling and they dropped it. And it went down to the bottom of the Pacific. But, I didn't have one there, but I bought one on Guadalcanal. I bought a .45 revolver. It was so old and beat up that when you fired it, you got copper scrapings on the breech from the rounds. And it had Lucite grips, and it had a lot of pitting in the barrel. So, first, I got a new barrel from an Army armorer, I got new walnut grips and I had a Marine armorer work on the gears. Somebody'd been doing this, this Hollywood stuff, you know. I had it fixed so that it didn't, it lined up right.

KP: Why this need for everyone to carry a sidearm?

JB: Penis envy.

KP: Really, there were guys ...

JB: No, but we all had them.

KP: Did you ...

JB: My friend Buck bought a Tommy gun. And later on, he shipped it, in pieces, home. And then he sold it, and I just wonder, "Who bought that?" you know, especially in New York.

KP: When you arrived at Guadalcanal, it had been the site of ...

JB: It was declared secured.

KP: Yeah, but it was ...

JB: But, they didn't tell the Japanese air force. Every night, they'd give us air raids. And the first night, I didn't have a slit trench dug and [what] my three tentmates [and I] did [was] lay on the floor with my arms wrapped around my head. Next day, I dug a slit trench. And I told the doctor that I'd done this and he said, "Well, the long bones in your arms should be pretty good protection."

KP: Was that the first case where you'd been fired at?

JB: Yeah, and we got those air raids all the time. But, they weren't massive air raids. They were one or two planes. And they'd see the searchlights and all that and you'd think it was a drama being put on for you. But when anti-aircraft was fired, there was more danger from the anti-aircraft fragments, because they came down ...

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

JB: ... Stuff falling down. And Eleanor Roosevelt came to visit Guadalcanal and I swore they put an air raid on, just for her benefit. That's probably not true.

KP: She actually was there during an air raid?

JB: Yes, and before that, we had to enclose all the urinals with target cloth. They were just pipes with funnels, you know. They went into a pit of rocks. We had to put enclosures of target cloth around them.

KP: So, Mrs. Roosevelt ...

JB: Yeah, couldn't get shocked.

KP: How long was she there?

JB: Just a few days.

KP: Did you get to meet her?

JB: No.

KP: But you were aware of her presence?

JB: Yeah. And then from Guadalcanal, we went on the invasion of Bougainville. And I was in Bougainville for ninety days. So much so, that I got two stars on my Asiatic Pacific Ribbon for Bougainville. The second star was called "Consolidation of the Northern Solomons." And I told you about the tree op, earthquakes. I had twenty-seven tropical ulcers on my legs, between the knees and the ankles. At one time, I had twenty-seven ulcers, and the bandages wouldn't stay on because of the humidity.

KP: What about malaria?

JB: I was lucky. I slept without a mosquito net. Well, in battle, you're going to do it, anyway.

KP: Yeah.

JB: I should have had malaria. And I was a microbiologist and ...

KP: So, you knew how important ...

JB: The last week on Bougainville, we were in reserve, and I went to CB Battalion across the road, and the doctor there had guts and he treated my ulcers. The first time anybody really treated them. He cauterized them with phenol, and then he put the old reliable Whitfield's ointment stuff on, and every one of them cleared up. So, I told him I was a microbiologist and I worked for him a week. I was a first lieutenant in the Marines, acting as a corpsman in his sick bay. And I made a malaria smear that I wish I could have showed my professors right down the road here. It was beautiful. It's a textbook smear. He didn't need it. The guy was standing there, like that, you know. And then I made a Vincent's Angina smear that I couldn't find anything. And this doctor was a go-for-broke type guy. He had bought an autoclave and incubator out of his own pocket for his battalion. And he admitted that most of the troubles he had were geriatric troubles, because guys lied about their ages to get into the Sea Bees. They dyed their hair ...

KP: And, in fact, they were too old.

JB: Yeah. Yeah.

KP: They were really too old.

JB: Yeah. And they were terrific.

KP: At Bougainville, had you been taking atabrine at all?

JB: I took it ...

KP: Or was that later?

JB: I'll tell you, we used to stand the checkout line and check off each enlisted man as he swallowed it, not put it in his mouth, swallowed it. We handed it out where the beverages were. The reason for that was that Radio Tokyo had spread the word that it caused sterility. And the average Marine [thought], "That's means I can't get it up." So they'd spit them out, the ground was yellow around where you'd give them the atabrine, until we enforced it by making them swallow it. And I personally, I stopped taking it. I was on thirty days waiting for transportation. I stopped taking atabrine to see if I had malaria. And I didn't.

KP: You developed ulcers?

JB: Yeah. I did. I had, when I hit an island, the bugs said, "Hey, fresh meat," you know. And centipedes. I hate things like that, centipedes and scorpions. I never encountered a scorpion, thank God. But, one night, when we're in reserve in Bougainville, at the end, Buck went out and had a flashlight and he said, "Bill, come out, what is this?" A canteen cup, you know, it's that big. There was a centipede on the lip of the canteen cup, long enough to bite his own tail. And I took a plastic map case and I, with great fear and trepidation, I went "clumm," like that, on the top of the canteen cup. Then I grabbed it, put it down on the ground and held it there and took my K-bar knife, which is a big, big knife, and I took my hand away. I thought that centipede would be big enough to throw that plastic off. But he wasn't. So, I threw it off and he jumped to the ground and I made centipede burger out of him.

KP: When you were at Bougainville, you mentioned that you were at this fixed post for a good while.

JB: Yes, I, no, initially, I had advanced with the infantry. We had a big preparation one morning. I remember this colonel, Fred Beam. He was a great big, muscular guy who played football at the Academy. And he was shaking, because he was afraid of our own flyers. I called off the artillery preparation because we were going to advance against this so-called "Piva" Village, and the Japs had evacuated it. So, I called off the artillery barrage and they tried to call off the bombardment by air and they said they couldn't receive it, you know. The radio was breaking up. They didn't want to go back to the strip with an armament load. So, they came in and they scraped and bombed this empty village. And Fred Beam's going, lighting a cigarette like that, (shaking), "These goddamm flyers."

KP: So, the fear of friendly fire was ...

JB: Yeah, oh, yeah.

KP: And it sounds like some of the officers were nervous in the presence of artillery fire.

JB: We had, one of my colleagues was battery exec of a battery, and a certain thing was changed without their knowing it. So the aiming stakes were moved, and some enlisted man removed the aiming stakes. And that night they fired and they injured, they didn't kill anybody, but they injured some Marines. And this guy, his name was Friday, he got relieved.

KP: And it was because the stakes were removed?

JB: Yeah, yeah. But he was responsible. Responsibility, again.

KP: At Bougainville, did you go in with the initial wave?

JB: Yeah. It was D-Day, H-hour plus two, I guess. And I got very worried because every landing boat broached to. It was terrible. You'd look up and down the beaches and all these landing boats were sideways, broached to. Because the tides were different and the surf was different than they had anticipated. And all the Marines swarmed under these abandoned landing boats and took off the .30 caliber machine guns and the water breakers. The machine guns were for local defense and the water breakers were for making jungle juice, "Raisin Jack." Sugar, raisins and coconut palm juice, and you'd put it in the sun and let it stew. It tastes like a mixture of soap and champagne. For my birthday on Guadalcanal, I think, I was forced to drink a canteen cup of that. You know, I had to, because they were giving me a birthday present. As a result of all those machine guns ashore, there was a, one of our own fighters got shot down by these eager beavers on the beach with their own machine guns. And he lived. He came ashore with a bullet through his leg and walked up the beach and was going to kill the guys that shot him down. And that night, my fourth hole that I dug that day. While at first, I was digging first, I heard this conversation, the guy says, "Boy, you're really getting down there with your helmet." "All I've got, you've got entrenching tools, and I've got a helmet." The guy says, "Entrenching tool, I'm using my hands." But that night, I drained water out of my foxhole, it was full of water, and there was a yellow snake about three feet long in it. So I killed him with my .45 and I said, "I can tell people, one of those little yellow bastards got in my hole and I blew him away."

KP: Did you make contact with the Japanese at all while you were in Bougainville?

JB: Oh, yeah. I got fired at with small arms fire. I got bombed. I had a 500 pound bomb that I can remember to this day. It sounded like you were standing on a subway platform when a train comes by you. This train didn't come by. He laid a stick across our battery and we were in an inverted foxhole. It was a swamp. It was made of coconut palms and sand bags. And when that thing dropped, it landed in a stream, which, I think, saved us, because it deflected upward where it only killed one man. But, my mouth was full of dirt. I shook until I could light a cigarette under a blanket, after twenty minutes of shaking. And that was the closest call I've ever had, except, maybe, on Iwo Jima. But, another story about Bougainville. Artillerymen can't help but compute the directions needed to put the next round of artillery fire on them. And we had a 15cm gun firing at us. And that's not much, that's one round every thirty seconds or forty-five

seconds. And we had this old warrant officer named Bob Stutz, who was a Swiss national, who got permission from Harding to enlist in the Marine Corps. And he was due to retire. He was past due. And Henry Morgenthau was Secretary of Treasury, and Stutz says, "Well, if that guy goes up 100 and left 200, it'll save Henry Morgenthau a lot of money." And we were all laughing, because it's gallows humor, you know. And the next day, a new lieutenant, who slept ten feet away, went to the captain and said, "There must be something wrong with me. I was scared last night, and you guys were all laughing." But that's gallows humor.

KP: We actually ran across a poem you wrote.

JB: *Remembrance.*

KP: *Remembrance, at Bougainville.* If I could read some of it for the record. "Now you are gone, you with whom I have so often laughed at some small thing known only to ourselves; You, whom time could never soften nor dull the keen, bright wit. Sometimes there we shared the ring of friendly glasses touched in jesting toast, and there were girls to whom we both made love, you softly whispering some bit of foolishness into her ear, the while I held her hand and neither knew who pleased her most. And deeper than all this we knew the lowering sullenness of war, have known the naked feeling when a bomb burst or shell flew overhead; we both have knelt waist deep in water while the mad rain drummed against our backs and that more deadly rain searched through the jungle, yet there was laughter even then. Now you are gone, forever young and filled with joy. While I remain to trudge the same dull wit and someday find that careless boy who was within me has grown old- I wonder if it be so sad you died." Who was that? Was that someone specific?

JB: Yeah, but he didn't die, he got transferred. But I was writing about, because we did date the same girl. We both tried to make time with the same girl in Auckland. And all the rest of it is true. We cracked jokes. We were often together as forward observers, in the same place. And he was another, he was a writer. Actually, later on, he wrote one book that was bought by Avon or Dell, one of those. That's it. He's a travel writer today. He goes all over the world, first class, with his pen.

KP: So, no one died in this ...

JB: Other guys did. That's poetic license.

KP: You had some close calls in Bougainville. You saw people get seriously wounded and killed.

JB: There wasn't a night that I got in my jungle hammock and I loved it. I loved it so much, that I actually dug a deep, deep trench to hang my jungle hammock in, below the ground so I wouldn't get killed. Because there was not a night that I didn't remember a guy that they wrapped up in his jungle hammock and buried him in because of the bomb, you know. Well, the first time I ever heard small arms fire directed at me, it produced watery bowels, immediately.

Which is, that's a, what's the word? Classic, what's the word you use for something you used too many times in literature?

LB: Cliché.

JB: Cliché. It's a cliché of war.

KP: But it's true?

JB: Yeah, it is true. I had to go, I had to go while they were shooting at me. So I went off and dug a hole.

KP: Well, one person I interviewed very early on, I mean, he had a lot of Marine Corps training. And he talked of himself, it's almost like John Wayne. But he said, "I was so pumped up." And then, he goes, "I landed on a beach, and the shells started to fall all around me and I realized that I could get killed. I realized that I could get hurt out here and I better not be foolish." He said that other Marines never quite got that. Could you reflect on that?

JB: Yeah. I had a very real personal crisis of my own. Iwo Jima, I was assistant S-3 of corps artillery, coordinating all the artillery on the island. In that job, I got a request from the direct support battalions, [asking] if anybody would volunteer to be a forward observer in the front line outfits. And I, the lonely debate, the Hamlet soliloquy, "I lay in my cot, which, I had a cot with no head and tail on it, and I thought, "I'm probably the best forward observer I know," and I was, "I should volunteer. I don't want to volunteer. I don't want to get killed." I had never been afraid before. On Green Island, I used to go by myself, up through the jungle. I'll tell you about the New Zealand outfit. But, at this point, I thought, "If I volunteer, I'll get killed." So, I didn't volunteer. I got back to Guam and it ate at me, it ate at me, ate at me. The only way I could heal that, and this is ridiculous, looking at it now, but, I went in to the general and volunteered to go to Okinawa as an observer.

KP: You felt so guilty.

JB: Yeah, I felt that I had lost my manhood because I didn't volunteer.

KP: And it wasn't like you were some slacker or ...

JB: No, I was in combat.

KP: Yeah, I mean, it ...

JB: I was getting shelled and stuff, mortared. One night, on Iwo Jima, the Japanese set the 5th Division's ammunition dump on fire. And among other things that night, we got a direct hit with one of our own shells. It was blown up by the dump. And our tent was in shattered fragments. You'd look up in the air and you'd see flares coming down, composition C and dynamite, mortar rounds, the increments would catch fire in the fiberglass and the mortar round would fire. It was,

the shit-hit-the-fan, you know. And I had a bottle of Schenley's Black Death that I was saving for emergencies, and there were six of us in this little jury-rigged shelter that I had made, in the wall of the tent. I passed out the bottle of Schenley's. It went around once, that was it.

KP: How was the food at Bougainville?

JB: Oh, we had, I had some men in my forward observer chain that were good thieves. They'd go to an Army dump and get loaded up with good stuff. There was a ration called a J-ration, Jungle ration. It was a cube about this big in wax cardboard, heavy waxed cardboard. And in it there were Spanish peanuts, chocolate milk powder, real milk powder, toilet paper, cigarettes, all kinds of goodies, you know.

LB: Coffee.

JB: Coffee, yeah. And we used to really live high on the hog with J-rations. Now C-rations weren't very good. My boys, I have four sons, they claim that I tell, that every story I tell is on a track, and that it's the same story. And when I said I was going to Hawaii, with something to do with Iwo Jima, my son, Chris, said, "You're gonna heat your C-rations in the sand?" Well, that was Iwo Jima, not Hawaii. But, the rations, the food was good in Bougainville, I think. We used to go past the Sea Bees Battalion on our way up, back and forth, in the lines. And those guys would literally drag us in and have us take coffee. "Here, have some coffee." And we'd clean our weapons there. And they had half drums, fifty gallon drums filled with gasoline, and [we'd] clean our weapons in that, you know. They were so good to us, the Sea Bees.

KP: There was a lot of mutual respect?

JB: Yeah, there was.

KP: That you didn't view them as just construction workers.

JB: Every time I look at a road-building project in the States, for fifty years, I say, "Nah." Because the Sea Bees would come in and do it while you weren't looking and be gone with it. A new road there, you know. They built, when I first saw the highway they were building on Bougainville, it was hard to believe. And the airstrips, terrific. And I used to have claustrophobia. And I used to love to get out on the airstrip and [take a deep breath], you know, out where it wasn't the jungle pressing in on me.

KP: I can imagine that the jungle was a very unpleasant place to be in.

JB: I tend to conflate the jungle in Guadalcanal and the jungle in Bougainville. They're both in the Solomon Islands, but, I have seen spiders with that big (eight-foot-ten) legspread. Scarlet, you know. One night, on Bougainville, I had finished adjusting, now, this is a beautiful little story about emergency barrages. The guy on the right flank of the advance could see the sea. He was hundreds of yards from me. But he fired and adjusted more and more of the barrage in front of him. The next guy, just by sound, moved it over and over until it got to me. I had sound-

powered phones to the three platoon leaders, the infantry platoon leaders. And I had them on the phone and I fired out in front, and when they heard fragments crashing in the trees, I said, "Cease fire and record." Then, I was lying there going to sleep, and something big and furry, with many legs, came plop on my face, and scampered off. It's a wonder I didn't die, 'cause I hate things like that. Anyway, banana bears, which are little marsupials, used to pee on us. And I think it was deliberate.

KP: Did you have any contact with the enemy at Guadalcanal?

JB: No.

KP: But, in Bougainville, you saw action?

JB: I never saw a Japanese over my sights. But, I killed, and I'm not proud of this. It was something that I had to do in the course of my job. I killed hundreds on a hill called 600. I was on 600A. And I fired with triangulation from my tree op and destroyed, almost destroyed a regiment of Japanese. They went in there and found arms and legs lying all over the place.

KP: That was reported back to you?

JB: Yeah, yeah.

KP: And you knew that you were responsible for this?

JB: Yeah. The first time I ever got a chance to fire back ... the Japanese had pulled a little 70mm, which can kill you, a 70mm mountain gun up on the side of a mountain, and they were pooping out one and two rounds a minute, you know. And they were firing at my battalion, which is "sacrilegious." You don't fire artillery on artillery outfits. It's *lese majeste*, you know. So, I got them in my crosshairs and somebody else had a sight on them, and we registered and I fired something like, "Battalion, six rounds." That meant twelve guns, fired six rounds in just a few, a couple of minutes. And I saw all these bursts in my crosshairs of my instrument. I was jumping up like that, up in this tree. Another time, I'm not proud of this, I tried to fire on a volcano. I saw lights, it was probably lava.

KP: And this was a ...

JB: Thirty miles away.

KP: This was while you were on ...

JB: Yeah, yeah.

KP: And you were convinced that this was ...

JB: I thought it was a campfire. I said it was a campfire. And another time, I was up on Piva Ridge, which was high ground. And somebody said, "There's a campfire out there." And across the valley was a campfire. I get up in a tree and I see the campfire. And I started to register. It turned out to be an Army patrol. Thank God, they got out of there before I killed any of them, you know. But they shouldn't have had a campfire out there, in enemy territory. They were probably cooking their lunch.

KP: What did you think of the Japanese?

JB: I didn't look on them with contempt, I'll tell you that. I thought they were fierce fighters. Misguided probably, but not to be fooled with. And incidentally, the first dead man I saw was a Japanese, on Bougainville. There's something else that I want to tell you about Bougainville. I don't know what it was now. It was my baptism of fire. And then, within a matter of weeks, I was selected, because I was a good forward observer, to be loaned to the 3rd New Zealand Division, for an invasion of a place called Green or Nissan Island, which is north of the Solomons. It was Hollywood's idea of an atoll. It was beautiful. It was park-like, no thick underground, no jungle, just trees and separate, not much foliage, you know, and in an atoll, about nine miles long and three miles wide. I was supposed to provide naval gunfire until they got their artillery ashore. And I practiced on the way up on some little islands called Rua Sura, Rua Sula, Rua Kiki. I'm not sure of that. And then Kolombangara, we fired from Vella Lavella, we fired on Kolombangara. And I was billeted with this New Zealand outfit. And the company commander was a young major, Arthur Bullen. He was twenty-seven. I was a twenty-four year old Marine lieutenant. And, in just a matter of two weeks, we became firm friends. I went in with his outfit in the invasion of Green Island. The Japanese fired at us and ran away and evaded contact for five days. And every day, I'd go up to visit, I was supposed to stay there until the second echelon came. I couldn't leave. And I had a .45 revolver and a shoulder holster made by paratroop raiders. The only thing wrong with it was that it always stuck. The front sight would get hung up. And the day that I left that island, or the day before, I was up there and they met, the two forces met. And they still hadn't found the enemy. And there was a nosey old brigadier sticking his head out of Valentine tank, and he says, "Lieutenant Berglund. What are you doing up here?" I said, "Well, I come up to visit, General. "Well, if I were you, I should get back to the rear immediately. I'd have the very devil of a time explaining to Admiral Wilkinson whatever happened to one Lieutenant Berglund." Admiral Wilkinson was the commander of the task force.

KP: Was he American?

JB: Yeah. And the next day, I left. But, parenthetically, I couldn't get my radios to work when I went up there. So I sent a signal to CTF 31, Admiral Wilkinson. And, I, being a Depression kid, I used economy of verbiage. I said, "Send immediately by air, three new TBF radios for use in forthcoming operation. Signed, Berglund." Well, number one, if I thought about it at all, I would have thought that the Admiral wouldn't open his own mail. He had staff, you know. Number two, I didn't realize that only an admiral can sign his name that way. And Wilkinson opened this thing, "Who the hell is Berglund?" And I didn't get the radios and I flew back to Guadalcanal deadheaded and started looking down the radios. And all of a sudden, I couldn't get

priority to get back to Vella Lavella. I was in danger of being charged with desertion in the face of the enemy. But, I got back to Vella Lavella in time for the landing. And the day after I left, Art Bullen was [with] one platoon out on patrol, and only two platoons were effective, found the enemy behind a natural fortification, a cliff. And with thirty minutes of daylight left, in twenty minutes, they killed the entire Japanese force and lost four people, one of whom was a friend of mine. And he got the DSO, which is the second highest honor in the British Empire. When Bullen died, he was Brigadier Arthur B. Bullen, CBE, DSO. And you could smell the Empire.

KP: Oh, I'm sure. And he loved pretty ...

JB: He loved it. He lived it up. He took us in a club, the Army, Navy and Air Force club in Adelaide. And every waiter in there was like Hudson in "Upstairs Downstairs." They wore their ribbons on their mess jackets, the waiters did. We had a, oh, that was, there was a French admiral being entertained at the next table, I don't know.

KP: What did you think of the way other countries' militaries worked?

JB: Well, the first thing, they got a liquor ration. And they assigned me a liquor ration of one of the officers that was sick in Noumea. When I got back from my abortive trip to find the radios, or almost aborted trip, they had saved two bottles of horrible Australian brandy or something like that. I said, "We'll have a party." And they had a party and they invited officers, and staff and NCOs, were there at the party. And Bullen threw his arm around me and said, "What do you think of this for a democratic army, Bill?" Well, democratic army or not, I had a batman assigned to me, who brought me tea in the morning. Tea and toast and pressed my khakis.

KP: Even though you were in a combat unit.

JB: Right. And this was Vella Lavella, and, at night, if you went out to use the urinal, the ground was moving. Land crabs. They're not dangerous, but they're just all over the place, you know. And speaking of coral, on Green Island, I had a Navy JG named, Hearn, from Boston, who was a very bitter man, because he joined the Navy to sleep between clean sheets and take hot showers, and here he was in the mud with the Marines. He was supposed to tell me what type of ships were available for fire [support]. And he and I dug two hours to get nine inches deep in coral. We carved it, you know, we carved a place to sleep. And we had air raids there, too, on Green Island. And nine inches didn't feel quite enough.

KP: Did you ever get used to the incoming artillery fire?

JB: Well, when we fired, in New Zealand, way back there, we had rounds that went over us, and right quite close to us. We were firing out in front of us. We had one of my friends call back to battalion and say, "Something just went past me and was painted yellow." The shells were painted yellow, see. You get, I guess, familiarity breeds contempt. In New Zealand, there was a muzzle burst that killed several guys, not in my outfit, but in another outfit. And I think, it was probably caused by the fact that the cap, they put a cap on for transport so the rain doesn't get in there, I think, the cap was on when they fired this piece, I don't know. It wasn't my battalion, but

because of that, they had to check every round of ammunition. And I had a team set up in this park. So one guy would open the clover leafs, another guy would take the shells out, another guy would pull the shell and the cartridge apart and another guy would count the power bags and then put it all back together. And I would check the fuse setting for quick or delay, put it all back together again. Checked every round of ammunition we had. That was the day I learned to ride a horse, bareback, with a Navajo ladigo. Somebody's horse was there.

KP: Any other observations about the New Zealanders?

JB: I'll tell you one thing, these guys were being victimized by their own people. The people in New Zealand felt that the only ones who were fighting were in North Africa. And these guys, they called them, "The Playboys of the Pacific," "The Coconut Bombardiers" and stuff like that. The guy that got killed on Nissan Island, he got a letter, he got a sweater, a Red Cross sweater, and he wrote a letter of thank you. The woman said, "If I'd known it was going to one of you Playboys of the Pacific, I would never have knit it." Then he got killed, and didn't need a sweater anymore.

KP: And you sometimes forget that both Australia and New Zealand fought in the war.

JB: And they fought in the Shortland Islands, below, below Bougainville. They landed there, too.

KP: After the stint with the New Zealanders, what did you do?

JB: Well, I went back to Guadalcanal and we were supposed to invade Kavieng, New Ireland. And I remember the briefing. They said, they showed us all these pictures, aerial photos and stuff. And they said, "The first battalion of 9th Marines will land at Government Wharf and then sweep up to the airfield." And I thought, "Who's doing this sweeping?" because there were six-inch guns on each side of Government Wharf. We were going to land there. As a matter-of-fact, there was a real neat gimmick that was going on. We were to land on an island, in the harbor, on D-Day minus 1, and support the landing.

KP: And you weren't looking forward to this.

JB: No, and I was shaving. And we had had an episode of sabotage, too. They found gas masks that had been cut. The rubber hose, cut back in the States somewhere. I was shaving and the S-2 went by me and he said, "We're not going." I said, "Bullshit, Major." "No, we're not going, Berglund." And it had been called off. Now, what it was, was apparently, all the way up to the MacArthur vs. Nimitz thing, who had had the most casualties and got the most headlines. That's all. I mean, I don't know for sure, but it had been planned that we would have this bloody operation and land. There were signs there, saying, "Welcome, 9th Marines," that the Japanese had painted on the beach.

KP: And this was something you were not looking ...

JB: No, no. So then, I was selected to go back to the States to form the 5th Division. I didn't go to the 5th Division. I went to Fort Sill.

KP: Why didn't you go to the 5th Division?

JB: Because I had this experience in sound ranging, I was in an artillery training regiment in California, waiting. And this was called San Mateo Barracks. It was part of Camp Pendelton. This is not germane but, I met Ida Lupino when I was there, and went around, I'm not going to say I was going with Ida, but I was in a crowd that included Ida for several weeks. And when I left Fort Sill, I went right to Pearl Harbor, and from there to Kamuela, Hawaii. Camp Tarawa, which I don't remember being called that then. But that's where I was camped and trained for Iwo Jima. That's where Lynne and I just were two weeks ago.

KP: What year were you at Fort Sill? Was this '44?

JB: Yeah, yeah.

KP: And you were this overseas Marine who comes home and ...

JB: Yeah. Probably a pain in the neck.

KP: But, I mean ...

JB: Well, I'll tell you a little story about that. We had a Marine colonel who was the liaison officer at Fort Sill, and he backed us up. We were nasty. We told the, [let's] see if I can reconstruct this. If you wore dungarees, which the Army calls "herringbone twill," you had to wear leggings. And that was for your own protection, because of rattlesnakes. And we told them that that was not considered a uniform in the Marine Corps. You didn't wear leggings with herringbone twill or dungarees. We lied. And the Colonel backed us up. And we had a colonel in charge of our class. We called him "Neon," 'cause he had a false grin, you know. And we used to sing barber shop at lunch. And he thought there must surely be something in the Articles of War that forbids officers singing barber shop in the field. I broke my arm at Fort Sill. The only time I got hurt in the war, really, was at Fort Sill. I jumped, gracefully, out of a truck into the, from the bed into the driver seat, then into the shotgun seat. But, I tripped getting out of the shotgun seat and broke this arm. And splinted it with an artillery slide rule, a graphical filing table, and duct tape, or not, I mean, friction tape. And I rode thirty miles to the hospital like that. And it hurt every time we went over a rut, you know.

LB: You tell them about your orders.

JB: Well, when I was with the New Zealanders, I had a set of orders that, at the top, said, when I left. "On His Majesty's service." And unfortunately, that's lost. Fifty-two years. Addressed to me.

KP: How long were you in California, at Pendleton?

JB: I'd say three months, max. 'Cause I think I went, in February, to New Zealand.

KP: February of ...

JB: '43.

LB: '42.

JB: No, in '42, I went to OCS. In '43, I went to ...

KP: New Zealand.

JB: Yeah.

KP: So you end up going to Hawaii?

JB: Yes. Oh, this is World War II, yes.

KP: Yeah.

JB: Yeah, that's where the corps artillery, 5th Amphibious Corps was. And for Iwo Jima, they formed, they stole this idea from the Army. It was called, it's a good idea, "1st Provisional Field Artillery Group." It was the headquarters, on which you could attach x battalions. In this case, they attached two battalions of 155mm howitzers. That's what we took with us to, but, we were, we coordinated the fire of the entire, either seven or nine battalions of artillery. Every morning, I fired a barrage, like World War I, and the infantry would advance. And one morning, I was wishing that Colonel Letcher, now Brigadier Letcher, would be at this thing I went to at Hawaii. He wasn't, because I was going to say, "You owe me an apology." He called me up one morning in Iwo Jima and he chewed my butt four ways from Sunday, because the barrage time had changed. And he finally stopped for breath. And he was insulting, no profanity but just insulting. He stopped for breath, I said, "Colonel, your barrage was moved up a half hour." "Oh, oh. Was it? All right, Berglund." And Lynne always likes this story. This is a true story. In the middle of the battle of Iwo Jima, in the fire direction center of corps artillery, 5th Amphibious Corps, the phone rings and I answer the phone. And I said, "Captain Berglund." It was a guy named Dave Swanson, a major in one of the gun battalions. He said, "Hey, Berg, how's the second verse of Little Orphan Annie go again?" 'Cause we used to sing commercials, in the mess, in Hawaii. "Always wears a sunny smile. Now wouldn't it be worth your while, if you could be like Little Orphan Annie." This is before your time, obviously. But, that's a true story. He called me up and I sang it there in the fire direction center. Another time, the phone rang and it was a guy named Pesko. I don't know where he went to college. I don't think he went to Rutgers. He was a Jewish guy [from] Atlantic City, from my high school. And I answered the phone and I said, "Captain Berglund." He says, "Berglund. Bill Berglund from Atlantic City?" And I went over to him and he showed me, they were living in a Japanese pillbox, using that for

their fire direction center. And there'd been a Jap in the walls, in a chamber for, like a week, with hand grenades, and he finally committed suicide. They didn't know he was there.

KP: Really, the whole ...

JB: No. Oh, yeah. I played poker with Admiral Nimitz.

KP: How did that come about?

JB: Well, there was a Marine named Rick Ohrstrom. I don't know whether he's alive or dead. He was from Connecticut, his father was a very wealthy man. Because of Rick, I lived in the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, on my way to Hawaii, for four days. And this is a very, very plush place where Rudyard Kipling visited in the 19th century, and Jack London was a member and all guys like that. Rick, when we went to Pearl Harbor we were traveling together, and he called up this family named Walker in the Nuuanu Valley. He had been at St. Paul's School with their son, and at Easter time, rather than go all the way to Hawaii, the Walkers' son would go to visit Rick in Connecticut. So he said, "I'm here, in Pearl." And Mrs. Walker said, "Come on out." He said, "I have somebody with me." "Bring him along." Well, we had a few drinks at the club at Pearl Harbor, at the BOQ. Then we went to the (Walker?)'s and we had another drink or two. And it was a beautiful home. They were reduced to five servants because of the war. They were suffering. And they said they were expecting more guests. Well, okay, that's fine. There was an Army major there and the two lieutenants, two Marine lieutenants. And I can remember, to this day, the sound of a car on the gravel, the wheels. I said, "Well, I guess that's the guests." I was feeling mellow and so was Rick. And into the room walks Admiral Nimitz and Admiral Lockwood, the submarine commander. And you never saw two lieutenants sober up so fast in your life. So we had dinner and then after dinner, they played ten cent limit, poker. And I wasn't in the game to begin with, but I got in later on when somebody dropped out.

-----END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO-----

KP: And you were saying that you won.

JB: I won the last hand. It was a short hand, but I won a hand against Admiral Nimitz, and I never saw him again. On Guam, I went to his headquarters to buy shorts, because the Marine Corps didn't have any. But he wasn't around when I went to the ship's steward there.

SC: Did you speak with him at all?

JB: I played poker, sure, I talked to him. I don't remember what I said. It was probably, "Uh."

KP: But you mentioned that your host said something to you about ...

JB: Mrs. Walker said, "Don't tell anybody about it," because they had, what I called "The Pearl Harbor psychosis." They thought that the people on the mainland thought they were all drunk the night of Pearl Harbor. They probably were. But they were worried about the picture, the

perception of them in the States. By the same token, in the big island, where I was stationed there, we had to follow a curfew. We weren't allowed out after a certain hour on the roads. We went to a movie over in a place, about thirty miles away from camp, and never saw the end of the movie because we had to be back. And I drove across the island, Colonel Letcher, now General Letcher, forgot his orders when he went to Pearl Harbor to a meeting on Iwo Jima, and here was this top-secret order, about that thick, (two inches), and he left it in his office. And the adjutant said, "Berglund, grab a sidearm and catch Colonel Letcher with his orders. And I drove across the Cross Island Road, which you had to drive at certain speed. If you didn't, you got fined, like seventy-five dollars or something. A lot of money in those days. And if you stopped to make up time, you got fined. Well, I got to Hilo Airport and Colonel Letcher was gone. I had to eat dinner, so I ate in a Japanese restaurant and I put the orders under me while I ate. And a bunch of MPs came barreling in the place and said, "Is that your jeep out there, Captain?" I said, "Yeah, but I have the distributor caps." "Captain, these guys have bags of distributor caps," the guys that steal. If I had forgotten orders like that, I'd be in, probably, in Portsmouth Naval Prison yet.

KP: But, these were details ...

JB: Yeah, yeah.

KP: How many months were you in Hawaii?

JB: Three or four.

KP: Did you ever make it to Honolulu?

JB: No, I flew in there. Then left there to fly right over to the big island.

KP: What were your impression of Hawaii?

JB: Loved it. I'd go there tomorrow.

KP: Really?

JB: Yeah.

KP: Did you like it during the war or was that a different set of circumstances?

JB: I liked it during the war. I told my wife, "ad nauseam," that I used to sleep under blankets every night in Hawaii. And she found out [that] it was true. And we were there, this time, at 3,000 feet, where we were. And I used to come out of the tent in the morning and see snow on the volcano, every morning. And I liked it. I went snorkeling where Captain Cook's monument is. We went snorkeling there, now, but they won't let you go near it, under pain of something or other, but they won't, what's that bay?

KP: And then you were destined for Iwo Jima?

JB: Iwo Jima, yeah.

KP: What were you told about Iwo Jima before the invasion?

JB: One of the silly things that sticks in my mind. We were told, see, I was a bacteriologist. We were told that there was scrub typhus on the island, tsutsugamushi fever. And we soaked our dungarees in some pesticide and dried them. That was to keep the fleas or whatever it was that was going to give us this scrub typhus. Well, we were told that it was volcanic and that, you know, the Japanese had somebody lay 20,000 troops there, in concrete pillboxes. And the funny thing is [that] Letcher stood up on an oil drum and said, "If you know where we're going, don't tell anybody about it. If you don't know, don't tell anybody about it. Or if you do know, or anyway, don't try to find out about it." And everyday, in the *Honolulu Advertiser*, you'd see pictures of it being bombarded by B-29s. And it's a pork chop-shaped island, you know. It was identified on the front page of the *Advertiser*. But the maps we used in the field for training had the name cut out. Iwo Jima, one to five thousand scale maps. And I'll tell you something else. I read intelligence documents later on, that every unit that left the Hawaiian Islands was known to the Japanese on Iwo. Every unit that left Guam was not known to them, which means, they had somebody who was a sympathetic agent on Hawaii.

KP: When did you read this?

JB: At the end of the war.

KP: You were still in the service?

JB: Yeah. I was still in the service, had more points than anybody and couldn't get released and was rapidly going psycho. Especially when they sent me down to find out if they had room at the transient center. I came back, "They got room, they got room." "All right, but you're not going, Berglund."

KP: Did you ever go to chapel services at all?

JB: Yes, with the New Zealanders. Church of England.

KP: Oh, so it was a very high service?

JB: Yeah. It was on Vella Lavella and I thought, incidentally, Vella Lavella had, they had their latrines that were out over the water, on pilings, 'cause it was so hard to dig in the coral. So, that if Admiral Arleigh Burke, "Thirty-Knot Burke" was the destroyer skipper, you know, if he went through, you didn't need to wipe yourself. The waves came up.

KP: Do you have any other Arleigh Burke stories?

JB: No.

KP: When did you land on Iwo Jima during the invasion?

JB: H plus two. D-Day. D plus two, I mean.

KP: So, on the second day?

JB: Yeah.

KP: So, you weren't part of the initial wave?

JB: No. And I saw the flag go up on Suribachi from out at sea, on an LST. I saw it. I didn't see them raise it, but I saw it after it was up.

KP: And when you landed, where were you based?

JB: Well, did you ever hear of Manila John Basilone, Congressional Medal of Honor [winner]?

KP: Oh, yes, he's a New Jersey native.

JB: Yeah, one of the rest stops is named after him.

SC: It's right near my hometown.

JB: Well, we were, our fire direction center was located, just by accident, right where Basilone was killed, after he was killed. And we just dug out a hole in the pumice with a bulldozer and put a tent down and that was our fire direction center. It was next door to the 5th Division cemetery, which did not yet exist at that point, but soon did. And also close to the 5th Division ammunition dump.

KP: And you mentioned you were controlling fire for the whole island. So you knew how the battle was going much more than the average participant in the battle.

JB: Well, I know that I thought, at the time, I knew something about World War I. This business of having a barrage every morning and then advancing, it was World War I all over again. I think one morning they tried to attack without the barrage, and that didn't work either. The Japanese were really dug in and they were really tenacious. And they were hard fighters.

KP: Did you have a professional respect for the Japanese?

JB: Yeah, I did. I think they were wrong in their approach. There was no concept of surrender. There was no such, it didn't exist. So the ones that we did capture were usually dazed. And way back on Bougainville, I remember they captured this guy after one of the big artillery barrages. He was as dazed as this microphone. And I remember, they brought him into the infantry

battalion and all these, what I call, “chairborne, paragraph troopers,” the clerks, you know. “Let me kill him. I’ll kill the son-of-a-bitch. Let me kill him.” I’m not exaggerating.

KP: Oh, I’m sure, I’m sure.

JB: And then, when they brought up, they brought up a Japanese speaker, a young lieutenant from the beach. I thought that Jap was going to turn inside out. He fawned on him, ‘cause this guy spoke his language, you know.

KP: Even though he was American?

JB: Yeah, yeah. And I know, a story that I love, which has nothing to do with the war, but I love this story. We had friends where we lived. The guy’s a great big Swede, at least six feet with a big mustachios, and his wife’s a little Japanese doll. And when he was in Japan, he ordered beer in Japanese, which he learned from, what I’ve heard called, “A sleeping dictionary,” you know, his wife. And the waitress ignored him. So he ordered again, and she ignored him. So he got the manager. And the manager said, “Did this man order beer from you?” “Yes.” “Why didn’t you give it to him?” “I couldn’t believe Japanese would come out of a face like that.”

KP: You mention your close call on Iwo Jima, where the ammunition dump exploded.

JB: Yeah, everything hit us that night. And when I was building that so-called, “splinter-proof” shelter, that was at the orders of the Chief of Staff, Colonel (Melvin Flume?), that I used to call, not to his face, “The Grim Gray Man of Destiny.” He was not a friendly type. He ordered me to build this six by six by six cube, and all it had was sandbag sides, and it was awful hard to do, because when you dig away to put a sandbag in, the pumice would collapse, you know. So, eventually, I got the sandbag sides and I got one layer of two by fours on edge, and one layer of two by twelves, two by twelves over them and then sandbags. It would have stopped splinters, that’s all it would stop. It wouldn’t stop a direct hit. But, when I was building that, two mortar rounds went off about twenty yards away. And I got mad and chewed out the guys for jumping in the hole. That’s seeing tunnel vision. I didn’t think that I almost got killed, I was thinking about this job I was doing and I chewed them out for breaking the sides.

KP: So you had gotten conditioned to battle?

JB: Yes, I would. When I went, I went home, in between times overseas, and when I heard a siren at home in Margate, I wanted to get in a hole. It was an involuntary thing.

KP: Iwo Jima was among the bloodiest battle Americans had ever fought. When did you get a sense of how bad this was going?

JB: Because every morning, when I came out for coffee, I saw the same dead guys for five days. The same twisted, blackened, bloated, split-like, if you put a hot dog on the fire too long, that’s what they looked like. And the reason they were lying there so long was this young lieutenant was probably an anal compulsive, he was outlaying with the aiming circle. He was surveying

before we ever dug a grave. He did that for five days. And the wind changed and blew down towards “Howling Mad” Smith’s place and the word came back, “Bury those people.” And that’s when they buried them. When I saw a guy, a big, strong, fighting Marine, on his knees, looking at the grave crying. It could have been his brother, it could have just been a friend. When the “fit hit the shan” every night. We had hospital brandy, two ounce bottles that, in Bougainville, I never saw a drop of it. I felt [that] the doctor and the priest drank it all. I have good reason for that. But, on Iwo, I did get a ration of this hospital brandy. And one night, I was, the whole place was shaking and I was ordered to take the jeep and go back to the division headquarters. So, I had to go out in a barrage in the jeep. And I felt sorry for the driver, I felt sorry for Bill. But when I got back, I was shaking, and I took one of my little bottles of brandy then. I said, “Either the ground’s shaking or it’s me.”

KP: While it seems like you were able to deal with the combat, I’ve noticed that you and some of your fellow classmates can’t talk about it without some difficulty.

JB: Kurt, I had an easy war.

KP: It wasn’t that easy.

JB: Mitchner, I had a great deal of respect for him, in one of the *Tales of the South Pacific*, I’d like to find it, dig it out and copy it, but he said that the only man in war, is the guy attacking the pillbox with a bayonet. All the rest, back in the echelon, don’t know war the same way he does.

KP: Did it get pretty close?

JB: When we got fired on with a 15cm gun on Hill 600, all I could think of was firing back. And I said to my guys, “Get me up that tree. I wasn’t thinking about getting in a hole, I was thinking about getting up in a tree, which is even more exposed, so I could fire back. They said it was *lese majeste*, firing at artillery.

KP: Really, that is the sense that you were firing ...

JB: Well, that’s the way I felt.

KP: Did you see people on Iwo Jima who broke down and couldn’t take it anymore?

JB: The guys, the guys that suffered combat fatigue were invariably, in my opinion, the guys that lacked a sense of humor.

KP: Really, but that ...

JB: Yeah, absolutely. And when you see a guy refusing to get out of his hole, and shaking and trembling, you can’t help but think, “He’s right.” You’re crazy to get out of the hole, but you’ve got to, you know. I didn’t originate this. I wish I had, but I heard it quoted again, lately. A guy was asked if he was afraid of getting killed when he went overseas, he said, “Every Marine is

afraid of getting killed, but he more afraid of letting down the other Marines.” You’ve heard that before.

KP: I am struck because of the range of people’s reaction to it, because some people, like yourself, can really talk about it and reflect on a lot of things that other people simply still cannot talk about. I’m sometimes the first person some people have talked to about the war. And sometimes, it’s very difficult.

LB: And that came up with Alan, in Hawaii, the curator.

JB: I was interviewed by the curator of the Lyman Museum, because he had boxes of pictures of this camp, in Camp Tarawa. What did he say?

LB: Well, his father ...

JB: His father was in the 442, the Purple Heart outfit.

LB: And Alan didn’t ever know it for years and years and years, until something happened. I forget what happened.

JB: Alan was Japanese. Alan needed to say he’s Japanese. Other little things that happened along the way, like, we had, one of my buddies, not exactly a buddy. I turned him in for smoking during an air raid. And all the Colonel said, “Don’t do that again.” Whereas, the mess water wasn’t boiling one night and the Colonel gave my battery commander five days arrest in quarters. But the guy smoking in an air raid. We were told [that] you could see that five miles away, you know, the cigarette. He was doing it this way. But anyway, I saw him fill his canteen in Bougainville in a stream that was choked with dead Japanese. And he filled his canteen down below. And I said, “That’s Jap bouillon you putting in there.” “Oh, it’s all right.” He drops a halozone tablet in and off he goes. Not for me. Although, I did something silly and, Lynne, I know, would appreciate this. I looked at a stream in Bougainville and said, “That looks clean.” And I filled my canteen without using, I didn’t like the taste of the halozone. And I had dysentery, not amebic, but I had dysentery, oh, for months. I weighed 130 pounds when I went home the first time, when I left Guadalcanal. I gained ten pounds in the ship and thirty more on my mother’s cooking, I guess.

KP: You were on a Liberty ship, staffed by a Navy crew?

JB: No, a Merchant Marine crew, and that was very interesting. Number one, we had, we were, as an experiment, carrying troops. They took one hold and made it into troop quarters. And because the messing facilities were in there, too, there was a lot of seasickness, because of the proximity of food and the place where they slept. And the next hold had 500 tons of high explosives in it. I didn’t wear a life preserver. I said [that] I need a parachute more than I needed a life preserver. And I’d go around the deck at night, to check things, you know. The deck load was oil and gasoline. If we’d ever been hit, we would have been a pyre, you know. But, I remember the captain, no, the third mate, who was an old guy, who obviously had been back to

the days of sailing ships, maybe, you know. And he's telling some seaman, such and such, and so and so. The guy whips the book and [says], "You can't do that to me, it says [so] in the seaman's agreement." I thought, "Boy, how the world has changed." Because I knew, one of the other mates was a guy that had come up through the fo'c'sle, as they say, in the Merchant Marine. He had a broken neck so that when he got tired, he'd be like this. And he was a very nice guy and he didn't own a sextant. And they made him do dead reckoning everyday, because they wouldn't lend him a sextant. You won't lend another man your sextant, you know. And he talked about the early days of the NMU, when they put sixty men in a single jail cell, for instance. And he said [that] guys died of uremic poisoning because they couldn't do anything else, you know. And he was in those days, part of the formation of the National Maritime Union. And in those days, when a seaman signed the papers, he became a chattel, legally. He had no rights, other than that of a chattel. So, things had changed when I see this guy, "You can't do that to me," telling this old mate, you know. I think in the old days, the old mate would have picked a belaying pin out and laid him out in the scuppers. And more funny stories, really. They had a 50 caliber machine gun above the dining, where we ate, the mess hall, or cabin, or whatever you call it. And one time, they fired it and I heard the links hitting the steel deck overhead, you know. I thought we were getting fired on. And other time, I was on the john and they fired the three inch gun on the fantail, I levitated.

KP: How long were you on Iwo Jima?

JB: About forty days.

KP: And then what happened?

JB: Back to Guam. And I was Assistant-Two, I'd been Assistant-Three on Iwo, but I think they had enough threes, so they put me as Assistant-Two, that's intelligence. And I had learned surveying at Fort Sill. And this one colonel was the S-3 and he had no say over me at all, but I think he thought I needed jogging. He says, "Berglund, got a job for you." And I surveyed in a ball diamond. A baseball diamond. And I used the beautiful surveying techniques of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, just as if I had been a USC and G man. And then I surveyed in and built a carbine range. And in order to do that, I destroyed a lot of palm trees. And the palm trees were being used by the natives for making tuba, which is a coconut palm beer, which tastes more like soap than champagne. I did hikes and I did, oh, I had, some colonel handed me a field manual from Fort Sill. It had a new technique of making a grid of blank photos. And this was in the days before computers. I did weeks of calculations to compute the points of this blank grid, which went out like that and like this. I plotted the whole thing, and then I had a draftsman make it, then photographed it down to scale and made a transparency of it. And here was all this work, I took it out in the field, I couldn't go up in a plane, it so happened, but, I went to a hill that I knew I could use in known locations, and it didn't work. I used logs, it was infinite series of logging and anti-logging. Good exercise.

KP: What were you preparing for?

JB: Japan. Cascade, Operation Cascade. And where we were to land. We were to land behind the 3rd Marine Division. My whole outfit was a few miles away. My 3rd Marine Division. We were going to land behind the 3rd MarDiv. And there were three Japanese divisions entrenched there, where we were to land. And I figured, we thought that, at times, there'd be fifty percent casualties. Not because of their expertise, but because they would fight to the death for their homeland.

KP: Where were you when you learned about the atomic bomb?

JB: Oh, I went on my old LST, that I rode to Iwo on. ... It was tied up in Agana Harbor, and I found out about that and went down to visit my old friends on the LST, and I had to row a boat out to it, a rowboat. And when I got in there, they told me about the atomic bomb. And I had been raised on science fiction. I read science fiction since I was thirteen. So, there was nothing distinctive about an atomic bomb, you know. But I said, "That ought to show the little yellow bastards that we can outdo them in anything, including barbarity."

KP: You said that at the time?

JB: Yeah.

KP: So, this was like science fiction?

JB: Did you ever hear of the story of John W. Campbell, who was the editor of the most famous sci-fi magazine. It was *Analog*. It started life as *Astounding* and became *Analog*. It still exists, I think. The FBI tried to get him to stop printing stories about atomic bombs.

KP: I've heard that story, because, in fact ...

JB: Yeah, he said, "If we did, that would be a dead give-away." Reverse.

KP: Your reaction is different from most people. Most people had never even heard of the concept of the atomic bomb, much less ...

JB: Yeah. Well, I was a science fiction nut. My father wouldn't let me bring them in the house when I was a kid, because they were pulp magazines. And therefore, by definition ...

KP: Racy and ...

JB: Racy and dirty. And actually, as far as sex goes, and science fiction of the '30s and '40s, a man and a woman could go from here to Alpha Centauri in a ten foot square cubicle and not ever get closer than three feet from each other. It didn't exist. The only thing, there were certain magazines that had, what they called, the "Bug Eye Monster," the BEM, on the cover, ripping the clothes off a nubile female. Why? I don't know, unless it was to eat her, you know, because he certainly didn't have sexual interest in her.

KP: You mentioned that you had a hard time getting home?

JB: You mean, after being overseas?

KP: Yeah. You mentioned that you got home early, but something happened?

JB: No, no. At the end of the war?

KP: At the end of the war.

JB: Oh, yeah. Well, as I said, this adjutant sent me down to the transient center to find out what room they had. I came tearing back and said, "They got room." He said, "Well, Berglund, you're not going." "Now, don't do this." And I had more points than anybody I knew of around me. You know, you get points for each battle scar, et cetera, and et cetera. I had one decoration, letter of combat, which was a green and white ribbon with a combat V on it. What did I say? Letter of Commendation, yeah.

KP: When did you actually leave for the States? Was it in 1945?

JB: Yeah.

KP: Was it in September?

JB: Well, when did I come to Merck?

LB: You came to Merck in December, the middle of December.

JB: And I'd probably been home three months, or four months, then. Yeah. And I went to New York with Bill Lewis and stopped here and applied for a job and got hired.

KP: You decided to stay in the Reserves?

JB: I did, yeah. But, because of my own stupid fault, I don't have a pension. I didn't, I'm sure Wally Kaenzig has a pension, and ...

KP: Well, you did twenty years?

JB: Yeah, but I had seventeen years of satisfactory federal. For three years, I didn't do anything after the Korean War. If I had taken Mickey Mouse correspondence courses, I would have had a pension since age sixty. And what did that guy tell us in Hawaii? 20,000 dollars a year. That combat correspondent. Yeah.

KP: So, you don't have a pension?

JB: No, I don't.

KP: A lot of people have said they stayed in the Reserves 'cause of the pension.

JB: I know.

LB: That's what he was in it for. But after he was in two wars, after the Korean War, we thought ...

JB: And another ...

LB: We had four kids. I guess we had two, and then Chris was born ...

JB: Nine months after I got home from the Korean War, nine months and ten minutes.

LB: And we had a fourth. That was enough.

JB: I ...

LB: But, we didn't know about the correspondences courses, or I would have pushed for that.

JB: And parenthetically, also, Lynne and I went to Bermuda on our honeymoon, and we met some young men from main Philadelphia, Main Line. And we went on a double date with one of them and he took us to his girl's father's house. The father was a major general, commander of the Pennsylvania National Guard. When he found out that I was a Marine artillery man, he offered me a battery in the National Guard. But, if I had done it, I might have been a brigadier general by the end of twenty years. And I might have been dead, too. I might have been dead in Vietnam.

KP: For a third time, after World War II and Korea. So, your fears were not ...

LB: Yeah.

KP: Well, I knew someone, Carl Heyer from the Class of '25. He was in his forties when he went into World War II. He was on some list, and he managed to get called up for Korea. I mean, he was in his early fifties.

JB: Speaking of correspondence courses, I have a friend at the lake, who's a neat guy. He was a Navy JG, and they sent him a "Dear John" letter. He had three years left, to do twenty. He was smart enough to go and enlist in the National Guard and he wound up as a staff sergeant. But when he reached retirement, he retired as a Navy JG and he gets a pension.

KP: Before we leave World War II, you were going to seminary as a second career.

JB: Tertiary.

KP: You never joined any veterans organizations?

JB: Somebody put me in the same American Legion Post that my dad was in. And I never did anything. I didn't live there, for one thing, in Ventnor. Carl Voelker put me in it. And I just let it lapse. And then, when I was in Philadelphia, as a minister, in Roxborough, there was a neat old man that, you remember the land rush in Oklahoma, you've studied it?

KP: Oh, yeah.

JB: The movie ...

KP: My wife went to high school and college in Oklahoma.

JB: Well, this old man had been a little boy, riding on his father's buckboard, in the land rush in Oklahoma. And he was a member of the VFW post, Hattal Taylor Post. And he came in to see me in my office, "Reverend, we need men like you in the VFW. I can go down to the (??) and get a bunch of drunks, but we need men like you." And because my predecessor had been a member of the post, finally, I gave in. And they paid my dues. I never paid a nickel in dues for years. I'm still a member.

LB: I think you are a member.

JB: Yeah. One thing they didn't help me do, though, is get a disability pension. I tried that. I have heart trouble, and I can trace it back to high blood pressure [that I] first reported in the Korean War. But, they say, "No, not so."

KP: Had you thought of staying in the Marines?

JB: Yes, I had, at the end of the war, because General Pepper, who was a neat guy, not at all like the caricature of a Marine general, he was more like an amiable, old schoolmaster. He called us all into the mess and pleaded with us to apply for a regular commission. He was ordered to do so. They wanted to do that so that they could weed and pick and choose. And I know guys, later on, that I found out, that did apply and thought they had it, and spent money for blues, for dress mess jacket and for a sword, and then, "Oh, we made a mistake, we have enough of your MOS."

KP: So, did you own blues at all

JB: Yes, I did. And they didn't fit, so I sold them. There was a wrinkle across here. And I had whites, I loved my whites. But, unfortunately, when you wear whites and go into a bar, you get lipstick and everything else all over you.

KP: What about the relationship between the Navy and the Marine Corps?

JB: I think it's amiable. I think there's a lot of BS that goes on. There's not, down deep, underneath, I think, there's mutual respect. And I will tell some guy, I'd say, "We like the Navy, they're like the PTC. They take the Marines to work."

KP: Well, in fact, Wally Kaenzig said that. Basically, to Leon Canick, in your class. He said that before we were taping him. He said, "Ah, the Navy. They were great. They took us into battle, and they took us back out." And Leon Canick didn't know quite how to take it. But you would be aboard Navy ships. I mean ...

JB: Yeah, I rode on a four-stacker, yeah. Four-stacker destroyer, called an APD. That's a World War I destroyer. They took two of the stacks and two of the motors out and made troop quarters. And it had about as much water ability as that pen there. Talk about rolling and pitching and weaving. I did get sick on that, on that APD. That was on my way to Green Island. Before that I traveled on a Fletcher-class destroyer, and slept in the wardroom. That's like having somebody sleep in your living room or dining room, you know, because they were supposed to take me. And I remember, I asked the captain what that fuse, that strange fuse was. He said, "That's a magnetic fuse." Later on, I found out it was a VT fuse. You know what that is? That's a radar, that's the neatest thing. It sends out a radar impulse, radar. And when it gets fifteen yards from anything, it doesn't choose, unfortunately, anything, the radar comes bouncing back and explodes the shell. You can see what you do to enemy planes with that. You don't have to hit them, just get within fifteen yards of them. And I saw, in the first hour of Bougainville, I saw three Japanese planes in flames at once, in the sky. And I'm sure that was a VT fuse. I rode on an aircraft carrier, baby flat top. And one night, I was going to dinner and the sun was in my eyes, and I walked into the wing of a Vega Ventura, which is a two motor bomber, which was being transported. And all of a sudden, I'm flat on my back on the deck, "Who hit me?" When it's dinnertime, I move.

LB: Yes.

KP: What about the Navy food? I can imagine that you don't get that in the field, but I've heard some people say that the reason they joined the Navy was for the clean sheets and the hot meals.

JB: Amen. We used to, in combat, the best you could get was in the stream. Going in the stream and washing, which we did on Bougainville. And that wasn't too often, probably.

LB: Wasn't it cold?

JB: No, the place was so warm and muggy. I swam in the ocean at Bougainville, too. I lost a St. Christopher's medal there, in the surf, and a tiki I had carved out of a penny. But on Guam, we had oil drums up, black painted, so that they soaked up the heat of the sun and we had hot water.

KP: And I guess, you've alluded to it a lot, but I just interviewed Mrs. Kramer, Vince Kramer's wife. And she denied that anyone at Douglass ever drank. We know times were different, but she really denied that people at Douglass drank at all.

JB: The good girls drank beer. If they drank scotch, they weren't good girls. They were too expensive to date. College Inn, that's what was over there, across town. CI was College Inn.

KP: Okay.

JB: You ask Mrs. Kramer about that.

SC: I've heard of that in some of the other interviews.

KP: We know it's a different era, in terms of sexuality, but some of your classmates deny that anything ever happened. And others have said, "Well, no, in fact, times were not that different. It was just more discreet." What was your sense of that in college and in the Marines and in the 1930s and '40s, in terms of ...

JB: Well, I look around the world today and I think that young women, and I don't say this judgmentally, I think young women are amazingly free about sexuality. Not just on TV, but it happens. You know, we're, we saw some girl being interviewed, she said, "I can't picture myself sleeping with that guy," or something. It was on TV. I don't remember what show it was. But, in those days, you figured that a woman didn't have sexual desires.

KP: You really thought that?

JB: Yeah, men had them. And the first time, this is, this is, sexuality in the '40s. The first time I ever heard dirty jokes told in mixed company. "Boy, listen to that." That was Louie Evans.

LB: Yeah.

JB: I think there probably was the same amount of sexuality, except in a lower key, and not as blatant, not as obvious. Today, it's in your face.

LB: It's really too much.

KP: Some people really describe, and people have told me, with a straight face, that there was no drinking and ...

LB: Well, there was no drinking in my ...

KP: In your circle?

LB: Circle, at all. In college, I didn't drink and neither did any of my friends, who were good girls. But, when I got to the medical school, that was a little different. Or should I say, that was a lot different.

KP: What happened to you during the Korean War?

JB: I didn't leave the country, thank God. And I was down at Camp LeJeune and Quantico. I was in the artillery regiment of the 2nd Division, 'cause they cleaned out the 2nd Division to send to Korea. And, I was just, Lynne was pregnant and I was 500 miles away, and I hoped to get to Quantico because I heard they were going to move there for a while, the 10th Regiment. And they did. And I came home and I saw Lynne and I went back and on Monday morning on my way to breakfast, I met the regimental exec and he said, "Oh, Berglund, you and the other new captain that just reported," I was late reporting because I had to be responsible for all the stuff, to turn it in, and I found out about demurrage. Have you ever heard of demurrage? That's what the railroad charges for freight cars lying around not moving. And I had all these, I had six artillery pieces, trucks, jeeps, radios, all to turn in. That's why I was late reporting. But he said, "You and the other new captain that just reported in. Now, this is not a shaft." I thought, "Well, it's a shaft then." And we were transferred back to the 6th and 8th Marines as commanders of the 4.2 mortar companies. What had happened, somebody up at a high level cried, "You got all the officers." "Well, they're all artillerymen." "Well, we could use them at 4.2 Mortars." So, we were drafted. And I had a 4.2 mortar company for months, and, in that time, I never saw, not even a dummy round of 4.2 Mortar ammunition. I couldn't show my troops, "This is what it looks like," because they were all going to Korea. We used sub-caliber. We used the 60mm in an aluminum frame that fit down in the tube of the 4.2 and fired 60mm to train, to teach the troops. Anyway, I got back out of there. I went to the second 155mm gun battalion, corps artillery with ...

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

JB: I was adjutant of the gun battalion. And also, I did observation and stuff like that. But we couldn't fire those at Camp LeJeune because the infantry had taken over all the combat area, and we had no impact area. We schlepped that whole battalion all the way to Fort Bragg, because Colonel Hyatt had a friend who was an Army brigadier and they cooked it up between the two of them. Then it was pushed back and forth through channels to make it official. But, we fired Marine artillery at Fort Bragg.

KP: Which doesn't happen too often.

JB: I know. And I learned about fat pine, the certain kind of tree, you can take a piece of green pine and hold a match to it and light it and it'll burn, it's so full of turpentine or the equivalent. And we had coal stoves and chimneys that would fill up with soot, and in the middle of the night, everybody would start gasping, coughing, and hacking, and they'd take the chimney out in the street and beat it with a poker to get the soot out of it. God knows what we were breathing, all of us. But we had fun.

KP: Were you just taking training units or ...

JB: We were training as a battalion. Yeah.

KP: As a battalion that might get deployed?

JB: Yeah, right.

KP: But, it was not?

JB: No. I took, they cleaned out the division again. And talk about a Judas goat leading the sheep to the slaughter, there. I forget how many troop trains went out. I think it was six trains with 300 men on each. And I had a sergeant in each car and I had two regular second lieutenants, two lifers on my train. And we gathered in the yard at Camp LeJeune, they were going to Korea. They were going to go out and fight. But I gathered the sergeants in Camp LeJeune and I said, "There won't be any drinking on this train." I said, "That is, I won't see any drinking, unless people start throwing seats off the train." I said, "That happens, then there won't be any drinking." So, the result was, they had tubs of iced beer in the aisles. These guys were gonna go die, you know. They had tubs of ice and beer in the aisles, they, I lost two men in Mobile. They caught the train, caught a civilian train, and picked us up later. And then, in New Orleans, this is really funny. I didn't go ashore. There was forty-five minutes. And I said, "You guys can go run around town, but you'd [better] get back here." I told that to the sergeants and they told the troops. And I stayed in my room. And I came out to look at the platform just in time to keep two Victory girls from being taken on the train. Teenagers. They would have been with us to San Francisco. And we started out of New Orleans and I had a count. I was with all these sergeants in the back car, and the count comes back [with] two men missing. I thought, "Oh, boy." General court-martial, here it goes. I'll get a general court-martial. So, we stopped a few miles outside of town and instead of two men, six men got on board. The count was wrong. They had taken a taxi to get to us, and the excuse given was, "Captain, we got in a fight in a bar and by the time the fight was over, I said we might as well get laid now." He said, "All of us did, for twenty-seven dollars." So, I got twenty-four hours out of San Francisco. I cleaned the train up. All the beer went off and everything. And it was a model train when we got in. But ...

KP: All spick-and-span?

JB: We got in at twelve-thirty in the morning, thirty minutes after midnight. I put those guys on board ship. At two-thirty, they were onboard ship. At six-thirty, that ship left for Korea.

KP: And you'd been in combat, so you knew what could happen to them.

JB: Yeah, and all along the way, they'd ask me, they were kids, "Are we going to get liberty, Captain, when we get to San Francisco?" I knew they weren't going to get liberty. The first three trainloads got on planes, instead of ships. And I'd say, "I don't know." But, I really felt like a Judas goat, leading the sheep to slaughter.

KP: By the time you got called up for Korea, you were pretty much a veteran.

JB: And the two second lieutenants I had with me, they wanted to go so bad to Korea. They were in there, crying at Treasure Island, trying to get their orders changed. And they couldn't get them changed. And one thing, it means something to their career to have combat, and to miss combat means something to their careers.

KP: Do you know in advance if you were going to see combat?

JB: No. And these were two regular officers, not an old runny nose reserve like me.

KP: How did you feel about being called up for Korea?

JB: "She was thrilled."

LB: Not very good about it. I had one three year old, we had just moved into a house two days before. No, we got the note two days before we moved in.

JB: With a non-functioning cesspool.

LB: And I was six months pregnant.

JB: We moved after I was called up.

LB: We were out in the country, really. It was country then. It seemed like every thing would happen when he was away. Everything would go smoothly while he was home, but when he was away, the car would break down, the kids would get sick and all, the cesspool would, everything would happen.

JB: And then there were not quarters available down there, but I performed a feat of amazing legerdemain. And historically, it's unparalleled. I heard these two officers, two captains that I knew, were going to Fort Sill for three months. And they were living in quarters. They had gotten there early enough to, they were from New England. And I said, "I wonder if I can occupy your quarters?" So, I looked it up in Navy regs, and then one day, I walked this order through regiment, division and camp. And every time, I got some salty old sergeant major, "You can't do that." I'd say, "Look in Navy regs, chapter so and so, page so and so." And it was a provision for joint occupancy of quarters. So, I called Lynne, I said, "Get packed. I got quarters." She had an accident with the car that day. There was ice on the road. And I went up, we kept together, your dad fixed the car, didn't he? We got together with the, we had a crib, or a playpen, shoved against the back seat. And who was in the, Steve, or Peter, he was the baby then.

LB: Peter was in the cradle of stuff.

JB: Yeah.

LB: It would be illegal today.

JB: And we drove the 500 miles, and we got there and the house was unbelievably filthy. It was foul. My wife's a very clean and orderly person. And there was food on the dining room chairs, around, had to scrape it out with a knife, and these guys had been batching it, these two officers. So we get the whole place clean. We were afraid to put our bare feet on the floor. Got the whole

place clean. She saw me perform in little theatre, “Kind Lady,” and then I got orders to Quantico. Yeah.

LB: Two weeks, so it’s two weeks.

JB: We went up to Quantico, we couldn’t even get a chicken coop to live in, in Quantico.

LB: We had a room for one night, in the annex to ...

JB: So, I took them home, and I came back and I walked in the class and I was class commander because I was, only because I was the only captain in the whole, and the rest of the guys were, you want to talk about being called up. Almost all of them were first lieutenants who had never even bothered answering correspondence in the Marine Corps, and here, they were, activated. That was as close to mutiny the Marine Corps has ever seen.

KP: Because they didn’t realize it was a lifelong commitment.

JB: Yeah, yeah. And at the end of the day, you’d see guys with their blouses folded, inconspicuously backing out the back door to get out. That’s AWOL, you know, going AWOL from class. Oh, it was a gay time.

KP: Did you think that you might get sent to Korea?

JB: I don’t think I knew it, or I just took what came.

LB: Yeah, I think we knew it was a possibility.

JB: If I’d had been an infantryman, I’d probably would have been there.

KP: You knew that that was in the cards?

JB: Yeah. But I was a cannon-cocker.

SC: How did your views differ between World War II and the war in Korea? Did your views of the war, did you agree with it, or did you not really get into that?

JB: I agreed with it. Yeah.

KP: What happens if you had stayed in and had been sent to Vietnam? What do you think your view would have been of that?

JB: I was getting kind of old.

LB: I’m not in favor of that.

JB: No. I wrote letters for guys. One of them just died in a freak accident. Wrote letters for conscientious objectors.

KP: In the '60s?

JB: Yeah.

KP: And you'd been a Marine, you'd been in two wars.

JB: Yeah, and I felt that I had to, it justified me in speaking out against Vietnam. I feel, to this day, that it did incalculable damage to the moral fiber of this country. How do you make young people believe in ethics, when the leaders lie to them, as they did at that point? Again, and again and again, over and over again. I like to tell people that I went to seminary at the age of forty-eight, because I was afraid I'd be drafted. Or I tell them that I went in the ministry to get the quick buck and then get out.

KP: You'd had had a career, a career in pharmaceuticals. What made you go to seminary? Particularly since you said that you became an atheist.

JB: Then a deist and then a theist. And I, Lynne, when I was in the Korean War, Lynne started going to a Lutheran Church in Lafayette Hill, because they had Sunday school at the same time as church, which is something, a practice I don't approve of, because Sunday school teachers can't go to church, you know. I'm serious about that. But anyway, she went there 'cause she had little kids. And when I came home, she dragged me to church. She dragooned me into church. So, what could I do? I went to seminary and became a minister. No, I got active in the church. I had been active as a kid. And I started, first thing I knew, I was teaching Sunday school. I was working with a youth group and I got in the Men's Brotherhood, which was a men's group, which doesn't exist anymore. But, it was a good thing. It was a positive thing. And then, I got put on church council. And in the course of being on the church council, I assisted in communion. And I began to feel then, as at sixteen, I wanted to be a minister. But, I had abandoned all that. And I began to feel [that] when I assisted at communion, that I wanted to be a minister. And then we went to a retreat at Pocono Manor for council members and their spouses, and it was such a good retreat. Good church leaders were running it. When I came back, I was forty-four years old, I had a real good job, I had my own cafeteria and was making good money, which wasn't destined to last, but I didn't know that. The guy that was in charge of the committee wanted to be my silent partner in this industrial cafeteria. But anyway, I went to the dean of the district. A man named Newpher. John Newpher. I said, "I want to go to seminary." I was forty-four years old. He turned me every way but on. He said, "Well, you've got the priesthood of all believers, you know. At your age, it isn't a good idea." So forth and so on. So, I listened to him. Four years later, I went anyway. And at that point, he'd become president of the seminary. And he was on my examining committee, when I was examined for ordination. I was in a class of people twenty-four years my junior. They didn't know what to call me. They wanted to call me mister or uncle or what. They didn't want to call me Bill, but some did. But I had a ball. She's the one that went back to work. And we had three kids in

college. And Lynne went to work, and that's been a positive thing, too. Because she had a career there at Merck, a good career.

KP: In the end, it sounds like you enjoyed going back to work?

LB: I did, after, once I got there.

KP: It sounds like the first few months were not enjoyable?

LB: Well, I was, when I knew I had to get a job, I applied for a job as an oil chemist with Rohm and Haas. Never imagined that they would offer me a job, which they did. But, I decided it wasn't enough money, so I decided that I would go back into a refresher in chemistry and microbiology. And, in the meantime, I was offered a job at Germantown Hospital, which I took. And I worked there for six months. And then a job opened up at Merck, so I took that.

KP: So, in many ways, while your husband was a pastor, you had your own career.

LB: Right.

JB: She commuted eighteen miles, every day.

LB: Well, that's not much.

KP: So you really didn't fall into the role of a pastor's wife?

JB: They tried, they tried to put her there.

KP: I have a good friend who's an Episcopal priest and his wife was expected to do all sorts of things for him and for the church.

LB: You know, it used to be that the pastor's wife had to do everything. And all my life, I used to say, "Being a pastor's wife must be the worst thing in the world." Now, I am one. And it wasn't bad, I enjoyed it.

JB: And I had a wonderful time. There was one very minor exception, my experiences were great. I had an internecine fight, which I precipitated, because I had old men that ran things, and I decided that had to change, so ...

KP: In terms of bringing in women, or ...

JB: No. Getting rid of a treasurer, who'd been treasurer since US Grant was a corporal. And he wasn't, he was a tailor. And he was the treasurer and his wife kept the books in a notebook, a school notebook. But I maneuvered and I got rid of Harry. And that was the, I went overseas, I went to Europe. And I left friends watching my back while I was in Europe, because I was afraid that there'd be a petition circulated so they could get rid of me.

KP: Were you in the Lutheran Church of America?

JB: Yeah, which is now the ELCA.

KP: ELCA. I know that around the time you were going to seminary, the Lutheran Church was just starting to ordain women.

JB: Yeah. The first woman was Beth Platts, who's still active. She was a campus chaplain at the University of Maryland. I just read a piece she wrote for a professional magazine. I met her later on, at a colloquium in Washington. She said, "I'm Beth Platts." I said, "You're famous." But, when, she was the first woman, and when I left, when I retired, I'll bet there were thousands of women in the ELCA. Now, Missouri, to this day ...

KP: No, I know.

JB: And that's why they won't agree to get together with us, because they take that verse literally, "a woman should remain silent in church," which I think was gloss. And I thought that before I ever studied Bible criticism. I mean, it was written in the fly leaf by some early scholar and the next guy said, "That sounds good," and put it right in the text. If you look at the preceding verse and the following verse, they fit together just like that. This is history. And in the same book, he said, "A woman should cover her head when she prophesies." Where was she going to prophesy, in the marketplace? In the church.

KP: The Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church were engaged in long talks over some sort of union, where the Lutherans, who are much stricter theologically, than the Episcopalians, who were all over the map. How did you feel about that?

JB: I was for it. In fact, before it ever happened. What are you ...

LB: Last year?

JB: Well, I was against it.

LB: You were against it.

JB: No. Against the Church of Christ, the UCC. And I was also against the Episcopalian, because ...

LB: Yeah.

JB: They said we had to get re-ordained. That was right ...

LB: That's right, yeah. The Episcopal Church was ...

JB: Apostolic Succession.

LB: Didn't go through.

JB: Yeah. Well, did the UCC go through?

LB: Yeah.

JB: All right.

LB: I'm not sure about that.

JB: Do you remember when I celebrated communion with Father ...

LB: Oh, yeah. Well, that older fella, that was fine, when you did that, years and years ...

JB: Before it was official. I did it.

LB: Yeah. No, you didn't, it was official then, but just all the ...

JB: With an Australian Episcopalian priest that, Coombs. Maury Coombs, who speaks like "Stone the bleeding crows, mate."

KP: It sounded like you very much enjoyed your being a pastor?

JB: I did. I still do. I don't preach anymore because, Lynne, rightfully says, I get too, too shaky and afraid of making a mistake, you know.

KP: Because you really seem like you can ...

JB: A master of aplomb.

KP: You could sprinkle, you've told many a story in the sermon, you know, the good lead in sermon and ...

JB: But, I'm old. I'm seventy-seven, almost seventy-eight, you know.

KP: When did you retire from the ministry?

JB: Ten years ago.

KP: And what types of congregations did you have?

JB: I had one church for fifteen years, Grace Lutheran Church, which was primarily my church. For the last eight of those fifteen, I had two churches at the same time. The other one was two

miles away. And it was a field expedient that created, originated, in the field. The bishop never really liked it because it didn't originate with his staff, you know. I used to, I had staggered services, and it wasn't true that I rode back and forth in my vestments on my bicycle. But that was said, but it wasn't true.

KP: How big was your congregation, how big was Grace Lutheran Church?

JB: I would say, a max of seventy-five in service, wouldn't you? Attendance?

LB: No, I mean, it dwindled. Now it's ...

JB: It's about to go down the tubes now.

LB: Didn't we have 165?

JB: Yeah.

KP: It sounds like you had an urban congregation that was dwindling ...

JB: Blue collar and ...

LB: It was, yeah,

JB: And one cut above blue collar in some cases. Roxborough, Manyunk; Manyunk was the mills. Roxborough was where the foreman and owners lived. And there's still that feeling. They look down their noses at the "Yunkers," Manyunkers. Manyunk has become, what do you call it, gentrified. Gentrification is going on there.

KP: Right. I was there a few years ago and it was stunning how much it looked like a mill valley. And now it was becoming very gentrified and ...

JB: Some of the best restaurants in the city of Philadelphia are down there.

KP: What about your career in pharmaceutical sales and then the cafeteria? Could you say a little bit about that?

JB: Well, that would be another three hours.

KP: Well, you told us ...

LB: One thing led to another.

KP: You told us about your first job and ...

JB: Well, my first job was working in the lab with Lynne. And I had a boss who was, is now a retired Ph.D. Thiele-Elizabeth, probably playing tennis at this moment in San Diego. And she decided that I wasn't quite fit for research. And I know, I can't go back and go over a thousand blind alleys over and over again. That's what you need to do, to do research. I want dramatic results. I'm sorry, that's the way it is. And one night, Thiele took me home and the other, what's his name, the guy that ran away, you know, I forget his name.

LB: Ed.

JB: Ed. Ed, yeah. And she said, "I can't wait to get in tomorrow and see how those proteoses of yours and peptides came out." And I thought, "I can wait." I can wait a long time. So, at her, on her advice, I switched to sales, pharmaceutical sales. And I worked, I guess, two years in Sharp and Dohme sales. And when I left, my boss said he'd never hire another guy from research. We ask too many questions. In other words, "Just take what I dish out and hand it out." But then, I went with Lederle for thirteen years, I guess. And along the way, I, no, I was selling real estate on the weekends, because I had kids to put through college. And I was selling real estate on nights and weekends. And one guy used to come in my office, and the funny thing is that this guy lives, at least part of the year, six miles from us now in the Poconos. But he was a builder and also a real estate salesman. And he used to say, "If only I had 40,000 dollars," and I thought, "That's another form of sales. I bet I could raise 40,000 dollars." So, I told a friend of mine, who's now dead, John Carnes, was a Marine officer and lawyer. And before I could get the words out of my mouth, John Carnes had drawn up a limited partnership agreement, and we had formed a limited partnership, where the two builders were the general partners and the investors were limited partners. And, in a matter of a few weeks, I raised 60,000 dollars venture capital, which may not seem much today, but ...

KP: 60,000 dollars, at one point, was a significant ...

JB: And we went to the people who were going to do this real estate, this house-building thing, and roll over, build two houses and sell them, and roll over. And I said, "We don't want to sell." So, everybody got his or her money back. And I didn't get my 5,000 dollars back, 'cause I hadn't put it up, but that was my commission on the real estate sale. And a guy we knew in church, this is one of the most mixed days of my life. 'Cause he was a nice guy, but he was deadly dull. He was bigoted, he was, all the old clichés about black people. For instance, "Black people like to cook with a hot flame, et cetera, et cetera." But, he was a graduate of Cornell School of Hotel Administration, and we thought he knew his stuff, except Lynne found out he liked to use oleo. And that turned her off, when he ...

LB: Well, when he used oleo in a banquet instead of butter, I was horrified.

JB: At a banquet, yeah. Anyway, he said to me, "You raised that money. If you could raise some money for a catering company, we could make a lot of money." And before you knew it, we had plans, architect's drawing and everything else, of a banquet hall and catering company. And we started with, I think, eight accounts that Jim had stolen from his previous employer. They were all non-profit camps, like summer camps, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and so forth. And

we made sure they stayed non-profit when we had them, 'cause we never made any money. Jim would quote a price that nobody could turn you down, with the prices he quoted. But we lost money. We had Montclair Academy, and he said, "That's a prestige account." We were losing 2,000 dollars a year on Montclair Academy. I'd say, "Look, the CPA says we're losing this money." "I don't believe those figures." And we're going down further and further. And then we got a chance to do two restaurants at the Shore. One in Beach Haven and one in Wildwood. And somehow or other, I wound up running both places. I was commuting on the Garden State Parkway between Beach Haven and Wildwood. I had an alcoholic at Wildwood that I had to get rid of. And then somebody defaulted on a great big deal and we were left holding the bag there. I only lost 1,200 dollars at Beach Haven, but lost 40,000 dollars at Wildwood. And eventually, we went down the tube. And we did ...

LB: Not before we managed to feed a hotel in Ocean City, for a summer.

JB: Yeah. Well, that was, no, that was afterward, after the bankruptcy. The hotel in Ocean City.

KP: So your partnership went bankrupt?

JB: Well, it wasn't a partnership, it was a corporation. I was treasurer, secretary treasurer. But we were losing money and Jim would not see that. He couldn't see it. And it got to the point where I was afraid to go into the office at night, I was afraid I'd find him hanging in there. Literally. And I was cooking at a firehouse, not me cooking, but I had two nifty, black lady cooks, one of whom worked for me later. Iona. And I was cooking for a hospital in Center City and hauling that food, wrecking our car to do it, and great big thermo-tainers, 'cause the hospital was rebuilding and they had to have all the meals brought in, and I'd come home after that was over and wash the pots, and then I'd go over to the General Lafayette Inn to the happy hour. But, anyway, the day before we went bankrupt, I, we had one good account.

LB: Cafeteria. AEL.

JB: AEL Cafeteria. It was an electronic company. I went there with fear and trembling in my heart and asked them if I could bid on running the cafeteria, and they welcomed me with open arms. They saw what was happening to our company and they were afraid that they'd have to take it over. So, I took it over and, then, with my treasurer, (Lynne), paid the bills and paid the payroll and all of that. And we did well.

KP: So by going to the ministry, you were giving up something good?

JB: Well, no, because I lost it. But, I don't want anybody to think I fled unemployment to go into the ministry. I mean, I was working for Slater, for a while, there, after we, we had a restaurant in Ocean City. And that was a disaster. It was the worst year in the Shore history.

LB: Weather-wise.

KP: Weather-wise.

LB: It was horrible. The sun came out [only] part of eleven days all summer. That was terrible.

JB: Our dentist got us into that. He was a friend of the guy that bought the hotel. The guy that bought the hotel was mentally ill. We didn't know that. He later committed suicide. Everything, it's all grist for the mill. And Lynne ...

LB: It should be in a book. That experience was something else.

JB: Well, tell them about your vision, the night that you, Lynne always laughed at me bitterly when I said I want to go to the ministry. "You, a minister?"

LB: No, I was thinking about the hotel. I mean, the first day we got there, our boys got the elevator stuck between floors. I thought, "Oh, this is gonna be a wonderful summer."

KP: But it sounds like they had a good time?

LB: The boys?

KP: Yeah.

JB: One of them was my pantry-man. And Randy was the newspaper boy. He made money that summer.

KP: It sounds like he was the only one.

LB: He was the only one.

JB: Well, Peter got paid.

LB: Well, Steve was the oldest. He was called up and ...

JB: Drafted twice.

LB: Was that Korea, no, that was Vietnam. He was drafted.

KP: Did he serve in Vietnam?

LB: No, he didn't. They turned, I went home that day, put him on the train in Norristown. He went into the hotel, he came home [and said that] they turned him down. He had asthma, so they wouldn't take him.

JB: And he still has it.

LB: And Peter was working for Bill, but that was the summer he was going with a girl, and we were very much opposed to that. So the whole summer was a disaster.

JB: Our dog died.

LB: Our wonderful ...

JB: Beloved dog ...

LB: ... That somebody was taking care of for us. Paddy Paws died.

KP: And it rained all the time?

LB: It rained the whole summer.

JB: Yeah, and we kept blowing circuit breakers with electric heaters in the restaurant. "The Crystal Dining Room."

LB: Oh, God.

JB: We got snow blind from looking at white table clothes, with nobody at them. We served a full course dinner for around three dollars and fifty cents, soup to nuts.

LB: They just, we went, it was Bill. I didn't want to go into that. He went too fast into it. He knew we were not given all the facts, the important facts.

JB: I had lost the cafeteria.

LB: We did not get the important information before we went into that. But it was an interesting experience.

JB: Well, Lynne feels that everything that happened to us was aimed towards me being in the ministry, which may sound arrogant, but, I think it's true.

LB: Well, yeah. I mean, I dragged my feet. I said, "No" for several years. I couldn't see it. I couldn't.

KP: You couldn't see him in the vestments?

LB: And I didn't want to see me as ...

KP: ... The pastor's wife.

LB: The wife of a pastor, no way. And I had a dream one night. He was working and I woke up about five in the morning and I was very much agitated. And I had been in the presence of this

blinding light, where everything that had happened for years just flashed right by me. Telephone conversations, situations, all kinds of things, people. And I thought, "Oh, boy. Now what am I going to do?" So, I didn't tell him about it at all. But I went over to see our pastor. And he said, "Well, the next time he mentions seminary, just send him over to me." Which is what I did. And we went along and were on our way.

JB: And I was a little bit unusual, at my age, but there was a guy, six years older than me, in the class, from Reading. And it becomes more common now. But, strangely enough more women, older women, as a second or third career, are going to seminary.

KP: Do you think your life experiences made you a better pastor?

JB: It certainly gave me the ability to see all sides, I think. Yeah. And, not that I'm knocking the straight track guys that go, high school, college, seminary. That's all right. There's a place for them. But anybody that's got a second career has been, has seen the elephant and heard the eagle scream, you know. And it teaches you, you know more about life.

KP: Well, one of the things that struck when I talked to my friend, John, who now has his own church. He says that, at times, it's sort of like running a small business. It's a very complicated business. You've got employees, you've got volunteers, you've got everything from the maintenance of the building to different dealings with people. He would tell me that he had this knock-down, drag-out fight with his vestry. It sounds like as nasty as any struggle of a chief executive with the board of directors.

JB: It can happen. I had a friend who is no longer in the ministry. He was the third generation. I think that's why he, talking about Jansen, Billy. I called him "Billy Bishop the III." But, I think he sells mutual funds today. But, when he had a church, he said, "There's one good thing about this job. You get a chance to bury your enemies."

SC: I wanted to ask you about your trip to Hawaii. You said it was a kind of dedication/reunion?

JB: There's a place, which is called, Kamuela, and also called Waimea, which is 3,000 feet on the slopes of the volcano, 3,000 feet altitude. There was a camp in World War II, called Camp Tarawa, and it was called that because the 2nd MarDiv came there after Tarawa and froze. They didn't have any clothes or anything else, and they froze there. And I went there before Iwo Jima, for the months preceding Iwo Jima, and trained there. And they were dedicating three markers on a memorial. They had a lieutenant general, had a major general, they had a nifty Japanese nisei who had been an agronomist with the Parker Ranch. And he was really good when he spoke. And the mayor of Hawaii spoke and people like that. And they had the band, Marine Corps band, from the FMF Pacific, from Pearl Harbor, and they did the presenting of the colors. And I have to admit that my eyes got a little misty.

KP: You're still very proud of your service and being part of the Corps?

JB: I am.

JB: Well, that major general was talking he said, “There’s no such thing as an ex-Marine.”

KP: No, I interviewed General Kroesen, from the Class of ‘44. And he said, with some envy, “Yeah, we don’t have that in the Army, the way that they do in the Marines.” Every Marine I’ve interviewed has always had a profound respect for the Corps.

JB: So, we had, there was the ceremony, with the trooping the colors. Then there was a party at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel, which was built by the Rockefellers, and it’s like [what] God would have, if he had money. And that was really sumptuous. And we had a very nice party there. Hoola dancers, and singers and country, the Hawaiian equivalent of country and folk that, right, would you say?

LB: We had his music had been recommended to us and we had been listening to it on the radio in the car for the last couple of days. We had a tape. And here he is, at the party.

JB: So, then that was, we flew to Oahu then, and went to the Arizona Memorial and Punch Bowl Cemetery. And I showed Lynne, Nuuanu Valley and the Pali, which I remembered from fifty-odd years ago. It’s a little different now. They’ve built an observation platform. Then, you just stopped your car and went and looked over. Wind pours up ...

LB: I never saw such wind. I couldn’t even hold my camera.

JB: It was shaking the masonry that we were on.

SC: Did you meet any other Marines?

JB: Not that I knew. I said there was a, I couldn’t imagine why I was in the war with all those old men. There were a lot of them there, but I didn’t know any, I hoped to meet some guys, but I didn’t. There was one guy from the 10th Gun Battalion that I might have known, but I don’t remember knowing, you know. But the one I told the story about, “How’s the second verse from Little Orphan Annie, go?” Dave Swanson, I thought he might be there. He wasn’t there.

LB: Well, it wasn’t very well publicized as far as we’re concerned.

JB: No.

KP: I even heard that they sort of looked for them.

LB: The only way we knew about it was through our friend, who winters there every year.

SC: Oh, really. You didn’t get a formal invitation.

LB: No.

JB: No.

LB: No, Margaret was at a town meeting and it was mentioned there, and afterwards, she went up and asked the man about it and he faxed her all the information, which she sent immediately to us.

JB: More on Margaret. Margaret's a nifty person, who's eighty-one, is she?

LB: Eighty-two.

JB: Eighty-two. You'd think she was seventy. And she was, her first husband was an ornithologist, Curator of Birds for the New York Museum of Natural History, and commissioned by National Geographic to go do studies of birds. Margaret was one of the, was the first white woman in the highlands of New Guinea in the '50s. They were told not to turn their backs on the Bearers, who were headhunters.

LB: There was a massacre right before they left.

JB: Yeah. Margaret knows pigeon. And I know a little pigeon, not near as much as Margaret. On her eightieth birthday, I wrote her a tribute in pigeon. I got some books, primers in pigeon. Read it and then the translation of it, she loved that.

KP: This is going way back to World War II, but did you ever encounter any black Marines when you were in the service in World War II?

JB: When I finished artillery school, I was at Camp LeJeune, that's the only place we could fire them. They didn't have, they now have a firing range at Quantico, but they didn't then. And all the officers were Southerners, as I've said. And this one, I think, it was Colonel Barney Oldfield, he said, "Berglund, you're a Yankee. We're gonna send you in the 51st Composite." That was a black outfit. "You can handle them." Korean War ...

KP: The Corps was very integrated in the Korean War. I'm curious if you saw that?

JB: I heard, I went to the hostess' house one morning for breakfast, in the Korean War, and these two enlisted men were all but crying. They had black guys in their squad bay.

KP: And that really made them cry?

JB: Yeah. That was the beginning, I guess. But, nowadays, I think, it would be taken quite for granted.

KP: No, I've seen military units that are more diversified than college campuses. Is there anything else that we forgot to ask you?

LB: I think we've pretty well covered ...

KP: Lynne, how many of these stories have you heard before?

LB: Most of them. But every once in a while, another one comes out that I never heard of, and I marvel.

KP: Were you always willing to talk about the war? Was he always willing to tell you what happened?

LB: Yes, I would ask questions and he would always would ...

KP: Because there are a lot of people who really wouldn't talk about this.

SC: That's one thing I was struck by, because he was so enthusiastic about coming down and doing an interview. And I was, it made it easier for me, for the first time out. We were nervous, but ...

JB: You did fine.

SC: You did better.

LB: The boys, our boys, they always tease him about his tapes. You know, "He's running his tape again."

JB: We'd go to my brother's in Cherry Hill, almost every year for Easter, and ...

LB: Christmas. We used to, she and I used to trade off, you know, back and forth. But, when we moved to the Poconos, it was never too far for us to go there, but it's always too far for them to come up to us.

-----END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE THREE-----

JB: I see you've fixed them so that nobody's going to use them again.

KP: Well, yeah, I, we never want to tape over an interview. That's our one great tragedy. You might want to finish the story about the gangland murder in the hotel near the Garden State racetrack, which ...

JB: Well, my boys say [that] I tell it every time. And the last time we were together, one of them said, "Did you see the chalk marks on the pavement where they outlined the body?" My boys, how sharper than a serpents' tooth it is to have a wise-ass son. Or four of them.

KP: Were you glad your sons didn't serve in Vietnam?

JB: I was.

KP: But would you ...

JB: And I wanted to make it very clear that I admire the guys that did, intensely. And I would never want them to think, for one minute, as many of them do, that because I was opposed to the war, I was opposed to them. I wasn't, I felt they were victims. I felt the whole country was victimized.

KP: Were you critical of Lyndon Johnson?

JB: Yeah. Yet, in spite of that, I liked him.

KP: Really? Even ...

JB: I mean, he's a sort of a down to earth, homespun type guy. I liked him. I never liked Nixon, I didn't want anything to do with Nixon. My favorite president, probably, is Carter. And he won't be known to fame, I don't think. And Harry Truman.

KP: So, you remained fairly liberal?

JB: Yeah.

KP: That part has been ...

JB: Well, that's what ministers are, you know. Pinkos, pinkos. You read some of the letters to the, they don't print them anymore in the Lutheran newsletter, because, I think, they got sick of them, but, sometimes written by clergy. "I'll never subscribe anymore to your liberal publication," and so forth.

KP: Well, the Lutheran Church has always been, particularly the LCA and the old ALC was always fairly moderate or even liberal.

JB: Listen, Martin Luther could not receive communion in a Missouri Synod church. He's not a member of the Missouri Synod.

KP: Do you stay in touch with some of the people you met in the Marine Corps? You've mentioned there were some people you stayed in touch with after the war.

JB: Buck, who was my best friend in World War II. And I guess, it's probably up to me to write him, I don't know. I wanted to tell him, and maybe I have told him about the Griffin books, *The Corps*. They're fantastic, they're so close to the real thing.

KP: Were there any movies that captured what you experienced?

JB: Sure. *Sands of Iwo Jima*. If I see it one more time, I get another star on my Asiatic/Pacific ribbon.

LB: There was another Marine movie in the last five years.

JB: I don't remember. Yeah.

KP: So there were some movies that captured some of what you went through?

JB: Yes, the scene where John Wayne, somebody drops the grenade, John Wayne picks it up and throws it over the parapet. I saw that happen. Not John Wayne, but somebody dropped a grenade in my presence and ...

KP: Someone picked it up?

JB: Yeah, in training.

KP: And, I meant to ask you this earlier, but I can't resist, because we just had a meeting with Vince Kramer yesterday. You mentioned that you knew Vince a little bit in college, and you said that you idolized him. But out in New Zealand, he had had a serious injury and you met him there.

JB: Hero-worship, yeah. He'd been in combat and we hadn't been in combat. I felt the same way about Joe Foss. And Buck felt the same way. We were novices, in the presence of the great mystery. And these guys had been there. And they were initiates, you know. Now, after I'd been in combat, I don't think there's so much mystique to being an initiate. It's just a matter of hunkering down and letting them throw stuff at you.

KP: Did you get the sense that the younger Marines would be looking up to you, being that you had had so much combat experience?

JB: I don't know. I got mad at my company because I got feedback, this was when I had the 4.2 mortar company, I got feedback from my NCOs that the guys were not snapping to when they were talked to and stuff. So I assembled them and I chewed them out and I said, "We're going to take a hike that's not scheduled." Guess who suffered from the hike? Guess who got blisters that I had to put tincture of benzyl compound on? The kids didn't suffer. They could have done it on their hands.

LB: Did you talk about your hike, your forty mile hike?

JB: Oh, that's right. In New Zealand, some nitwit up at division staff got the idea that, because the Japs could hike great distances on rice and raisins, we should learn to do it. The whole division was told to make a sixty-mile hike, with a sock full of dried rice and raisins. Clean sock, I aced that. And my colonel and, and this guy, this took guts. He was a regular Marine, you know, a career Marine, and he fought this order. He said, "We're artillery." And they said,

“You’ll make the hike.” “We’re artillery.” And so, finally, he said to the regimental commander, he said, “All right, someday, in combat you’re going to ask me for artillery fire, and I’m going to say, my men are damn good hikers, but they’re damn poor artillerymen.” Now that was *lese majeste* for real, and the risk of his career.

KP: He could have really been ...

JB: Yeah, because he was talking to a bird colonel, who later became Commandant of the Marine Corps, as a matter-of-fact. But many of those guys did. I trained them, you know, and they went on to become Commandant. So, it was agreed that we make a forty-mile hike. And we all had our little sock full of rice and raisins, and, I’m gullible, I wrote “Gullible’s Travels,” as a matter-of-fact. I didn’t take any candy bars. Lynne will find it hard to believe. I took the rice and raisins. The other guys are eating candy bars. And I’m cooking my rice and raisins in the mess gear. And I found out, I learned one thing, that a Marine field shoe makes an excellent pillow. You put it under the blanket and you put your head right in here, and it’s great. So, then we got back from that forty-mile hike, more-or-less unscathed, and the division said, “Wait a minute, the whole division made a sixty mile hike and you people didn’t. You will make a sixty mile hike.” So, in effect, we did 100 miles. We did the forty and then we had to do a sixty. We did three loops of twenty-one or twenty-two miles. And that night that we did that, I was out ‘till five in the morning with my buddies. And all I did that day was lean forward and swing my legs. I was numb. And, of course, they had a meat wagon following to pick up the lame and lazy, but we did it. And that time, I saw something, I never told you this story. Buzz Letcher, he was FFV. His grandfather was governor of Virginia in the War Between the States, you know. And we were hiking along, and dogs love to attach themselves to Marines. There’s some kind of, probably a philosophical statement about that. And all of a sudden, we were marching along, dog tired and beat, and we saw Captain Pulla, who was a very inoffensive, tall, lanky guy, he never got on anybody’s list for anything, that I know of. Saw him fall out with his carbine and shoot a dog. Now, here’s a bunch of young American boys seeing somebody shoot a dog. And there was a growl. And we found out later, Letcher was annoyed, because this dog was worrying the cattle in the fields, and they lose weight when you do that. And, he, being a landowner from Virginia, he didn’t want to see that happen. So he orders Captain Pulla to shoot the dog. Scratch one dog.

KP: And this ...

JB: You can’t do anything about it. You can shoot Colonel Letcher in combat. Listen, you think that’s a joke. There was a guy named Ed Peoples, who later became my friend. I didn’t realize it, but everybody hated him. They hated his guts.

KP: Why?

JB: Well, he was an SOB. He was a mean, mean man. He ran his battery through the desert in Camp Dunlap, towing the pieces with ropes, in the desert heat, running and towing them. That’s a punishment. And they drew lots in his battery to see who would have the privilege of killing him in combat. I’m not making this up.

KP: And they were really ...

JB: Yeah, and the kid that won the lot, when Peoples got transferred to battalion, the kid was sitting on his cot crying, because he was going to lose his chance to shoot Captain Peoples.

KP: This was serious.

JB: Real, real. And I'll tell you what we did in our little effort to fight the good fight. There was a bottle club in Auckland. There were lockers. And we'd go in and we'd say, "Captain Peoples's bottle was in locker number seventeen," and we'd drink his scotch. But then, you know, talk about getting coals of fire heaped on your head. In combat, in Bougainville, I told you I was in this tree op and I could see like that. I could see 1,800 mills. Over here was a little misty with tree foliage and I fired all these barrages in front and I got around there. I popped it up and over and I saw some smoke. "Cease firing, record, range corrector, deflect record." Within hours I get a call, "Come back to the battalion." So, I trudged back, that's the day I met the Indians, they were on their way to a pow wow, Navajo talkers that were used in the Marine Corps. I trudge back to battalion and what happened was, there's a thing called, "slope one fall," and the rounds coming down, if it hits a mountain, no matter that's it's going to land out there, it lands here, see. And slope one fall got me. That round plotted out perfectly, out in front where it should be, but it hit a mountain, and, fortunately, it was white phosphorus and it didn't kill anybody, but it burned a couple of guys on their hands. So, Colonel Christ wanted to know how this happened. What they were concerned about was because I said, "Cease firing, record. Range correct, deflection correct." And if we had fired that barrage later on, we'd have killed some people. So, I got down with a twig in the dirt and sketched the whole thing, while my life's hanging in the balance. And Ed Peoples was there and he says, "Colonel, I wouldn't want anybody else but Berglund to be up there observing." Colonel says, "I agree." So, not even, it didn't even show up on my fitness report. I didn't even get a reprimand. In fact, I got a good fitness report for Bougainville. But, Ed Peoples, after I drank his liquor in New Zealand, he went to bat for me.

KP: But, it's a good story to say, because, during the Persian Gulf War, people were thinking that friendly fire was something new and dramatic. But, in fact, it's always been there.

JB: Yes. And there's a thing called, have you ever studied quantum physics, quantum mechanics?

SC: Bits and pieces.

JB: That's, I love quantum. And you know that, if you let particles go through slits, they fall in a dispersion pattern. Well, that always reminded me of artillery fire. If you fire 1,000 rounds at a certain fixed elevation, fixed charge and everything else, they're going to land in an oval as big as a football field, maybe, with twenty-five percent of the rounds out here and fifty percent in here. But they land all over the place because of dispersion. And, where was I going with this? Oh, friendly fire. Because of dispersion, sometimes rounds will land, when you plotted to fire

right in front of you. And there are many cases when I told you about, in training, bringing fire on ourselves with the 75mm. In real cases, there have been guys that have deliberately brought it in on where they were, to kill the enemy. They hunker down and hope they're going to live through it. Sometimes, they don't.

KP: But, because of dispersion, that ...

JB: Yeah, right.

KP: Okay. We thank you very much. We really enjoyed ...

JB: Oh, I've enjoyed it.

LB: I was just about to ask you, do you people sleep here?

SC: Well, occasionally.

KP: Well, we go as long as people are willing to go. Yours has been on the long side, although not the longest. In fact, we've had a number of interviews that have gone five and six hours.

JB: I'm long winded.

KP: Vince Kramer was also very long.

JB: Was he?

KP: In fact, for us, more is better.

LB: Well, I thought it would probably be an hour.

KP: Oh, no. You should really write some of them down. And I think you should write up this year in the hotel. You could ...

LB: I'm telling you, that would fill a book.

KP: You could write it as a short story for the *New Yorker*.

JB: I used to, I've never, I've made thirty-five from writing. No, fifty dollars, I made fifty dollars from that play, remember? I did an adaptation of *Midsummer's Night's Dream* for a Shakespeare Festival, and I had the hubris to add material to Shakespeare. I added slapstick out of vaudeville. You know the mechanics in *Midsummer's Night's Dream*? I had the business with the board swinging and knocking the guy down and all that. They loved it. This was for Head Start.

LB: It was in college, out of the summer theatre and then the ...

JB: It was performed at the Philadelphia Academy of Music for their children's theater series.

KP: Oh, so you have ...

JB: And I got fifty dollars for that, and I think that my co-author, who really didn't write anything, but directed it, I think he got about 450 dollars, and I got fifty dollars.

KP: But, you had your work performed at a ...

JB: And I heard my words, that I wrote, spoken on the stage of the Academy of Music.

KP: You must have been thrilled.

LB: It was, it really was.

KP: Well, we hope you'll come to reunion one year at Rutgers.

JB: I will.

LB: We've been to ...

JB: I'll wear my Old Guard ...

LB: The last couple of times they ...

JB: We were away, probably.

KP: Yeah, because my interns that research this, they love the Old Guard. My research assistants and interns find that one of their bonuses is that they get to hang out with the Old Guard. And they absolutely love it because they ...

JB: You don't have any interns like Monica Lewinsky?

KP: No, no. Although, although I've mainly had woman interns. I mean, it's been ...

SC: The class is predominately female, you know. But everybody wants to go.

KP: Yeah. Well, thank you again. This concludes an interview of John W. Berglund, on April 9, 1998, also joined occasionally by Mrs. Berglund with Kurt Piehler and Scott Carroll.

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

Reviewed by John Berglund 7/01