RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM H. MACKENZIE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Mr. William H. MacKenzie on February 8, 1996 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler.

SH: And Sandra Holyoak.

KP: And I guess I would like to begin by asking about your parents. Your father came from Scotland.

William MacKenzie: From Scotland. That is part of the very brief and not-so-illustrious military, legendary, tradition in the family. My dad was born in Scotland, Glasgow, Scotland. In fact, I visited the birthplace twelve years ago. In 1907, he was then seven years old, he came over with my grandmother, whom I never knew, and four sisters. The year before my grandfather, whom I never met, came over with my dad's two older brothers. ... I think this answers your question. When England got into the war, into World War I, my father's older brother Bill, after whom I was named, I guess he was in his twenties, somewhere in the twenties, I forget the exact age, he went to Canada and enlisted in the Canadian Black Watch. He went to Europe and he was in the war. He was severely wounded over there and died in the late twenties. It was after I was born. I never saw him. He died in Canada in a military hospital there. Second rung in that ladder ... when the United States entered the war, my father was about seventeen. I think he lied and I think he was probably younger. He enlisted and he wound up in the infantry and he went to Europe. He was disabled in a gas attack over [there]. The Germans were using poison gas at the time. And he was given a leave and went back to Glasgow, Scotland on leave. I know, because I have a postcard that he sent to one of my aunts from there. He went to visit his uncle, who was then one of the ranking generals in the Scottish army. And I remember this story, my father told me. He went up to the house in Glasgow and ... he said, "I want to see General MacKenzie [they] said, "Who shall I tell [him] is calling". He said, "Private Harry B. MacKenzie 114th infantry, United States Army." That's about the substance of our military involvement that I know of. I'm sure that all of the Scots were involved in a bloody mess at sometime or another along the way and I'm sure the MacKenzies were part of the thing.

Sandra Holyoak: I was just going to say, why did your uncle enlist in the Canadian Army if he was in the states at that time?

WM: I don't know. What was the Scottish logic? I don't think America was yet fighting. I never met him, I never asked him. He died when I was a baby.

KP: And there was no family lore that he was very loyal to the Empire or ...

WM: Not that, the only thing that I can assume that ... I was the only one in the family that ever went back. ... None of the other family members ever went back to Scotland and I went back there about a dozen years ago to England and Scotland. But they made their home here, but I'm guessing, that he had a sense of being part of the Empire and he went to Canada.

KP: Because he really could have avoided the war.

WM: Probably, yeah. That was before the United States was involved.

KP: Yes.

WM: Because he was a ... well he died in the hospital up there. I forget when .... but it was when I was very young. So he had no obligation. He just decided to go. And I assume that's what motivated my father, because he volunteered, he enlisted. He was only, I think he was sixteen. I think he told them he was seventeen so he could go. And, my mother was born in the United States and they met I guess sometime after my father came back from the war. My mother was about the same age. I'm an only child. They had one look at me and they said that's it I guess. Just interestingly enough, on the afternoon of December 7th, 1941, like a lot of people in those days, I was listening to the Giants football game on the radio with my father. When Pearl Harbor was announced I said, "I guess I'm going". "Like hell you are," he said. I said, "Well, why not?" He said, "You're seventeen years old, you're underage and you're still in high school." He said, "You're gonna finish high school."

KP: Really, he did not want you to rush off?

WM: No, he didn't want me to go at all. No, he had to sign an approval when I enlisted that fall, when I was out of high school. He had to sign for me, because, even at eighteen, I guess I was underage.

KP: Your father's attitude, do you think that came from himself being the seventeen year old who rushed into the war and got gassed? Do you think that had something to do with it?

WM: I never asked him about it. ... He told me a few, very few stories about the war. They're mostly anecdotal, the humorous side of it. Even with the being gassed he said, "I guess I shouldn't smoke, because of that." Of course, he kept on smoking anyway. But he was in combat as I understand it. He was with the 114th Infantry. Harold G. Hoffman, who later became the governor of the State of New Jersey, was my father's company commander and they kept in touch. My father was only a private, I guess, but I remember when Hoffman was governor we went down to Sea Girt, the big summer white houses.

KP: Summer governor's home, yes.

WM: The summer governor's home was there and we went down a couple of times and visited. And Hoffman, you know, had reunions of his old company, Company D. My dad was involved with the American Legion and the ... Veterans of Foreign Wars, because that's what they did in those days. That was during Prohibition, I guess that's where you could get beer and so he was involved with those organizations. Early on I had an interest in, when we were going to West Point for the first time. I said, "I want to go to West Point." And father knew Gordon Canfield, who was our Congressman representative at the time. He said, "Oh, when you grow up you'll get appointed to West Point," which never happened, of course. And I thought about the Coast Guard Academy, but that was only a passing interest. Then I got interested in flying. None of which I followed up.

KP: You grew up in, for part of your early life, you grew up in Paterson.

WM: Paterson, Rutgers anecdote. I grew up in Paterson, I was born in Paterson and I left there, when I was about a sophomore in high school and moved to Little Falls. But in front of the city hall in Paterson are two statues, one of Alexander Hamilton, who was one of the earlier founders of Paterson and the other was Garret A. Hobart, who had been vice president of the United States. And ... I was aware of these statues. After the war I came down to Rutgers. Freshmen were expected to go to chapel even after the war. And I was sitting there one day and you know, looking around at those pictures on the wall in the chapel. Garret A. Hobart. I said "son-of-a-gun, MacKenzie, you're in pretty good company here." It was during the Depression. It was not a good time to be around, but I guess we were poor, because I guess everybody was.

KP: What job did your father have before the Depression? Because you mentioned in your survey that he became a treasury agent.

WM: He became a treasury agent. And he was, I guess, he was good at mathematics. He probably would have been an accountant, except he never went to college and he got a job in the Treasury Department. I guess in accounting and he wound up as a treasury agent, which were sort of the forerunners of the FBI, before they had G-men and they didn't have guns. That's the only [difference], they did the same thing as G-men, but they didn't have guns and their early job was enforcing the IRS, I guess, at the beginning. But they were also involved in, again there was the transition of Prohibition and the repeal of Prohibition. They were tracking down rum runners and that kind of stuff. It was kind of dangerous work, I suppose. I never thought about it. You had to be either kind of brave or kind of senseless. But it was a job and it was the Depression ...

KP: Your father once he had gotten this job, had fairly steady work in the Depression.

WM: Well, up until, strangely enough when FDR was elected then everybody got a job, my father lost his. My father had made the mistake of being a Republican. My uncle was a big Republican leader in Paterson at the time. And there was no, what do you call it, federal job protection, whatever it's called, it didn't exist then. So he was out of a job. ... It was not a pretty story after that. He had some real problems and eventually became an alcoholic.

KP: So your father had a tough time during the 1930s?

WM: It was a tough, tough time. Kids I think survived it because that's what you did, you know, this is what you did. ... We lived in Paterson, we were sort of on the cusp of the very wealthy neighborhood and the very, very poor and we were sort of in between. The kids I went to high school with, grammar school ... were the children of doctors and lawyers and dentists and then just tradesmen and whatever. So, even though I knew the good life, whatever that might have been, it wasn't a matter of envy or anything, this was what it was. Most people were poor. I saw part of the strikes in Paterson, the great silk strikes. I remember that as a kid. They were pretty vicious times and that sort of thing. But it was all sort of, part of the growing up process at the time.

SH: Is that the reason that you switched to the different high schools, then during your high school years?

WM: No, it may have been economic, I don't know, may have been economics. My grandmother lived up in Little Falls. She had this home up there and she lived by herself, until we moved in with her. And I switched ... I guess I went to Paterson Central for the first year we were up there because there was no local high school at that time. ... Passaic Valley High school was built, the regional high school, and I wound up there. I finished up there. And that was advantageous to me. ... I guess I was bigger then. But I ... played football and I played basketball and then baseball in high school.

KP: So it was a much smaller high school?

WM: It was a smaller high school. The coach, our coach was Elmer Griswold, who graduated from Rutgers in '35. And I used to meet him at football games years later. He's quite ill right now. But he would introduce me to friends. He would say, "This is Bill, Bill played football for me at Passaic Valley. He was the greatest this and that". I said, "You forgot to tell them, Red, that I was 6'4" weighed 225 then." [laugher]

SH: When you were in the high school and you were getting ready to graduate from Passaic Valley ...

WM: Passaic Valley.

SH: Passaic Valley, did you entertain any thoughts of going to Rutgers straight out of high school?

WM: It was a concept. I had been invited over to, ... I think it was Burlington Mills had a plant over in Passaic or Clifton and they were looking for high school kids, who ... showed promise in the field of chemistry and I did at that point. And I thought about that, it was a possibility of a scholarship. Really the thought, the possibility of going to college, even though everybody talked about it, it was kind of slim. I think it was kind of slim that I would have made it. Then when the war happened and it just went out of everybody's mind unless you were actually in college at the time. You stayed. To me, when I graduated from high school in May ... or June, whatever it was that year '42, I got a job just to make a few bucks and tried to enlist. It was a standoff for awhile. I was finally enlisted and sworn in and they put me on inactive duty and this was not what I wanted. I wanted to go and fight and ... whatever. I wanted to be in it. But I am making a long answer to a short question. I don't know whether I would have gone to college. I don't know whether I could have made it in chemistry. I never did like math and it never liked me, particularly. I liked chemistry. I liked that part of it. So if anything good came out of the war for me (my kids said, “well you got a free scholarship”). I figured out that I averaged a dollar and ten cents a day for all the time that I was in service.

SH: So you are pretty good at math. [Laughter]

KP: Your mother was mainly a housewife.

WM: Pretty much.

KP: But you mentioned in the survey, that she had worked during the war.

WM: During the war she worked for ... gosh it was an aircraft ...

KP: Curtis-Wright?

WM: Curtis-Wright, yeah up in Fairfield, New Jersey, which then was out in the country, now I think it is probably ... all shopping ...

KP: Shopping malls?

WM: Now, yeah, right. She worked there during the war. She and my father, my father had some problems and they separated and she worked there during the war. She was very quiet person I guess, looking back at it. My father was inclined to be volatile, and she was not. But she worked very hard. I remember I ... had an allowance taken out of my pay all during the war sent to her. And when I got out she had saved the money and gave it to me.

SH: Was she also from a Scottish background?

WM: No, she was English. Her mother had come from England. I know these useless facts, because I have my grandmother's bible she got from her Sunday school when she came to the New World in 1886 and she was about twelve years old. She came from Macklesfield, which is near Manchester. ... I guess everything was out in the country then, in 1886. The family, they're not good record keepers on that side. In fact, one cousin and I were very, very close. She and I were about a month apart. She lived in Clifton, I lived in Little Falls. We kept in touch up until the war and till after the war. I came down here and we drifted apart. And at a high school reunion, a couple of years ago, I ran into some friends of mine from high school, who had been neighbors of theirs in Pompton Lakes. And I said, "How are Doris and Jim?" They said, "Oh, they went to Florida." I said, "When?" They said, "Oh, about three years ago." I said, "Where?". ... "We don't have their address." I figured there goes my only link. And last summer I got a telephone call one day. It said, "You probably don't remember this voice." I said, "Is this Doris?" And it was. Their grandkids are up here. They live in, on the East Coast of Florida, but she missed the grand kids so, they bought a summer place up here. [laughter] We found each other last fall. Be careful of your questions, because I go off and running.

KP: No that's okay. No, that's good. You had mentioned that one of your very distinct memories is the Paterson textile strikes. Do any particular memories stick out about that?

WM: I remember ... being ... a little kid, I remember being very surprised at the violence of it. I guess I was as violent as any other kid. I was involved in sports, football, other stuff, but these

people, I remember them throwing rocks and screaming at each other. "Bloody hicks" and that kind of stuff. And it was also again Prohibition and Paterson was not the prettiest of towns, I guess, it was ... gang violence. You know, ... my father described later the early days of the Mafia. But we lived in the East Side section of Paterson, which I said was sort of the cusp between the very good and the very bad. And the last of some of the silk mills were in that area and they were still operating at the time, but then the strikes got very, very violent about that time and so I do remember. It made an impression upon me as a kid, I didn't know what it was all about.

KP: So you did not know any of the strikers?

WM: No, no, no. ... I was a bystander, a watcher.

KP: The strikes were very close, but almost distant in personal involvement.

WM: It was close by geographically, but it was distant as far as ...

KP: The people involved.

WM: The people were involved or what it was all about.

KP: You mentioned your father was a treasury agent during Prohibition. Any stories about Prohibition and Paterson and speakeasies? Also your father's work.

WM: I remember one story. Again, I said he had been involved with the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. And they used to hold occasional, what they called "rackets," which were social events. It was a racket. And, they, of course, had beer at these social events. Of course, it was quite illegal at the time. But they had to buy the stuff, I guess, from bootleggers at the time. And I remember him telling me that one of the big racketeers at the time was a guy named Waxey Gordon. He was one of the big, big bootleggers ... and ... apparently Paterson was a very good market for their product at the time. And I remember he told me about one of Waxey Gordon's henchmen coming up and saying, "You're buying your beer from us." And their response, the American Legion, was "The hell we are!" (Ppptt) down the stairs. But apparently there were some very sinister events. He used the term "mafia" or the "black hand" at the time and apparently there was a lot of, I guess murders and that kind of stuff going on.

KP: You remember Paterson as a tough town?

WM: Yeah, it was a tough town.

SH: Was it ethnically divided?

WM: You know maybe I live in a dream world. I do sometimes, but it was more together than it was divided. There were neighborhoods, particularly where we lived, there were black families that lived in the neighborhood. There were Jewish and Italian families from, some of whom had

not been over here too long. One neighbor we called the kid "Frenchie." I think they were Algerian. Albert Alessandrino lived on the first floor and his father owned a tailor shop. And Wiech's Bakery, a Dutch family and Gus Naundorf owned a candy store. And you went to school where you went to school. We didn't have, well I guess we had pretty good, ... high ... school, I went to elementary school at School 13. We had the sons and daughters of lawyers and doctors and industrialists. One girl, Elinor Prell, her father owned a big paper factory. And I remember black kids were just kids who were there. I went to high school, Paterson East Side High School, that's the one where recently they had the fuss about Joe (Clark?) the principal.

KP: Oh yes.

WM: That was a mixed high school to an extent. I went to school with Larry Doby, who was the first black player in the American League baseball. The Jackie Robinson of the American League.

KP: So you were very used to having black students in classes and in your neighborhood and other groups-- Italians and ...

WM: I don't think there was a great embracing, but it was accepted. This is the way it was. This is what life is all about and I guess there was a tendency to coagulate into groups. ... Well in Little Falls I don't remember a black kid in the whole town of Little Falls. In Paterson, on the track team, on the basketball team, the football team, they were mixed. Paterson East Side basketball team I remember Oliver and Hapgood, two of the guards, were black. Larry Doby played, but then Red Miller was the star really, the star of the team. He was a white kid. He was a paratrooper, shot down, was killed in Europe. But there was Vinie Fuscanero and it was a real mix and it, everybody was on the team. That was the way it was. Maybe it's, maybe I am looking through idealistic glasses or something, but I don't [think] they were problems.

KP: You also indicated that you were very early on a sports fan.

WM: Yeah.

KP: Because you remember you were only at Paterson for a year, but you remember ...

WM: I started playing football when I was about nine or ten years old. In fact my grandson, who's, is just starting to realize that I lived in a real world, too. You know when one is nine or ten or eleven, it's hard to believe what Grandpa did, "He did what?" I had to take him pictures of my Boy Scout troop and he picked me out. Out of forty fat white kids he picked me out. But we played in East Side park, which was up, along the river in Paterson. We were up there we played football ... playing in snow. I have pictures that, somebody had taken some when I was a kid. I showed them to my grandson. But I always liked those. And my father had a (?) there was a guy named Chuck Jameson, who had played for the Cleveland Indians. My father knew him as a kid and took me to Yankee Stadium to see Chuck Jameson play. He was never a great star I guess, but he played for the Cleveland Indians. It was big, it's still big as far as I am concerned. Larry

Doby played there. And I guess we went to the Y, where we played basketball and swam and worked out. ... We didn't have television, so what could we do? [Laughs]

SH: How long were you in Boy Scouts?

WM: I guess, ... the prescribed amount of time. I think it started earlier then ... I think you started in Cub Scouts from nine to eleven or twelve permitting and then joined the Boy Scouts thirteen until you got too old for that kind of stuff.

SH: So you were in it for awhile?

WM: Yeah pretty much, because it was the neighborhood that was the center of activity. We went on Friday nights to Boy Scouts and we went early and we played games. And then when you did the stuff that Boy Scouts do and then when it was a holiday we got to parade and we were in it and it was okay.

KP: What rank did you make? Do you remember?

WM: I think that's what Eric, my grandson, asked me. [laughs] I think First Class Scout or something like that. I have merit badges. He's got a ton of them, I know now. ... I had a yearbook from ... this Troop 13, which I had found. My mother kept all this stuff and I got it. And my daughters want it now. In the book was a picture of a cabin, which the troop had up in Wyckoff and we used to hike from Paterson up to Wyckoff. And in the wintertime. My grandson is very impressed by the fact that we went up there and stayed overnight in this cabin in the wintertime and cooked our own food. And I told him about the day I was selected to make the cocoa. And I put no sugar. Too late we discovered it was the soap powder I had put in the cocoa, not the sugar. [laughter]. This is prologue to war, I guess. [laughter]

KP: Well on the war, you were growing up in the 1930s and I guess one question before the war: this is the Great Depression, your father was a Republican, but how did he feel about the New Deal?

WM: He was very bitter about it, because he lost his job. And when you lost your job in the Depression, this was 1932 ... by 1933 he was out of a job. He wound up as a bartender and I told you he had some problems with alcohol so that was ...

KP: And that did it?

WM: Yeah. It is probably difficult to explain by anyone who's a Republican then, I guess, but it didn't matter, whether Republican or Democrat you picked your ... I think, probably, most people picked their parties by the number of special events and picnics that each party had. And in Passaic county the Republican party was very party prone, apparently. As I can remember.

KP: So you remember going to a lot of Republican party functions?

WM: Yeah, oh yeah. Well, see my uncle, ... was head ... of the fourth ward, had a big club, which was this community center. The parties and the things that were held at that club were part of life for the entire fourth ward, which was a big chunk of Paterson. And he was also under sheriff at the time, which meant he was a pretty big man in town. And he was a Republican so which way would you go? Gordon Canfield was the representative, he was a Republican congressman from the district and the family knew him, so this, you're a Republican. That's the way it was. It had nothing to do with economics or politically correct or anything. [Laughter]

KP: In the 1930s, we know in retrospect more than probably people were aware at the time, that America was going to war gradually and things were heating up in Europe and in Asia. Growing up, how much did you know what was going on in the world?

WM: Very little. I learned more about the war from reading two books, Herman Wouk is it? **Winds of War** and **War and Rememberance** that's about what ten years ago or something like that?

KP: Yes.

WM: War was a very, this may or may not be true, I suspect it is for a lot of people, a very, very personal thing and in a very, very limited sphere, unless you were a MacArthur or a Nimitz or a Bull Halsey. I got a Bull Halsey story about Rutgers, too. The war existed only where you were. That day that I heard Pearl Harbor was, I knew where Pearl Harbor was bombed. I knew it was in Hawaii, had no idea where Hawaii was. It was out that way somewhere. I had never been, we had been to Montreal when I was a kid, probably about seven or eight years old. [I had] been to Washington, been to the Poconos, I'd been to Montauck, Long Island, 'cause an uncle of mine had a hotel out there. That was my world. ... I was aware of the German-Nazi thing ... years before the war. I went to school with a kid named Heinz Souell. We started kindergarten together. In about the third grade and he went back to Germany with his relatives and lived with them for about four or five years. He came back, I think we were in the eighth grade. And he had been through the Nazi youth movement over there. And I remember going to his house and he had the big swastika flag and the bayonet "blut und" ... or whatever it is on it. While we had been in the Boy Scouts, he had been in the Nazi youth movement. And it was ... first realization on a personal basis that this kind of thing actually happened. Heinz played football at ... at East Side high school. He went into the American army. I think he wound up in the Pacific, I don't know, ... I lost track of him totally in that time. But I was at, I think I was at the New York World's Fair when the Nazis invaded Poland. And it was again something that was "over there." The only connection I had my father had been in France during WWI.

KP: How did he feel about the coming of the Second World War?

WM: Well the only time we discussed it was that, probably that Pearl Harbor day and the day that I had him sign permission for me to enlist. We never really discussed it. ... We lost a lot of contact through the years, particularly when I was in service. We didn't ...

KP: You did not write?

WM: No.

KP: When did your parents separate? Was it when you were growing up?

WM: About that time, about that time. Yeah it was, the war overrode the same era in my life. So, I guess we hated the Japanese immediately. Japan had been a big joke here in my growing up, because anything made in Japan would fall apart immediately. And I remember talking about them shipping steel to Japan. And I remember seeing in a news reel launching a ship and the ship turned turtle as soon as it was launched. And we all laughed at Japan. You know, the poor, pathetic Japanese. They came around snapping pictures of us over here. That was, then they were all spies. They were taking pictures of what, they didn't know. We didn't have very high estimation of the Japanese.

KP: So Pearl Harbor must have been a real shock for you.

WM: I had a very close friend, a guy I had been to high school with and he was about two years ahead of me in high school, but lived in the same town. We became good friends ... I knew his mother and sister very well. And he was at Pearl Harbor when it was bombed. And that probably was part of the motivation that moved me, because I was very angry about it. How dare they do this! That was as close, I guess, as that part of it came to me, that Ed was over there. He wasn't hurt. As a matter of fact, he was there when they were bombed and strafed. He was at Schofield Barracks.

SH: How soon were you aware of the atrocities in Germany?

WM: I read what everybody else did, I guess. You had the Nazi sympathizers here in the country before we were actually engaged in the war and I guess they came in varying degrees. They had Bund meetings and I read that in the paper, if you read the Hearst paper, which I did or the *New York*, what was it the *Journal American* or whatever it was at the time. ... Yeah I was aware of it, but again it was on the other side of a wall. It was something out there. You saw it in a newsreel, you read about it. I read a lot, I did a great deal of reading of newspapers and magazines and that sort of [thing] even in those days. So I was aware of it, but it was something else, somebody else.

SH: No community reaction?

WM: Everybody, well I say everybody, I was not at odds with many people, for strange and funny ... Who was the ... beat poet?

KP: Jack Kerouac?

WM: No, the other one, Golds ...

KP: Ginsberg?

WM: Ginsberg. He grew up not too far from where I lived in Paterson.

KP: Allen Ginsberg?

WM: His father was my high school English teacher, one of the finest teachers I ever had. Now I found out years later that he had graduated from Rutgers. Allen Ginsberg's father had gone to Rutgers.

KP: How interesting.

WM: And he was a wonderful teacher, an English teacher. He had, he spoke poetry, he spoke ... and humorous, one of the most humorous teachers I ever had. ... But the rest of the people, we were all, for example, Heinz Souell, this kid who had been to Germany, we were all sort of in awe of him. Maybe ... we thought ... he was something else at first. But then, of course, he played football. ... He'd hurt and bleed like everyone else.

KP: But you sort of bought that superman image almost?

WM: Well in a sense. We didn't admire him. We thought it was stupid. We did, we thought it was stupid. But we were aware that it happened and he was so completely brainwashed that when he came back as a kid, you know he spoke it. It was gospel when he spoke, for him. Whether we, I don't recall that we argued with him or anything whether there was anything to argue about. It's your, your red wagon, you pull it.

KP: But he really gave you the Nazi party line?

WM: Yeah, well ... he accepted it. That's the way it was. He, what more receptive age to get that fed into you.

KP: Yes, but he joined the American army?

WM: Yep. ... I don't recall the circumstances. I had already moved up to Little Falls.

KP: Yes, so you?

WM: And so I kept track of them, but ... my very close friends that I did keep track of. One, who incidentally was shot or injured, could not have been more than a half a mile from me on Okinawa and he was very seriously injured and we got together after the war, but he eventually, he, as a result of his, well he committed suicide. He was about 24 years old when he died. But that group of people fragmented. When I moved up to Little Falls and when the war began it just sort of happened. And guys disappeared almost overnight. Some of the guys enlisted. Most of them ... buddies, we enlisted, but not together. One other friend of mine, one friend of mine, Jack Hough and I went down and enlisted together. We both enlisted in the navy-air force, so we thought, and they swore us in. And we sat around for a couple of months and I said this is ... he

said, relax, "We're in, we're in." Well, I finally went to them and I said, "Look, I don't want to wait. I can't get a job. ... I'd have to lie and say I am gonna be available ... and that sort of thing." So ... they swore me in again. They took me. When the war ended, he'd gone to flight school, when the war ended he was on a carrier in San Diego waiting to go overseas. [laughs]

KP: He never left. So if you had waited you might well have been ...?

WM: I might have...

SH: You would have at least have gotten near an aircraft carrier, right?

WM: Actually, I did. On the way back I was evacuated. They took us out of Okinawa in a hospital ship to Guam and after about a week they flew us to Pearl Harbor. I'd never been in a four engine plane before. And about a week in Pearl Harbor and I came back on a wounded aircraft carrier. They loaded us on a carrier and took us back to San Francisco, used it as a hospital ship. ... They had to go back for repairs. I think it was the *Randolph*, ... I forget which carrier it was, now. But I had a very checkered career. I started out, with (?) duty with the Navy. I convinced them I didn't want to hang around. So they swore me in again in to New York. I went to New York and then they put us on a train went down to Norfolk and about halfway through boot camp was a great experience then. It was in early '43, I guess. And the rifles that we trained with were wooden stocks with gas pipe barrels. Wow, that's all they were. They didn't have any real rifles to use. And so we trained with those things. And they said you can go to school, various schools to learn things for a career in the service and I don't remember what the choice was, but I volunteered for gunnery school. I really don't know what the motivation was. I had done a little hunting, small game hunting as a teenager.

... And I went to gunnery school. At first, I went down to a place called Damneck, D-A-M-neck, Virginia, near Virginia Beach, out on the coast. That was ... marine and navy. And we learned about a lot of weapons. I wound up with a 20mm Orlikon anti-aircraft weapon. And then they taught us all the various ... middle of that, again I was still, but, as far as I was concerned, in the navy. They said they needed drill instructors back at the seabee camp in Camp Perary in Virginia and I went back there. ... I dressed in a marine type uniform. And I was a drill instructor for a short while and then I stayed with this one group while they decided, I guess ... I just went back and forth at gunnery school a few times. I went up to Rhode Island for advanced training ... We did some combat training out in the woods of Rhode Island.

Then they put us aboard a ship at Quonset Point, Rhode Island. It was a refitted Grace Liner called the **Santa Monica**. And they'd made a troop ship out of it. And they had, I think, a battalion of Seabees on it. And a mixed bag of marines. And I really didn't know what I was going to do, except they said, I was in the gun crew. And mostly in those days I think they used to put armed guard gun crews from the navy on these ships, but they may have been short of them. And I was in the gun crew. ... And we started out from Rhode Island, down the East Coast and that first night I slept down below decks. They were about four or five bunks, pieces of canvas. ... No way am I going to do this. So the rest of that trip I slept top side in the gun tub every night, rain or whatever. We were 51 days on that ship. We went down the East Coast.

Somewhere off the East Coast, the rest of the convoy veered off and went east to Europe. And we went down all by ourselves with no escort. Down the Florida coast and we were going across the Caribbean. I remember the skipper got on a local (?) and he said, "You're all very lucky to ... view this wonderful sunset here in the Caribbean. Civilian people spend hundreds of ... (thousands now), ... dollars [for] this great pleasure." And the only thought we had, was what a beautiful silhouette we made against that sunset. Because the German submarines were knocking off ships on the East Coast like crazy in those days. But we went across and through the Panama canal. First, we went to Cuba. Ever been to Cuba? Yes, I've been to Cuba, Guantanamo. We never got ashore and from there we went down through the canal. I went ashore in Panama City and got ammo on the ship. And we went to Samoa, another great tourist attraction. American Samoa, we visited there and then to New Caledonia. We knew things were going to get interesting from there on. And we went up through the Hebrides to Guadalcanal. It wasn't quite secured then. It was still hot. And we thought we were going in there, but we steamed right past it ... well past Savo Island there and Tulagi on this side and Guadalcanal on the left. We went west about ... 30 miles to an island called Banika, which is part of the Russell Group. I tried to find that recently on the map and I think it is now called Kennedy Island. I haven't confirmed this yet. It was actually an atoll, a semi-circle with a lagoon in the center, Jack Kennedy's torpedo boat squadron was on that island. A friend of mine, a classmate from Rutgers, Andy Sivess, was a shipmate of Jack Kennedy's on that island.

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

WM: That was our first taste of life, nature in the raw. We went ashore in the afternoon. There was no resistance from Japanese in that area. We weren't too far removed from Boy Scouts and we went ashore and we had some jeeps and we picked a spot, looked like a good place to spend the night. We set up our pup tents among, trees so we couldn't be seen from the air. About two o'clock the next morning this tremendous thunderstorm hit. And we had picked a low spot for camping and we were groping around for our rifles. We wanted to get our rifles, that's only thing we wanted, we wanted to get our rifles-- get them out of the water. [laughter] We were under about three feet of water there. I lived on that island of Banika for, off and on, for quite awhile. We did, again anecdotal stuff. We had outdoor plumbing that was covered with canvas, you know, tent sort of thing. And they would cleanse it by burning it out with kerosene so the inside was all covered with soot. And I was, unfortunately, out there, reading the mail I guess, one day and when Hell Point on Guadalcanal blew up. It was an ammunition dump and it went up and we were ... thirty miles away. Concussion was so incredible that the soot all came down and covered me. [laughs] It was an interesting island. It had two air strips on it. One was a bomber strip and it was a fighter strip that came in from another angle. And once or twice incoming planes that were shot up would make a mistake. The bombers, a couple times, came in on the fighter strip and went right off the end into the lagoon so. It was tragic.

KP: What was your unit's mission?

WM: Well I was an interchangeable part, ... I was a Navy gunner, ... ordnance man. And I worked after awhile mostly with marines, but I was still navy. So I was always attached to a navy unit. At that point, it was a Seabee group. I ran the armory and then worked with the

marines updating, repairing weapons and that sort of thing. Occasionally, well, I went up to Bougainville on a combat mission with the marines, 'cause we all wore the same suits. It didn't make much difference. You didn't wear any insignia anyway. And that was my first, we were bombed from time to time, but it was not, ... you know ... It was my first introduction to where the other guys were shooting back for real.

SH: At Bougainville?

WM: At Bougainville. And, again, the survival rate is amazing. The other things we did, the Thirteenth Air Force was there. Bill Bauer, have you ever interviewed Bill Bauer?

KP: Oh yes.

WM: Bill's a ... very good friend. Bill's, ... I guess, a retired two star general now. But he was with the Thirteenth Air Force. I didn't know him then. I met him here at Rutgers. But ... they'd been shot up a lot at Rabaul, above where Bougainville is. And they were running out of waist gunners. So they were looking around for volunteers. It was quite inappropriate 'cause they were in trouble and we were in trouble. We volunteered. We went up as waist gunners. And we went on bomb runs. We would strafe. Then we'd run like hell, because if we got caught, we would have been court-martialed.

KP: So you were an Air Force waist gunner for awhile?

WM: Couple times, couple times.

KP: Which was totally against ...

WM: Everything. [laughter]

SH: Everything!

WM: The biggest, the second biggest battle of survival was boredom, really even ... I remember my youngest daughter, Jill, asked me a couple of times what emotions I remember most from the war. I said the first one was fear, which was always there, interrupted occasionally by periods of terror. But actually the one-- boredom in between. You were just there. You didn't really know why you were there. Nobody told you, very private war, unless you happened to overhear something, you didn't even know where you were most of the time. And it didn't matter that that was Guadalcanal. You knew there had been a big battle there and you were part of it. And Bougainville, that's where we were, and then next time ... the armed forces edition of *Newsweek* or *Time Magazine*, a flimsy thing that used to come around, it was in there. But you really didn't have a feeling of where you were. You were just there.

KP: It is interesting that you should say that you were bored. A lot of people have said that they were bored. But also that you didn't have a sense of where you were. In a sense you had very specific assignments.

WM: You knew where you were. You knew what you had to do, but it didn't really have a feeling of perspective in where you were ... in the thing. You knew you were involved in something. Maybe, I guess, there's good reason why you can't tell people more about what they're doing in a war. Later on in business I found it important to confide people I'm working with, to explain to them why they were doing what they were doing, because it made their job meaningful. Even small, boring jobs became important if you knew the purpose. We didn't really know most of the time. I recall this is one quick, little anecdote. On that island of Banika, one time, we were crossing the lagoon between one strip and the other and I was on a weapons carrier, in the back of an open truck. We pulled on this pontoon barge to go across. Everybody, "Let's go, let's go!" And I said, "Wait a minute, we're waiting for somebody." And this jeep came roaring up and pulled along side of us, we looked over the side. There was Admiral "Bull" Halsey! He looked up and he said, "Hi guys!" "Hi admiral!" End of story there.

Back in 1952, maybe. Rutgers had been designated as the site for the National Football Hall of Fame. Never happened, but it had been designated at that time. We used to have a Hall of Fame game here and we invited famous football greats down to it and we were playing Brown here. Admiral Halsey was the honorary president of the National Football Hall of Fame. George Little was the athletic director at Rutgers, a great, great man, a good friend of mine. We were at the luncheon before the game and George Little came over and said, "Bill come here, I want you to meet somebody!" And he grabs me and takes me up to the head table. He said, "Admiral Halsey, I want you to meet Bill MacKenzie, he used to work for you." [laughter]

SH: That's good.

KP: Did you tell him that you had run into him earlier?

WM: Yeah, I told him the story about him crossing. ... Of course, he remembered it. [laughter] We spent a lot of time there, on those islands, back and forth. I even went up to parts of New Guinea, which I don't remember even by name. We went to these things and they were in some, they were combat missions of sort. We knew what we were supposed to do and sometimes we got shot at and sometimes we didn't. Sometimes we were in and out. And this is the broad brush and about November or December, December of '44, I had applied for officer candidate's school. I applied for flight school again and officer's candidate school and ... they sent us back to New Caledonia ... about the first part of December, middle of December '44. We said, "We're going home, we got enough time in now. Got overseas, all this overseas time and combat time. We're going home." And we were absolutely certain we were going home. And I got a call one day to come up to the company commander's office and said, "Your appointment has come through for officer's candidate school". ... I said, "Do I have an option?" They said, "Yes, of course." I said, "I don't want it." I figured, "Hell I'm going home, I'm out of this thing." And about three nights later, I think it was Christmas Eve, we were in the ... big open air theater and the skipper got up and said, we figured he's announcing we're going home. And he announced we're going back up.

And right after Christmas we went back up to Guadalcanal and we retrained and we trained some other people and then somewhere got on a boat and we went over to Tulagi. This is a story that's been, I've read about it. They put us ashore, fleet recreation. They threw all these people ashore and they threw all the beer and some baseball bats and gloves. "Have a good time." People wound up beating each other up with bats and all that kind of thing. And they put us back on a ship. We went up to Ulithi. And then we went to, they told us when we were leaving Ulithi that we're going to Okinawa, which was the next stop on the subway, had no idea what Okinawa was. That was ... an experience, Okinawa.

KP: I guess before we even get to Okinawa, I have a bunch of questions. I even have some questions about basic aspects of the islands, because you had mentioned boredom and I guess some of your creature comforts, beginning with food, I guess. How much of it did you get and how good was it, and how did it vary between islands?

SH: Did you get mail?

WM: Almost no variance, which, because we were eating whatever they brought. ... I remember one, this is an illustration, a couple of illustrations on Banika. We were able to get hold of a boat once in awhile. And we would follow the garbage scow out to the reef. And they would dump trash over the side, you know, food waste and that sort of stuff, which meant the fish all assembled. And we dropped a dynamite charge over the side, backed off and set off the charge. The stunned fish would come to the surface and we'd scoop them up and take them back and eat them. Some were good. I found out later, about a barracuda, which were very, very tasty. I found out later, under certain circumstances, barracudi can be very poisonous. We were fortunate. The other thing was they announced one day we were going to get some fresh meat. And this ship came up from New Zealand and I swear you could smell it when it was still 60 miles at sea. It was full of mutton. And that was the first fresh meat we had in God knows how long. And it was awful, it was just awful. In fact, until long after the war, I was in a meeting down in Philadelphia, this was around 1960, and I had never eaten, I wouldn't eat lamb, I wouldn't look at lamb. And I went to the restaurant in the hotel there, the Cheshire Cheese Restaurant. And they had a mixed grill and there was a big lamb, mutton chop in the middle. It was delicious. The food was not very good in the Pacific. When we were in any kind of a combat or a near combat situation, you ate K-rations, sometimes C-rations, which were bigger boxes. They were pretty awful. And when you're in a rear area they, you got powdered eggs and powdered milk and canned stuff. And I don't know anybody who ever starved. I guess if you're hungry you eat it. I remember, I think my cousin or my mother or maybe both sent vitamin pills to me, because they had read somewhere that that was, it would probably kept us from getting scurvy. The night before, whenever we went into a beach, any invasion beach, we got a meal of steak, an orange, and maybe some sliced tomatoes or something like that. I remember when we went, before Okinawa, back to New Caledonia, when I thought we were going home, the first time, they let us out of the camp. The native people, the French nationals, who lived there, they all had restaurants serving steak and tomatoes. I don't know where they raised them, we didn't ask them whether it was steak of what, but it looked like steak and tomatoes, which were the two things we ...

KP: You couldn't get.

WM: Couldn't get. Fresh vegetables or beef. ... But, I don't know anybody who starved.

KP: But it sounds like you ate a lot of the same stuff over.

WM: Same stuff over and over. You didn't look forward to going to dinner.

SH: How much interaction was there with the natives or the nationals on these islands?

WM: There wasn't much in the war. I was in Hawaii a couple of years ago and I got into a cab to the airport in Honolulu. And I used to jump in the front seat with the cab driver. And I could just barely get in. He was a big guy. And I looked at him and I said, "The islands, huh?" He said, "Yup." I said, "Fiji"? He said, "Yup." I said, "Sure glad to have you guys around." ... Fiji scouts were the bravest guys I ever met in my life. They were incredible, with the Japanese. They really were great.

The natives of the island, the Melanesians on most of the islands were very much in awe of us, I guess. ... They didn't really come, ... if they were not evacuated, they stayed in their own little spot. And some of the stories, I can ... I think **South Pacific** ... and some of the stories were true. You gave them a t-shirt and they were immediately cut out the, the women would, you know, 'cause that was the thing.

In New Caledonia, the natives were French. New Caledonia had been, I guess it was a French penal colony. It started as that and then, I guess, ... immigrants had come there from France and also I guess from Australia and New Zealand, which were originally penal colonies too, and they welcomed the trade, let's put it that way. But the Americans brought their own stuff with them. In New Caledonia in the center of town, there may have been a public park at one time. The army, I guess, or military, took it over and made a beer garden out of it. And they poured beer, big bottles of Australian beer and just served you that. And the French people, the native people we, only when we went to eat steak and tomatoes, that was about the only time you ever saw them.

On the other islands, on Okinawa, Bougainville they were incredible, you know, the bombardments and that sort of stuff. If they were there, they were hidden in caves. In Okinawa the people were literally shell shocked. They had been bombarded, I guess, for weeks before we went ashore and we saw very little of them. The strange things. The strangeness of war. We set up with, I guess they were pre-fab toilets. They dug a hole and put the thing on top, if you could sit on it. Each was out in the middle of a field. You'd be sitting there and then the Okinawa women would walk by and you'd get all embarrassed because, you know. [laughter] In the middle of this horrific thing. I saw very little of the natives and even in Hawaii, on the way back, I was in the hospital in Hawaii for about a week 'cause I ... wasn't walking very much, yeah, but we saw very little of the people there. So almost had no involvement with them, except for the Fiji, the scouts, they worked with us. They hated the Japanese, oh they hated them with a vengeance.

KP: You were in sort of anomalous position. You remained in the navy, but you were attached to marine units.

WM: Yeah, at Okinawa that was probably one of the-- I wonder sometimes, you see, ... war was such a private thing, you knew only what was happening around you. I don't know who, somebody must have been in charge. Maybe it was the good lord and [he] just pulled the strings, because somebody knew what was happening. I went ashore there. We went up on, ... it was navy troop ship, but it was manned by a coast guard crew. In fact, this guy in the coast guard crew was from my home town, Little Falls and I hadn't known him, I knew him very casually. His sister, had gone to school with me. And I remember when they were bombarding that invasion morning, I went up the gun tub with him. It was the first time I'd ever seen the sixteen inch shells from a battleship, see them go through the air. Yeah, I'd used the bullets from machine guns. [verbally simulates the sound of a machine gun going off]. ... God, you could actually see, looked like Volkswagens going through the air. I went ashore, I don't know, fourth, third or fourth wave. It didn't matter what wave it was. We were all in at once. Ostensibly with a Seabee battalion, it was a stevedore battalion, and the first objective was the Kadena airport, which has been in the news recently, for some reason or another. Unfortunately, that rape situation over there was at the Kadena airport. I didn't know it existed anymore. That was our first objective that day. And we went ashore. About six o'clock in the morning, around that time--it was L Day, Love Day, it was Easter Sunday and it was April Fool's Day that morning. And we went ashore and we didn't hear a shot fired for about three hours, I guess. And we just walked in and we were almost to the Kadena Airport before we heard the first shot fired. And then it got very muzzy. I had this base with this Seabee battalion, but they were working at stevedore trucking, unloading. And I was working with the marines and I set up an arsenal, an ordnance place. There was no place to go on that island, unless you were a cave dweller. It was like trying to dig a hole in the floor. It was ... concrete outside. It was coral and it was all right at first until they got angry and started shooting back. And then if you read about Okinawa, they ... I don't think I realized that ... they considered that the home islands.

KP: You didn't realize that at the time?

WM: We didn't know that, no. It was Okinawa and the Kyuku Islands, I think. And it didn't occur, we didn't realize we were attacking the home islands. We wondered why the hell they were fighting the way they did. It was if-- I'm not trying to change your mind, but this business of whether we should or should not have dropped the bomb, I think we probably saved two or three million lives, give or take a million on each side, 'cause they would have fought to the bitter end with it. And the expression, I think from **MASH** McLean Stevenson says there are two rules of war. Rule number one is young men die. Rule number two is nobody can change rule number one. And it was furious. That's why it all runs together from about that point on, because day and night were the same. Every night they came in with the ... all day long that, we call them saki divers or the Kamikazes. They were knocking off the ships, we could see them get blown up, I saw the **Birmingham** go, right out there in the water. And at night they were coming over and bombing and strafing. And we had no place to go. One guy, Carleson his name was, I don't know how the hell that we wound up together and we got caught out in the open one night and

we ran. There was a lot of caves in Okinawa. We ran into one, "Hey this is a good place." And we found a little shelf in the cave, it was overhead like this. So the next night we pulled in there and we rolled a bed roll out and I guess we spent about two nights there. And then it rained and the water came up and, washed us out. But out in the fields you had to dig and you scraped dirt up around you to try to get underneath. I got hit out there that one night. I guess, I got hit in the back of the neck with a piece of steel under my helmet and then I got hit in the leg there. But there was no place to go so you just stayed. One night we went down to ... they dropped color incendiaries and a guy about 30 yards away, when he got hit almost directly and he was burning and screaming. We took off for this cave. ... We found out in between that some of them were tombs and the Okinawans buried their dead in them, in urns. They were not bodies, it was in urns. So the custom became that, if you found a place, you moved them out at night and then you moved them back in the daytime. We did one night...

KP: You found one of these caves?

WM: Yeah, I found one of the caves. I remember going into it with a gun in this hand and, I don't know why, this was stupid, had a search light and held it out like this in case there was a sniper in there they would shoot for the light. [laughter] Maybe I'd get a shot back at him. ...

KP: But you never encountered a cave where there were ...?

WM: Never, never, no. They were, gee, I think that the Okinawans considered them sacred, because they were burials ... some of them were just caves, they were depressions in the ground. Must have been very unstable ground there at that. We went up to the northern end. I latched onto the 29th Marines, which is what this is mostly about. The 29th Marines and I did not go out to Ie Shima, the island, but went up part way and we cleaned that out pretty well up there. Again, I guess, one of the funny stories, we liberated a distillery up there. [laughter] Somebody found it and the word got passed very ... quickly and wound up with a couple canteens of Japanese brandy. [laughter] ... We came back. I guess the army had turned to the south, the marines went north. This friend of mine I mentioned, I think he was in the 77th or 27th Army Regiment, he was in that group down there and he got, he got hurt down there. We thought we had secured the north and that was it, the airstrip, Kadena. And then the Yontan airstrip, which I guess was just south of us. We went down there, too, and then things ground to a screeching halt. And it was, this got very, very wild, because there was no place to hide and there was no place to go. And we're getting the bombing every night. And the saki divers in the daytime plus the Japanese were, really dug in. They had dug in that Shuri Line I guess it was. The Machinato line, it runs right across there. They were (the Army) running into problems down there with the ordnance. They were just wearing the stuff out, 'cause it was just shoot, shoot and shoot. And I went down there with them and we were running out of stuff. I mean we were dumping everything we had at them and they were dug in, they were really dug in. They had probably a couple years they had spent digging those fortifications. And again, I don't know who was in charge of the war at that point, but I remember going back and yelling to somebody that we just were running out of ammunition. And somebody said, “then go get some.” ... And I was on a truck out to the beach and I'm not even sure what beach it was. It was back up north of Yontan, I guess. And there were a bunch of ships anchored off. And I went out and got on board an ammo ship. I just got

on board and then the General Quarters sounded. And they started making smoke, which they did to obscure them. I remember standing on the deck outside the radio shack. I wanted to get that ammo over the side and onto the ... beach. Because we needed it and they wouldn't move, because the Japanese divers were coming in. They were coming in at smoke stack level. And you could stand and see them. Is he going to hit us? You know, they go roaring over I head or toward another, veered off and it was smoke, you know, from the guns firing. We had five inch guns and the 3.5 guns and the 50 millimeters and twenty millimeters, all going at once and all this stuff happening. And then I'm thinking: what a hell of a way to run a war! And I thought that was it. Thought it several times.

KP: Because you? An ammunition ship gets really hit that's it, you're finished.

WM: There's nothing. ... There's no long lingering. [laughter] You're just a puff of smoke, just a puff of smoke. And as I say my main emotion during most of the war was fear interrupted occasionally by bouts of terror and that was certainly one of them. Somehow or other you dived down, they hit a couple of ships near us and I got ashore. We got the ammo down the beach there and, as I remember, we had to get it across a river, which was just north of the line. And I remember, I was wading across carrying a part of a machine gun and I got spun around right away, you know something's happening, but you don't want to know. And, of course, it was pretty much dark, so they were shooting up star shells. Pitch black and all of [a] sudden it was like the middle of a stage with a spotlight on and you just have to go because you can't stop here. [laughter] I'm not even sure what the time element was. Somewhere along the line I got, I ran into a corpsman, who just bound up my arm and I stayed in the thing. That's where there's a passage in here and where I say we must have been very close together within Manchester and I, at that point when we were trying to go up this hill and you had to go. There was no option, you just had to go. And there were a lot of unlikely heroes. You know, it wasn't a matter of bravery, the juices or anything else. That's what you had to do. You might just as well go forward as go back, 'cause you're not going to make it out of here anyway. And somewhere along that line I was sent back and I got hit again with some shrapnel, I guess, in my legs. And somebody caught up with me along the way and said, "You're going back up to a tent," or whatever.

And then the word got around that we were going to go out. There were two hospital ships. We could see them out there. The *Comfort* and the *Mercy* and these were lit up like the top of the Empire State Building. They were ... big white ships with huge red crosses on the side and there was a red cross on the stack. And flood lights on the ship from all around so that, they were there. And we were supposed to go out either the *Comfort* or the *Mercy* and just about dusk, I guess it was, the Kamikazes came in and one of them picked the *Mercy*. And dropped a bomb right down the stack of the *Mercy*. The report later on was that it wound up in an operating room and they were all killed in there. And they called us off. They put us back in a dugout right near, I guess it was Kadena. I'm not sure, the Kadena airport or the Yontan airport. And it was, I guess they used a bulldozer, they had dug a hole in the ground. And I think there were, I'm guessing, but probably a guesstimate of maybe 25, 28 guys in there. And the intelligence was that we were probably going to go out the next morning. And sometime during the night we took a direct hit in that bunker. A bomb. And I think five of us got out of it. I think, that's what I recall ...

KP: You must have been very scared, because you are supposed to be evacuated and wounded and out of it and your hospital ship gets sunk, that you were supposed to go on. Your bunker ...

WM: Petrified, petrified. ...

SH: Did the *Mercy* go down?

WM: It, I believe it went down, yes. They helped us out of this bunker where we were and I remember it looked like a meat market. And it was hard for me to believe that this was not a standing rib roast. This was the end of a man. We got out to the *Comfort* and they took our clothes off and threw them over the side. And they, I couldn't, they couldn't separate me from my rifle and my helmet. [laughter] I wanted to keep those. And I guess I had them for a day or so, but you know as sad as I was feeling for myself, the other guys, who were with me. We were on board the *Comfort* with a bunch of, the off shore (?) Kamikazes. The first ones they hit were what we called the picket ships. The destroyers out there. That was our first defense. And they were being dropped ... like pool balls. They were just, you know, boom! They were knocking them off. And these were guys who were destroyer sailors, who'd been tossed into the water. Some of them were half burned. They were full of oil and everything else and they were on this ship with us, the *Comfort*. And we got out. I have no idea ... how long it took to get from there to Guam. We landed at Guam. I was in the hospital there, I think about four or five days. And one night about midnight, I think it was, they took us out to the airport, ... Agana in Guam. And we flew out that night and I remember we woke up in the morning. That's before we came into Kwajalein, we landed on Kwajalein, I looked out the window. I'd never been in a four engine plane before. I look out and I said, "The the wing is flapping." And ... I guess an army nurse came by and she said, ... "[What's the matter?]" I said, "I think we're losing a wing." She said, "Oh no, they always do that. They're big, they have to go up and down." And we landed at Kwajalein. That was an experience that looked like this was the end of the island. We landed and we rolled to the end and we refueled, and we took off. We landed at Johnson Island in the night and wound up in Pearl. I was there for about three (?) Ieia Heights … I'm guessing a week. Overlooking Pearl Harbor. And they took us one day all the way out to Diamond Head, in some kind of a vehicle. Fleet recreation, welcome to Hawaii. It was the Carter Estate, Carter's Little Liver Pills. Have you ever heard of those?

SH: Yes.

WM: The Carter estate was out near Diamond Head. And I guess they had given it over to the armed forces. And they took us out there for recreation. [laughter]

SH: How wounded were you? Were you able to recreate?

WM: I was just shot through the arm. This healed up. It was just a scar. In fact, it's still there. And I had some shrapnel in my legs and it was difficult walking, but I was not. I was embarrassingly unhurt I think.

KP: Well, you probably felt that when you saw people, who had really been mangled.

WM: Yeah, yeah. Right. I don't remember, talk about food, I don't remember eating on Okinawa. I'm sure we did. I weighed about one hundred and fifty-five, when I got into the war, when we got back to Pearl, one hundred and twenty-five pounds. I came back to San Francisco on a carrier. And I remember before we're coming, we're coming in ... under the Golden Gate and somebody took me topside on deck. And must have been somebody's idea of a welcome to San Francisco and they were shooting off fireworks. It looked to us like ... shells, machine gun bullets. And everybody said, "What the hell are we doing here?" ... But we were welcomed back. From there I went to San Diego to the naval hospital there. And that's where all the guys were, most of them from Okinawa, some from Iwo Jima. ... But that was the end of the war, for me, good riddance to it. But there were so many guys that were so much worse off, all the way along the line.

KP: In your job, how close were you to the front, because it sounds like you were a little bit back?

WM: Much of the time, but the front is a very fluid thing. On Okinawa, for example, we went up to the northern end, ... We didn't hear a shot fired the first couple of hours, nobody did, I guess. You'd be going along up the northern end and all of a sudden there'd be a pocket of resistance. And they would be there in back of you or on the side of you. But in Bougainville it was the same thing. It was in the jungle. You know, you can't see more than 50 feet. ... On Okinawa ... on the southern end, it was there, it was there, no matter where you were. 'Cause whether you're ... out in the water, not much closer you can get. ... It was ... all encompassing.

KP: How often did you fire a weapon in anger at the enemy? How often would you have to defend yourself or go on the attack?

WM: It varied. The first time, ... the waist gunner in a plane you were strafing to discourage anti-aircraft fire and I think the time in New Guinea, probably fired a couple of times. We got fired upon so we fired back just to respond. On Okinawa, I remember a couple times at night when we were caught out in the open. And these planes were coming over and just picking up the rifle and firing at them. Didn't have a chance in hell of hitting them, but you got just angry, just to respond. Did I ever hit anybody? I don't know, probably don't want to know.

SH: I was going to ask you did you ever see anyone any closer than the planes?

WM: ... There were two nights in the cave. One ... was a hand-to-hand encounter. Didn't encounter anybody in the cave, but we were going toward it. We were, I think we surprised a couple of Japanese snipers. And they started to break and we didn't know they were there and they turned around. It would have been a knife fight except that we fired first. And they either escaped or we don't know, it was in the dark. The other time Carleson and I were in this cave under the ledge, before the rains came. And it was the first or second night we were there. I was lying down and rifle on this side and I had a side arm at the time, but I had it lying ... I had mounted a 38 as an armorer, ordnance man. I mounted a 38 on a 45 frame. The best use of a 45

was to throw it at somebody, because nobody was accurate enough with it. But with a 38 on it you could be accurate. And I had it lying along side my head. We had a ... tarpaulin, a little shelter half over the side of us, because it was raining out. ... I was lying there half asleep and heard rustling outside, footsteps and then rustling again and footsteps. And Carleson started moving, ... quiet. I pulled the 45. I picked it up and I pulled around. I heard it again and I fired the 45, a 38 (slug?). And I heard thump and ran out, a goat. The poor little goats and chickens on the island had ... gone berserk, because they had been under fire for so long. This goat was wandering around at night and he wandered in the wrong place. That's my only absolute kill.

KP: Was the goat?

WM: The goat.

SH: Did he taste good?

WM: No, a couple of guys tried the chickens. They said they were so tough from running that there was ...

SH: Where was Carleson from?

WM: He was from Jersey City. I never, never ever got together with him. There was another guy I remember who was in my gun crew from near Phillipsburg. It's a little town just south of Phillipsburg in Warren County. Dutch Rodenbaugh who was from there. I tried to look him up one time and never got in touch with him. Most of the guys that were in my gun crews, the ones that I was close with stay up with the ships. I was probably younger than most of them, but some from Long Island and a couple from Brooklyn and there was a little belt of guys from Ohio and from Michigan. I met a girl from South Dakota. ... She was the first person I ever met from South Dakota. In fact, the only one until fairly recently. She was a navy nurse out in San Diego. And I dated a navy nurse out there. She was from Washington, Indiana. I was in the coffee shop one morning and these nurses came in. They were chattering away and there was something about her voice. I had had a guy in my crew from Indiana, "Indianer." And she said that word and I said, "What part of Indiana are you from?" I had a date. [laughter]

SH: Do you remember their names at all?

WM: The girl? Ruth Wilson. I called her once when I was in college. Well, we were very close as a matter of fact. It's one of those things for awhile, but then she went back to Indiana and I came down here to Rutgers and we kept in touch for awhile. And then she married the town pharmacist I think, something like that. I think we talked once or twice on the phone. I met another navy nurse from Montclair. I can't remember her name now.

SH: Do you remember the name of the woman from South Dakota?

WM: No I don't. Are you from South Dakota?

SH: Born in Rapid City.

WM: For goodness sakes. You're the third person from South Dakota that I've known.

SH: Small world. Would you pick out any one or were there many acts of heroism that you can describe?

WM: This sounds very stupid, because I know it's one of those judgements, which is not really based on fact.

KP: Hold that thought.

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

KP: This continues an interview with Mr. William H. MacKenzie on February 8, 1996 at Rutgers University with Kurt Piehler and ...

SH: Sandra Holyoak.

KP: Sandra had asked you a question about ...

WM: Well acts of heroism and whether I recall any. And I started, I guess I hedged on it, saying that it sounds like a misguided view of it, but unfortunately some of the most heroic things that I saw, I think were prompted more by ignorance than by pure heroism. Guys, who didn't understand what the situation was. And I think that might have been true in a lot of cases. I'm sure it was not in some, a lot, most cases. But I saw guys do things that were not good sense. They ...

KP: They had not learned the lessons?

WM: They hadn't learned the lesson. One of the most tragic ones was on Okinawa. Had a guy, a young kid from Brockton, Massachusetts, where Rocky Marciano came from. The kid's name was, (kid, everybody was a kid. I was a kid, too). His name was Marinelli and he was a big, easy going, Italian kid. He was not a dumb bell by any manner or stretch. And I feel he was the kind of kid, what would he have done after the war? He probably would have worked with his hands, probably been a craftsman and that sort of thing. And I tried to warn him several times about being careless with weapons and ammunition and that sort of stuff. And he was unruly. And I can remember I was standing outside the dugout on Okinawa one day. Things were flying, I guess. And somebody had said that we had uncovered a store of Japanese ammunition just down the road. And I said I hope nobody's messing with that stuff, because a lot of it's booby trapped and it was. They set us up and I guess about that point I heard this roar and I heard a scream and I looked up and there was Marinelli coming at me. One of his hands was gone and the other one had maybe two fingers left on it. And, you know, I said, "What the hell did you do?" And I knew what he had done. And I just hollered for medical aid and they took him away. I never saw him after that.

KP: So you do not know if he made it through?

WM: I don't know. I think he probably made it, 'cause he wasn't dead. He took everything in his hands. He had some blood coming from his chest and his face, but I don't think he was killed. But, I thought, what a tragic thing. He was oblivious to the danger involved. I think there must have been acts of real heroism all around. I know being out on that ship that day, on that ammunition ship, watching what some of the other guys were doing. Again, you're trained to do something and you just do it. That extra measure, whatever it is, I think it's in the circumstances. I think you read in Manchester's book, some of the thing that are described in there. Yeah God, this guy would go into a ... was he nuts? He did that? You know and I'm sure that's not just ignorance. My brother-in-law, my wife's brother was an ... air force captain. He had been a good athlete in high school, he went to Roanoke College in Virginia. I guess the end of his sophomore/junior year he enlisted in the air force and he was a light bomber pilot, B-26s he flew over Europe. I don't know how many missions he flew, but he had two planes shot out from under him. And he was shot down. He landed one in the channel and one on land, on France. He never lost a crewman. To me that was an act of heroism. He brought those planes in without losing any guys. You know, that took a lot of guts. He had a chute, he could have gone over the side, but he didn't. And I'm sure there was a lot of it, but, you know, we were stupid kids, to some extent. Why was I there to begin with? Well I guess, ... they would have gotten me anyway, I guess. I could have wound up on the carrier in San Diego, at the end of the war, like Jack Hough. [laughter] ... This is probably the most thought I've given or talked about the war since ...

KP: Since the war?

WM: Since the war.

KP: You've obviously read about the war and you have read William Manchester's book.

WM: I'd read Manchester's book, ("Goodbye Darkness) because I, somebody told me it was ... about the 29th Marines. I'd read a few, well before that I read, I think when I was in college, I read Mitchner's **South Pacific**, on which the show was based. You recall that book **South Pacific**? ... He wrote a piece about the island and then a fictional piece that accompanied it. And he had one that was, one of the sections about Guadalcanal. And I could identify with it. And I, I've been a writer. I've always liked non-fiction. ... I read some fiction. My wife is a heavy reader. She reads mostly fiction. She was a history major at Douglass when it was N.J.C. And my daughters are all very heavy readers. Two of them read a lot of fiction. My oldest daughter's the resident genius. ... She's a scientist, ... she became a veterinarian and then she decided that wasn't her future. She went back to Rutgers after her marriage broke up and she got another doctorate ... in toxicology. She works for Dupont now.

KP: When did she do this?

WM: She got out of Penn. Well, she went to the University of Connecticut as an undergraduate. Three years she made Phi Beta Kappa and got admitted to the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary College. She got out of there in '77, I guess, and got married. My grandson was born in 1985. Then her marriage went bust and she came back here. And I suggested, "Why don't you go back to school?" And she did! She went to Rutgers. When she was down in North Carolina back when her ex-husband was getting his doctorate in plant pathology down at N.C. State, she worked at a veterinary hospital for awhile. Then she worked over at the ... University of North Carolina Medical School, doing cancer research. And she got interested in toxicology.

KP: Yes.

WM: It was the same thing. The other two daughters are normal like me. [laughter]

SH: You had mentioned William Manchester's book. Had you ever entertained the idea of either writing such a tome?

WM: I really haven't thought a hell of a lot about the war. Yeah, I have obviously I have, but I haven't written anything for publication ... When I was in school, I came back in '45. ... Came to Rutgers in the Fall of '45. There was a story in the paper the other day about this woman, who left a million dollars or something to the New Brunswick Library. Her married name was Davis. It had talked about her pre-marriage name and then I finally put it together. Her husband was C. Rexford Davis, who had been a professor of English at Rutgers. When I was in school, for many years apparently before and afterward, every Rutgers freshmen had to take the "Davis Test." And that was basically a grammar test. And you didn't graduate until you passed the Davis Test. In fact, some guys in my senior class were struggling to get it. ... But I took the Davis test and passed it apparently and I wound up in English Comp. class, the first year. And you had to write things. My most recent history of life had been: they held a war and I attended. [laughter] And so I wrote a couple of things about it.

KP: Do you still have what you wrote?

WM: I don't think so. I remember I wrote one about New Caledonia. It was just a narrative about nothing particular. On our way up we were, went ashore and we're standing on the dock in New Caledonia. And looking at the water, in the harbor there, this thing started coming through the water. It looked like a telephone pole coming through the water and then it swerved. It was a giant shark. And, you know, to me that was a story. ... I don't think ... any of the combat stuff ... I read Manchester's book and I marvel at it, because, I think of a term I learned in psychology about "forced forgetting." I think I put a lot of the details out of my mind. My daughters used to ask me about it. They don't pursue it. Jill has threatened to ...

KP: To tape it, well you can give her a copy of this tape and she can listen. Well, we can make a copy for you, if you want. You can give it to Jill.

WM: [laughter] I would yeah, yeah. ... I haven't really tried to keep up the acquaintances with the people. I went back to Hawaii. While I was there in '45, in '70, I went back again. And my wife

had taught school with a woman, named Karen Oyama, whose family was Japanese, but they had been Hawaiian for many, many years, for many, many generations. And she was from, she born in Hilo, on the Big island. But her sister and brother-in-law lived in Pearl City, which was across the way from Aeia Heights. And we went out there on a long weekend, about four or five day weekend. And we met them, Karen's family. It was Hawaii ... revisited for me. And these were Japanese people, but they weren't, they were Hawaiian people as far as they were concerned, they were Hawaiian people. They had [been] subjected the same war. I went back again. I've been back three times since then.

On my third visit was some woman ... [who] worked with me. We worked together on this show that we were doing out there. They had never been there before. We went out to the **Arizona** Memorial at Pearl Harbor. Then we went to the Punch Bowl military cemetery. And that's the first time I'd ever been there. And little things that ... at the Punch Bowl cemetery they have these mosaics honor each of the major battles. And we got to the one, towards the one for Okinawa, but it was one of the other islands. I forget which one it was, which battle. And we're standing with a group of people and the guide was explaining this is what happened on this island and ... group of people, very respectfully silent, quiet and a voice came from the back. "Well that wasn't exactly the way it happened." The guide said, "Yes sir, you were there?" He said, "Yes I was." Actually he said, "When they came in on this side," he went through on his (?) Everybody was listening very carefully and the guide said, "Thank you very much sir." ...

Then, there's the other side of the coin. I've been to the **Arizona** twice, I went there with my wife in '70 and then I took these people out there in whenever it was. And there were a lot of Japanese tourists there. And my inner reaction was not a comfortable one for me. They were laughing and joking and I was thinking about the 1100 guys down there underneath this upside down battleship. And I didn't find it very funny. I didn't visibly react, I don't think, but I was not happy about it. It's probably just as well I don't think about it.

KP: What did you think of the Japanese? I mean it is a complicated question in some ways, but during the war you had mentioned earlier that the Japanese were laughing stock until Pearl Harbor.

WM: Yep.

KP: And then after Pearl Harbor they are not only an enemy, but they are really ...

WM: They were tough. They were tough fighters, very tough fighters. And they had, I think they were driven by a much stronger force than perhaps we were. ... The religious aspect, ... I don't know, the thinking of the emperor as a deity, I guess. Like many of the other peoples in the world, particularly some of the ones we face in the Middle East today. Dying is an act of going to heaven. I think they really, I know they had to feel that way. The Kamikazes, for example. There was no question in their mind what they were going to do. They were in there to kill and to die in the process. I wasn't involved in the battle on Guam. I had some very good friends who were. A bunch of them (Japanese), many of them committed suicide going over that cliff there. I heard later on that many of them did that on Okinawa. I did not actually see that, but I

understand that when we were up in the north end, northern end there near Ie Shima that a bunch of them committed suicide there rather than be captured or ... be killed. ,,,

SH: What did you know of the culture before you got there?

WM: Not too much, not really. In fact, I didn't know what Okinawa was, that it existed.

SH: Right.

WM: I didn't know ... they considered it part of the home islands. It was an island in, again, in a large ocean, which was a nameless thing for me. It was something on a map.

SH: There were no movies or the military did not provide you with any?

WM: Not really, no. Oh, maybe obvious propaganda, I don't even remember that. I was impressed when we were landing on Okinawa that ... in fact, somebody said that we are in the China Sea. Wow! Hey this kid from New Jersey is in the China Sea. ... When I first realized I was coming home, I guess it was on Guam. It wasn't when I was leaving Okinawa. I could not envision, I could not even believe it. It had been a few years, a couple of ... years. I could not think of it as 12,000 miles away. I'm going back there. It was a different, totally different world. I came back. I was in San Diego. I was discharged there. And I waited for about three or four days to see if I could hitch a ride on a military flight east. But there were obviously so many people coming in. I wound up taking a train back. And I came into New York City. I got off the train at Grand Central Station. Wow! Then I walked up to Times Square and the lights ... oh wow, wow... I got home just a couple of days before the war ended. I remember the night that it ended. I was up at my cousin's house up in Packanack Lake. And I guess it came out over the radio. I was only, I still had, I guess I still had military clothes. And they said, "You have to go downtown." They drove me into Paterson for the celebration. [laughter] Really strange, 'cause I had, I was just trying to get into college.

I came down here to Rutgers. I didn't have a place to live. The first semester I lived in a private home over on the other side of town. I used to walk back and forth and the second semester I got a room in Leupp Hall. And by my sophomore year, I wound up in a fraternity house.

KP: How hard was the adjustment from the military to civilian life and to college? Because you had mentioned when you were first evacuated that you did not want to give up your rifle.

WM: No, no, geez, that was glued to me, that was part of my body.

SH: I have a question before that.

WM: Things happen so rapidly, I guess, and probably just as well that they did. I came home and I had to make a quick decision. I had to pick a college and I had to pick a college that would pick me. And I had no idea. I went to the high school and to get a transcript from Fred Raubinger, who eventually ended up as state commissioner of education. He had been the

principal, but he may gone into the service, too. Fred Schneider was the acting principal. I got the transcript. And I had been very active in high school in sports and writing newspaper and all that, the glee club. And I came down here with my transcript and, to the admissions office and (Werry Zinjy?) was the assistant registrar. I reminded him that he had been coaching high school football. I played against his team. He looked at my transcript and shook his head and said, "You were pretty active in high school weren't you?" I said, "Yeah, but not in the classroom." [laughter] He said, "Well, we'll accept you and see how you do." And I had gone to Columbia. I knew they had a journalism school and they laughed at me, said this is a graduate school. And I had gone to Stevens, I think ... to take the college boards and I applied there. I really didn't want to be an engineer. So somebody said, journalism, Rutgers, and I was here and they took me in. That was it. ... The adjustment was, I guess, I was living away from home, just the way I had been for a couple of years with a bunch of guys. [laughter] The Corner Tavern was close, that was the only difference.

KP: Yes, the Corner Tavern has surfaced in a number of interviews and my current students can relate to that too. It's still a watering hole for Rutgers students.

WM: I gather it's changed a lot since...

KP: But they still have the mugs.

WM: I guess so, I haven't been in there in ...

KP: Yes, they still have the mugs. The mugs are still up there.

SH: Well, I was just going to ask where were you when you first heard about the bombs that were dropped?

WM: The atom bomb?

SH: Yes.

WM: I was home then. Yeah. Well, the second bomb was the day before they announced the war was over. They dropped the bomb on Nagasaki**,** I guess. It was the same one, and that day the Japanese, they didn't formally surrender, but they said that's "no mas." So I was either at home or-- it was not a significant thing. ... We dropped the bomb and ... my reaction then, I think, was the way it is today, thank God.

SH: Were you aware of the magnitude?

WM: That it existed?

SH: The magnitude of it and all that?

WM: No, no, no idea, no idea. It was, ... I knew what bombs could do. I had no idea what something like that would be. I didn't even know that it existed or ... what its capabilities were, but anything that could end the war I thought was, had to be a wonderful thing, because I knew from that point on, the way it went on Okinawa, it was gonna be a very bloody, deadly thing from here on. A lot of people were going to die. And as far as I was concerned enough had already, more than enough.

SH: That was my last war question.

KP: Well I have some war questions. You had sort of gotten to the Pacific so early, but I had some, this is even going back to your sort of basic training. When you think back on your basic training, because you had a sort of very unusual training background, how well did it prepare you for what happened to you?

WM: Well, I was eighteen years old, by that time. I was in pretty good shape, I'd been a pretty good athlete in high school and I stayed in pretty good shape, I guess. So it wasn't that much of a thing. We did just your basic physical stuff in boot camp and the combat training sort of phased right into it. That ... the obstacle course is hand over hand and crawling and all the stuff. It wasn't ... it was an interesting thing. It was a new experience. We learned jujitsu, they called it then. And hey, oh wow, what a way to knock somebody down. And I was a very impressionable kid. I had never been really that far away from home and in the situation you didn't think about the deadly nature of it. ... You learned ...

KP: So it did not really strike you until they sent you out to the Pacific that you really knew what you were getting into.

WM: ... I think the first time, I think the first brief awakening was at gunnery school down at Dam Neck, Virginia. When we had the twenty millimeter, where you're introduced to it, it was a truly foreign weapon. It was a machine gun. It was an Orlikon, I think it was made in Sweden. And we had ... these big barrels. We loaded the shells in. We had to load the magazines ourselves. And you had these boxes of shells and they were about ... long and twenty millimeters, good sized shell. And I learned that there were three of them. One's a (?) incendiary, one is armor piercing and one is high explosive. And they were marked color banded and they had to be greased. So they'd throw them out on the bench and hey, that's hot stuff. And then you had to grease them and you shoved them into the magazine, you loaded them. And you went down on the line and then a plane came over dragging a sleeve. And hey you could shoot that plane down, you know, wow! ... Somebody fooled around once and nicked the tail of a plane, you know, wow a guy could get hurt out here. And that's ...

KP: That is when you sort of ...

WM: Yeah, first time I saw somebody throw these twenty millimeter shells out it was like they were, like pick-up-sticks. Wow! And then the combat when I got more involved with the marines and were training Seabees as a drill instructor. You learned some of the fundamentals of combat, how to use a bayonet and rifle range and ...

KP: I mean, you were drill instructor for the marines, but you had not been a marine yourself.

WM: No, ... see it was ... whatever was handy got used.

KP: It just seems like that was one of the odder things that happened to people.

WM: How could it work?

KP: Yes, I mean my impression of DI's were career marines or if not career marines, somebody who had been to boot and even had been overseas and here you were a navy person and ...

WM: Even after a couple of years, I was still at the feet of these guys, listening to some of their war stories. Because I, even though I was sort of at arms length with these people, they were more heroes to me, even though I may have been doing some of the same thing that they were doing. It's a very, very small world. I realized everybody didn't have that feel. Some were just, you know, in it. I don't know how it worked. The complete disarray on Okinawa, how anybody knew where anybody else was at any given time totally eludes me. I mean obviously you stayed together in a squad, in a platoon, in a company and that was some measure of organization. But when you had company commanders getting knocked off, platoon sergeants getting knocked off, and you know with the end of a day maybe only half of the guys were still there and you reformed in groups again. And who's in charge here, anyway?

SH: Were the troops integrated? I mean not only integrated within army, air force, navy, that way, but even blacks and whites?

WM: Not, no, I don't recall it as such. I mean I recall people of different color ethnic/racial things, but most of them were not, most of them were not. I don't remember any black guys in boot camp. Very interesting though, on Okinawa there was a 10th Army operation. The commanding officer, that was an army general, I guess Buckner [Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buchner, 1886-1945] was until he got killed there. But you had the 29th Marines and the 22nd Marines functioning under army command. The Sixth Marine Division was under army command with the 10th Army. Who's in charge? [laughter]

KP: While you were in the navy, but you really had gotten along with the marines very well, because you served with them. But you had also, you even had some contact with the air force at more than a distance. You had actually flown and Okinawa had a large army presence. What did you think about the different services and protocol, both subtle and large differences, because the air force had a very different way it treated its enlisted rank and file?

WM: My first encounter with, I guess, the air force was on that, on Banika, where we volunteered. It was the 13th Air Force. I talked to Bill Bauer about it, 'cause ... I don't know whether he was there at the same time or not. The first real encounter with the army, I think I mentioned Peleliu, I was in on that for a very brief time. The marines went in on Peleliu and I think that they were supposed to go in a thousand yards and then the army was supposed to

relieve them. And they got in a thousand yards and the army said, "The beach is not secure, we're not coming in." We went 1200 yards, they went 1200 yards and then the army said, "We're not coming in until you secure 1500 yards." It was not a very nice, compatible, friendly arrangement. When I went back to New Caledonia in '44, I'd pulled shore patrol one weekend in Noumea. And the First Marine Division had been there and the 77th Army, I guess it was, came down. And that was the group that did not relieve the first on Peleliu. It was a very, very busy weekend for the shore patrol. Is it in **Mr. Roberts** that they talk about when they are in the island of "Ennui." When they bring their cargo nets over and they're throwing the people on the cargo nets and bringing them back on the ships, 'cause they were so drunk and beat up in the brawl. The whole town is a mess. That was based on that weekend in ...

KP: So you saw that?

WM: I was on shore patrol. [laughter] There was a great deal of, I think, pride in one's own breed, but when they were mixed together, I think there was mutual respect. Thank God.

KP: Well one thing, I have interviewed a lot of navy people and they have said that the navy is a very hierarchal service. I have gotten the impression that there is a very big divide and clear division between officer and sailor.

WM: I think much more so. I know that only, because I was never that high and up the ladder. I never had a problem. A very close friend of mine, I don't know if you've interviewed him. Vince Kramer?

KP: Oh yes, yes.

WM.: Vince was a colonel in the marine corp, which is very high. I mean, to some of us, marine colonel is the equivalent of, go two steps below God. ... Obviously, he was a very unorthodox high marine officer. ... Very unorthodox person, for instance. ... You agree? (laughs)

KP: I have interviewed him.

WM: Most think he's a character. We're good friends. We became good friends. I think we're having lunch next week. But, I think, my impression is over the years that the navy is much more caste conscious. I think they've become less so since the tailgate parties, which has probably done them some good, I hope.

KP: What about the marines, because you were in a sense a marine, but you were not? How did you see how the marines functioned?

WM: One of the key things, an element of pride that I've never seen in any other service, in any other human relationship, ... even though I was with these guys, I don't consider myself a marine. A lot of people do. I don't, 'cause ... they're not holy, they're not anything like that, ... and there's ... just as many screw ups in the marine corp, maybe more than some of the others. Maybe

they've used it as an excuse over the years, but I think ... the element of pride is unrivaled any place that I've seen.

KP: What about the air force where you had even flown a few missions, unofficially to your credit?

WM: ... Sort of go-to-hell outfit, I always had the figure, the feel. Knowing my brother-in-law who was there and Billy Bauer. Bill was, if you talk to him, you know, he, I guess, when he was in college, he got into the Air Force R.O.T.C. and he went into the war. He stayed, in the reserve and he wound up a two star general. He probably would have wound up higher, except for (?) Margaret Chase Smith. She held them all back for a few years when she was head of the Armed Forces Committee. In his class, Rutgers Otto Hill. You probably know the name.

KP: Yes.

WM: Otto's down in North Carolina now. He's a very close friend of mine, too. Otto I don't think went into the R.O.T.C., but he graduated. He was a football player here. He went into the air force and he got involved. They had these jock outfits. He wanted to play professional football. He played, you know, exhibition football. He played in Hawaii. He played in Guam. He played around the country and he had a great career and I think they served a purpose, whether the war was a different type of thing for him. And Bill and Otto are very close. Well, the three of us are close friends. But the air force was a more laid back I think.

KP: That's the impression I have gotten that I am curious to get you opinion, because you were in a unique position to observe all four services.

WM: The guys I knew after the war, ... very good friends who were ... air force pilots, air force people, not necessarily pilots, seemed to be much more laid back. This Andy Matyas, ... that I mentioned to you. On the Rutgers Vietnam Memorial a guy in my class is on that. Which means that he, and he was an air force veteran when we were in school, so he stayed, he must have been in his fifties when he was killed in Vietnam and I don't know the details of it. I really don't know. But most of the guys I knew, who were air force people, particularly pilots, are real go-to-hell guys after the war. Maybe they had to be.

KP: You were a drill instructor. How did you like that job and what did you learn about taking raw recruits and turning them into marines?

WM: It was a tough challenge for me, because I was not only young, I always looked young. I think when I became a sergeant overseas I decided I should grow a mustache so I'd look a little older. And after two days it looked like a two day beard, after a week it looked like I still had a two day beard, after three weeks, a three day beard, I gave up. ... I realized that if I was going to succeed in that assignment, at that time, I had to play it by the book and ... that's what I tried to do. Funny, years later, I developed a very close friend, a guy I worked with in Mutual of New York. He was a vice president for sales. And we were talking one day about the service. He had been born in Europe and Curt Rosenberg, he was actually smuggled out of Europe, out of

Germany, because he was Jewish. [He] came over here when he was a kid. He'd gone to the University of Turin, in Italy. ... And he enlisted in the Seabees. And we put the timing together and I was his drill instructor. These were ... these were guys, who were going to be commissioned. I was an enlisted man. They were going to be commissioned and I was their drill instructor. And I had to just play it straight by the book. Again it was a very strange thing, because I was young, you know, and what am I doing here? And I guess maybe that's how I survived a lot of things in the war … that I frequently said what am I doing here, I'm supposed to be here. But again, it's all a very personal thing where you are and there's not too much relativity with the rest of the world.

KP: Do you ever regret that you did not stay with a gun crew? Would you have preferred it, in a sense, not that you had a lot of choice, but would you have enjoyed that more?

WM: Well aboard ship, 51 days, that was one of the most boring things that I can remember in my life. Used to welcome a rainy night, 'cause you'd be lying up there in the gun tub, at least you'd get wet. The only time I came out of the gun tub pretty much was to eat.

KP: So you were really bored?

WM: Yes.

KP: What did you do to pass the day?

WM: Well, going up to Okinawa, I used to play cards. When I was in high school, guys I lived near used to go hunting and fishing with them, used to play cards and I learned how to play cards a little bit. So when ... going up to Okinawa, we were a long time going from Guadalcanal over to Tulagi then Ulithi and then over, and we were playing pinochle, hour after hour. And the last couple of nights I remember trying to go to sleep and every time I closed my eyes I could see a pinochle hand. I had never played pinochle since. I read a lot. You could get books, you could get books in the service and when there was an opportunity, I read a lot.

SH: Did you ever get any mail once you left the states?

WM: A lot of mail, ton of mail. I had a lot of people that wrote to me. I had, not guys obviously, but a lot of girls I went to school with ... , my cousins. I had a cousin, lived in Brooklyn, she and her husband, her husband was my cousin Bud, and she sent me the Sunday funnies every week. The New York city [papers]: the *Daily News*, the *Daily Mirror*, every weekday and Sundays. She'd always mail them to me out in the Pacific and I would get them and the guys would come charging around, you know. If you hadn't been getting mail for a few weeks, you get a big bundle of the stuff. And my mother wrote a great deal. That was a big thing to get, that was your only link and you wondered did they really exist?

SH: Was there anything going on in the states that came back in the mail, that was reflective or surprising, how it was for them here?

WM: Oh you'd get little bits and pieces. ... I think this cousin, or it may have been my aunt, sent me a can of Spam. She had to use coupons to get it. ... That's one of the few things we had. I didn't mention that. How could I forget that? She sent me a can of Spam.

KP: Which you had in abundance?

WM: It's about all we had. [laughter] But they were very concerned. You see, my father was the youngest of many children. And I was an only child. On my father's side, my youngest cousin was ten years older than I. And he lived in Brooklyn at the time. He's been down in Florida for the last five years; he retired. He had his own business. He's the only one left. So I was the baby. My father was the baby. I was the baby and they were all worried about poor Billy out there. He shouldn't get hurt. You knew they were concerned. But that was one of the bright spots, I guess, was to hear from people.

KP: And the mail was fairly regular?

WM: I think so.

KP: You did not go for months without mail and then all of a sudden get a sack of it?

WM: I guess the longest span was at the end. We went into Okinawa on April 1. I think we left Guadalcanal probably a month earlier. But we had been in New Caledonia and then up to Guadalcanal and then up to, up there. And then, I was evacuated ... probably about the middle or third week in May and I went ... to Guam and then to Pearl Harbor. I think I got back into the states, in San Francisco, I'm guessing, around the beginning of June. And then down to San Diego. I hadn't been paid and I don't think I had any mail over that period of time. And, when I got to San Diego Naval Hospital, ... the records still hadn't caught up with me. So, they would gave me some money, every once in awhile, to go out. And when I was discharged they gave me my fare back to New Jersey and gave me a check for my back pay. It was more money than I ever had in my life. It wasn't a hell of a lot, but it was more money than I'd ever had. [laughter]

KP: Is there anything we forgot to ask you about the war?

WM: I'll think of all of it on the way home.

KP: Yes. Did you ever get to any USO shows?

WM: I saw ... Bob Hope and Jerry Collonna over there with Frances Langford.

KP: Where was that?

WM: ... I think that was on Guadalcanal. On Banika, in the Russell group, I saw, at the time nobody knew who he was, but later on people did, Jack Parr. He was a sergeant in the army then. He was Sergeant Jack Parr and he put on, I thought he was a very, very funny man. After the war I was home one weekend "watching the radio," I know that guy. .... In New Caledonia when

we were back there for a couple weeks before, when we thought we were going home, they had a big open air theater. They had coconut logs for the seats. And they had stage shows and movies. I saw *Porgy and Bess* there with a full Broadway cast. And they had some good movies, whenever possible. I saw *Going My Way* out there in Guadalcanal. And *Bells of St. Mary*.

KP: So every now and then you had some real fun? I mean it would be possible to have some fun?

WM: ... Life was segmented so you had fun with what you had at the time. I remember going into town in New Caledonia with a couple of guys and we had a few beers and we walked around. I had a chief gunner's mate that I worked with for awhile. I think that was on, in the Russells. You hear these funny stories from time to time, but I think he sent a jeep home, piece by piece. And I know he built a motor boat there with a full engine in the thing, he constructed. And I think he sent a jeep home.

SH: Did you hear radio shows and things like that? I mean I am just curious as to what your perspective of the states was like, for example what was going on here.

WM: We heard a lot of the Hit Parade, I guess. That was played constantly. They ... was recorded. Tokyo Rose, .. she was there regularly and she would greet you and give you the business. But, yeah, we saw it and we had *Time Magazine* and *Newsweek*, they printed what they call overseas editions. They were mail editions and they were printed on onion skin, pretty much. They had no advertising, just a cover, black and white. And they had a summary of the news. And say once in awhile I'd get a newspaper and once in awhile, you'd see a copy of *Stars and Stripes* or something like that. For me, and I can speak only for me the rest of the world was something that was going on outside the door. Where you were, as boring as it might have been on some occasions or as incredibly horrendous as it may have been on others, this was where we were.

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

WM: ... But the game got called off, because the powers that be heard about it and they decided somebody might get hurt. So they cancelled the game. In fact, Evanowski was from New Brunswick. When I was in high school we had scrimmaged. New Brunswick was one of the best teams in the state then, New Brunswick High School. And my high school coach had gone to school here at Rutgers and he knew the New Brunswick coach. We were just a little high school and they were state champions and ... we played against them. In my boot group there was a guy named Johnny Evanowski. He was from New Brunswick, he'd been a fullback at New Brunswick High School. We became buddies (?) I got splintered off into this gunnery nonsense and I don't know whatever happened to him. When I came to Rutgers here in New Brunswick, I think I tried to get in touch with him and I never was able to. I don't know what ever happened to him.

KP: It had gotten cut off the tape, but you said you had tried organize a football game in boot camp.

WM: We did. We got it going. We used to play "recreation" football and it was more tackle than touch, but that's what we were used to. We challenged another company. And John Evanowski and I were the ring leaders in this thing. And we had the game scheduled. One of my least outstanding achievements, ... I guess, occured in Williamsburg. It was near Camp Perry, where Seabee trained. I went into town one night, into Williamsburg, quiet little town, but then it was still loaded with soldiers and sailors. There were two navy camps there and two army camps there. And Chowning's Tavern is a little colonial eatery on Duke of Gloucester Street. We went in there one night and we were drinking ale and eating sandwiches. ... And, ... repeatedly I ... led a parade down Duke of Gloucester Street that night back to the camp bus. When we got back, I also was accused of leading a charge through officers' country, in the quonset huts. You throw a rock over a quonset and it makes a lot of noise going over. And three o'clock in the morning they broke us out for a hike. [laughter] And the navy hierarchy got its revenge then.

SH: We are finding out why you wound up a marine.

WM: There were (?) fun things. I had a buddy, a high school buddy from Paterson East Side, (Lou Hoitsma, who was a freshman at William and Mary when I was down there. And Lou hadn't gone into the service yet. So I visited him a couple of times and he introduced me to a lot of people at William and Mary. I enjoyed that sort of thing. And even when I was up in Rhode Island, before we shipped out, went into town a couple of times, into, Providence and then toward Kingston, I guess and U.S.O. dances and met people. They were nice people. You know, they were people, who were interested in the guys. ... I'm about to get maudlin. I really, I don't envy my grandson growing up in the world that he's growing up in today. I think this country lacks a lot that it had, even as bad as it was, maybe in those war years, at least the beginning of the war. Saying I don't approve of it means absolutely nothing. [laughter] But I fear for this country if it should ever be attacked, seriously attacked again, because I don't think it has the gut level to do it again. I think that the Desert Storm was one thing. I think we're very fortunate the Russians didn't build up what they could have built up. But I can see this country fragmenting under pressure today and that's I think unfortunate. Fortunate part is I ain't going to be around to see it. I hope I'm wrong.

SH: When Vietnam came along were you glad you had daughters?

WM: That's a funny thing. I have very mixed emotions about that. I got very angry at times. First of all, I thought that, I didn't think we should have been there. Maybe not for the same reasons that a lot of other people thought we should not have been there. I didn't know anybody there at the time, at least I thought I didn't. I found out later on that I did. I have one nephew, who was in the proper age at the time, was in college and I hoped like the dickens that he would not be called and he wasn't. I don't know why we were there. I think it was very ill-conceived and why we stayed there was even more immoral. And I didn't know much about it. I learned, I met a few guys in the past eight or nine years, who were there. I felt very angry about how they were treated when they came back, because they were there not by choice. They had that thrust upon them and then they were blamed for all the ills that they had, you know. "I-- a stranger

unafraid in a world I never made. They certainly never created that world, but they were treated very badly by this country. And I think, maybe, we made some amends, a little bit. I don't think monuments do it. Last summer I took my grandson down to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington. He and I had a very interesting chat. ... He was ten years old. ... He's enchanted by, a little bit as a kid that young, by war as a glamorous thing. ... And without spelling it out or without going into detail I think I ...

KP: You were trying to dissuade him of the idea of war as a glamorous thing.

SH: What would you say to him?

WM: Well, I think guys, who were thrust into that thing and I think in many ways they had a more difficult sacrifice to make than we did. We never had a problem with drugs or booze over there. You never saw it. That was an added factor, that was thrust upon them. Nobody told them. ... I didn't know really why I was there, except I knew the Japanese had done something that I didn't approve of, and so that's the reason I was there. In Vietnam, I don't know why they were there or why anybody could have told them they were there. ... I feel very badly for the guys, who were in Vietnam ... somewhat about Korea, too. George Buckley was one of my best friends at Rutgers. He had been in the Third Marine Division. He was on Iwo Jima and he survived it. Never even got nicked on Iwo Jima. We got into the junior year and Buck said, "I'm going into advanced R.O.T.C." I said, "What are you doing that for?" I said, "You were in the marine corps. You got out as a sergeant and ..." He said, "Hey, I'm not going to get married for awhile." He said, "It sounds like a good life. I'll get a commission when I graduate. I'll go around and live it up a little bit." I said, "Okay." He graduated in '49 and they held another war. Buck wound up in Korea and he caught one over there. He was killed. Day that I got word that he was killed, ... my wife and I got this thing in the mail from him with Korean funny money, they used as invasion money. He said, "Here, have a drink on me at the Corner Tavern." And I got that I found out he had been killed over there. So it's a terrible way for people to waste a lot of time and lives and I hope we don't have it again, but since we don't seem to learn ...

SH: One of the things that Manchester says in the book is that he believes that in combat there's virtue. Do you agree with that?

WM: He believes in ...?

SH: That in combat there is virtue.

WM: There are a lot of things, not a lot, there are a number of things, he wrote in the book that I wasn't really sure I understood completely. I think there are, yes in combat there are some things, which are not virtuous, but they are virtues. I think that, I'm not sure we always agree with the answer, but I think a man does understand himself a little better in a situation like that. I think it, everything has to be qualified and quantified, I guess. I'm not sure exactly what he meant, but I think that I would say it this way: I would not now give up that experience for anything, nor would I ever do anything to avoid doing it again. And I hope, in my case, my grandson never has to endure it. ... I think we find some things in it, but it's a hell of a way to find things out about

ourselves. And I think there's always ... the question: Did I do enough? Did I do too much? I'm glad I was there, I am glad I was there. But I'm just as glad I've been to other places.

SH: Did religion play a part at all in your life?

WM: Pardon?

SH: Did religion play a part at all in your life then or now?

WM: It's interesting, ... my family ... floated about. Scottish and my mother was English, I think a Methodist. My grandmother came from England, and, of course Scottish on my dad's side. Presbyterian, but part of the family became Episcopalian. And my father and my mother and I joined a Dutch Reform Church in Paterson. And I enjoyed it very much. I was involved in the choir and then the young people's group. It was a good fellowship type of thing. When I got in service, I realized to me it was important that I have some kind of a religion anchor. And it seemed to me that the Catholic kids, I had grown up with some Catholic kids and they, I didn't like the discipline that they went through, but it seemed that it had some merit to it. I'm not sure this is religious as much as it is being part of something. On Okinawa, when it got very, very hot, we had a Catholic chaplain, whom I got to know. I got to know him, I was ... I had some steel back here (in my neck), and it was being taken out on an open operating room out in the middle of a field. And he came around, we were talking. And I chatted about it. It seemed like, you know, there was a compulsion to Catholicism that I didn't find in the Protestant Church. End of story there. Fast forward. About a junior in college and I roomed with a guy, Charlie Dale, and we had these great conversations. He was Catholic. He didn't try to convert me or anything. But about the beginning of my senior year, I started talking with Father O'Day, who [was] then with St. Peters Church. And sometimes we talked over a beer in the Corner Tavern. I got interested in it and I decided I'd be a convert. And I did. I converted to Catholicism. It was coincidental my wife was a Catholic and it really wasn't ...

KP: That was not part of it?

WM: That wasn't [it]. ... It was just a coincidence. I'm not whatever a good Catholic is today. I don't go to church that often. In fact, the family doesn't. Funny story, about two years ago I took my grandson, ... three years ago, to Mass on Christmas Eve at St. Matthias Church out here. And he's sitting there, 8:30 Mass, you know, for younger kids. And we got there a little bit early, ... and he's looking around and looking around. He looks at me and I say, "What's the matter, Eric?" He said, "Who's getting married?" [laughter] His church ... [laughter] I think to me it was, I think always believed in God. When it was really hot, I think ... jist of my prayer was get me out of here. And I probably made a deal, you know, you get me out and I'll do this, and, of course, he got me out and I was a little slow on making my amends. ... I am not a working Catholic. I am not a churchgoer. I think spirituality plays a great role in my life. I pray a great deal. I don't pray for myself. But what role it played ... when I was really scared, it was good to have a feeling that there was a God around with a power greater than I, because I sure wasn't very strong in those situations.

KP: How often did you see a chaplain when you were overseas? It sounds like it was an infrequent thing.

WM: It was infrequent, it was kind of a thing. But one time, on Okinawa, well probably because I was in charge of the ordnance thing and we needed a funeral detail and I was to round up a firing squad and I did. And I had never been involved in ... a military funeral so that chaplain took us through this thing and where we had to, you know, be the pallbearer and firing squad type of thing. Not really, not really. They would have services if you were in a rear area. The day we went into Okinawa, they must have had it very early in the morning, 'cause it was Easter Sunday morning and they had services on the ship.

This friend of mine, Charlie Dale, who was my roommate and I had a great deal of conversations about Catholicism, about four or five years after school I got a card from him. He was in a seminary up in Canada. And about three years later I got a call from him from Washington. He gave it up and ... was working for the State Department, I think. Quite a switch, Charlie. [laughter]

SH: In looking through your files you really have had a lot of awards and recognition for all the community service that you have done as a Rutgers student and an alumnus also in the military. Is there one award that you are most proud of or thankful for?

WM: Not in military, not particularly. I had the, you know, unit citations, Purple Heart, and I have no idea where it is. My mother had it and I have no idea where it is and my daughters have asked me about it ... It was an experience and that was about it. ... Except for this rare occasion, I closed the book on that. At Rutgers I stayed involved, even today.

KP: Well that was one of my questions.

SH: It was just award after award.

KP: I was just going to ask you a question, because you became quite an active student, even though you had been overseas. I have interviewed a number of people for your class and they really just hit the books and maybe would go to a football game, but you really were a man about campus.

WM: Well, I had a lot of fun at Rutgers. I met an awful lot of people. I think during my freshman year I got into the *Targum.* And it was the first postwar year and it was a great struggle going on. I didn't realize that politics on campus, you know campus politics. ... And the guys who had been here during the war, at the end of the war and the guys who were coming back, we owned the *Targum,* we owned the *Targum,* and we're gonna, and I was sort of in the middle. I was a freshman reporter. What do I know? And I was elected editor-in-chief in my junior year, which is a year ahead of time. Actually at the end of my sophomore year I became editor-in-chief. So I was an elder statesman as senior. [laughter] But I got involved in other things, because it was a lot of fun to be in things. And then when I got out of school, I worked here for five years. That kept me around. And I lived in Franklin Township. It was nearby, convenient.

And I wound up on what they call the executive committee of the Alumni Association then, now it's the board of directors. And I was around, "Would you do this?," "Sure, why not?" First, I wound up president of the alumni federation, which is all the colleges in the university. And then later on I became president of the association, which is the Rutgers College, this campus. ... I've stayed involved over the years, 'cause it's been, I've met some good people and I've enjoyed it. And I really and truly believed that I owed Rutgers something. You know they were here when I came out of the service and I needed a place to land and they said okay. And I think Rutgers did a great service at that time. They had been a little college, a little college before the war. And they were not yet the state university or the idea was not, it was in the works a little bit, but they really did everything they could possibly do to accommodate the guys getting out of service then. People, particularly undergraduates don't believe it, we had class, you know, where the dormitories are, the river dorms, they were quonset huts built along there, and if you got an early morning class if your an eight o'clock class and they had them then, you lit the fire. ... They had a wood burning stove in those things. And we took over part of Camp Kilmer and part of the Raritan Arsenal. They used them as dormitories. I wound up the first semester in a home, you know, up on Townsend Street, then a dormitory here. The university had been using the Zeta Psi house ... for offices during the war and then I joined the Zeta house and we moved in there. But they had classrooms any place they could possibly put them to accommodate the guys. I don't know where some of us would have gone to school if it hadn't been to Rutgers. So I think the university did a great service to us. And whether that's part of it or not, that may bit a little bit, pressing it a little bit to say I was repaying a debt, but I didn't feel ...

KP: It really sounds like you had very fond memories of Rutgers.

WM: I do, I do. I enjoyed it and some of my lifelong friends are Rutgers people. Bill Bauer I met when I got married the year I got out of school and started working at Rutgers. And they had the faculty housing out at the ...

KP: Yes.

WM: And Bill lived across, Bill and Barbara lived across the street. And Otto Hill, who was then one of the football coaches, he lived diagonally across. We've been friends ever since that time. Some of my fraternity friends, some are still very close friends. Some of the other guys that I met when I was in school. Bert Manhoff. I don't know whether Bert's been interviewed.

KP: Yes, I've interviewed him.

WM: I'm sure Bert's been here. [laughter]. I'll tell him, I talked more than you did Bert. Bert and I remained good friends over the years and there have been other generations of people who have come through obviously since I have, but I like Rutgers. I'm not happy about some of the things that are happening today, but what the hell, it's ...

KP: How would you feel about your grandson going to Rutgers?

WM: Beg your pardon?

KP: Your grandson?

WM: Well it's funny, ... none of my kids went here to begin with.

KP: Although your one daughter did get a Ph.D.

WM: She did. Susan, she wanted to be a veterinarian from the time she was seven years old and they had and there was no veterinarian school in New Jersey, there still isn't. And she went to UCONN and they were supposed to open a veterinary school then, but they didn't and then she went to Penn. When Laurie came along she, applied to Rutgers. [I] think they accepted her at Livingston and she said no. And she went to Trenton State and she had a good experience there. And Jill went to the University of Delaware and she was, I think she made dean's list her first year and she wanted to transfer up here. I never entered the picture with this, when they were in school. I guess they could do it on their own. And she was accepted at Livingston. She said no. So she stayed at Delaware and she had a very wonderful experience down there. So I had nobody at Rutgers until Susan came back after her marriage ended and she didn't know what to do. I said, "Why don't you go to college?" [laughter]

KP: Little did you know.

WM: And she went here. My wife went to Douglass, N.J.C. But they were born on the campus, literally. They all went to football games before they were five years old.

KP: So they remember growing up at Rutgers?

WM: Oh yeah.

KP: Rutgers is for them home?

WM: Some of their friends today are kids that they met when they were little kids. Katie Hill, Otto and Liz Hill's daughter, is one of Laurie's closest friends. She lives down in North Carolina now with her own family. Jill still has friends that she grew up in Franklin Township and she knew some of the kids from here.

SH: So you met your wife while you were here on campus?

WM: She was a few years ahead of me, because she didn't go to war. She was class of '47. She was a history major, thank God! [laughter] I was a journalism major. They loaded me up on economics and history and poli-sci. I had to steal courses in art and music 'cause they did not think I needed that kind of stuff.

KP: But you enjoyed the art and music courses?

WM: Oh yeah, very much. Some of them I had to audit. While I was undergraduate. I knew Soup Walters because he used to lead the Glee Club. He said come on in. I sat through a music course and a couple of art courses I took. I didn't really need credit ...

SH: Did you come back and enjoy some of the credits? I have met some people auditing in some of my courses that are ...

WM: Well they have a new thing called (RU-ALL), I think it is. A friend of mine, Carl Woodward ...

KP: Yes, I've interviewed him, too.

WM: Carl's interesting, he's the third generation. ... He's Carl, Jr. Carl the third, I've known through the alumni association. His father I think I met once years and years ago. He was president of Rhode Island University. ... But they've had a couple of courses I was interested [in], last year they had one on the war in the Pacific, Stet Ardith Burke's taught it from the Japanese point of view. And I wanted badly to sit through that course and something I couldn't ... see I lost a good part of my vision two years ago. And, oh I know what happened! This year we went away, I guess, when that course was being taught. He's got one going on now or is going to be coming up. Ardith Burke's, I think I probably met him years ago, but. I took some history courses, Edward MacNall Burns and who's the other one? Everybody had three names then. Oh goodness, well Dick McCormick. I know Dick. I didn't know his son, who is now the president of the University of Washington I guess. ... Dick Schlatter wound up as provost of the university under Mason Gross. Dick, ... I had him for poli-sci. ... We had a good relationship I guess. As a writer I sometimes had to be creative, you know, book reports got to be in and I'd get it in. I remember I got one back from Dick Schlatter, it said, "This is wonderfully well written Bill, why the hell didn't you read the book?" [laughter]

KP: Professor George was one of your favorites?

WM: John George, John George, yes.

KP: He surfaced a lot, a number of people liked him. What do you remember of him that particularly stands out?

WM: Well, not too much about the subject, but just the way he was with people. He was a wonderful, he was a Mr. Chips type you know, except a very-- ... you could smoke in class in those days, I guess it was particularly with the veterans coming back. He'd walk into his class and say, "Gentleman, you can light up whenever you want to. I don't smoke myself, but I do have stock in the American Tobacco Company." [laughter] With a southern accent, he said that, of course. But it seemed to me we were pretty close to a lot of the faculty members in those days.

KP: Do you think you were close because you were so much more mature coming out of the war? Did that enter into it all?

WM: It did for some people. I'm not sure it did for me at first. I felt like I had, that two and a half, three year period had just been lifted and I was still seventeen or eighteen years old. I had a very tough, very tough time dating, because I felt ... younger than people my age.

KP: Even though you had been?

WM: Yeah.

KP: Most people don't get your experiences I mean ...

WM: Yeah. The experience was not something that would help you out in social situations. [laughter] ... But I met some great people. Mason Gross. I got to know him first, I never had a course with Mason, but I got to know him on campus. And then I was president of the alumni association when he was president of the university. And I don't know whether you ever knew him.

KP: No.

WM: ... He was a amazing person, he was really a amazing person. He had a great sense of humor and he had a great sense of humanity and a vocabulary that would peel the paint off the walls, you know, when the occasion required. I remember in 19-, I was president in '69 and '70. It's when all hell was breaking loose. The ... yippies was it, yeah ... wild and they were taking over this building and that building and the alumni were raising hell with him and with me, I was president. CBS covered, CBS news, it may have been *Sixty Minutes*, but probably the Sunday News. They covered our meeting, the alumni association. We met in the upper room at the Rutgers club and they moved their cameras in and I said, "We've got a meeting to run. You run your cameras just leave us, you know, take your pictures and" ... And they, it was kind of a raucous meeting as I recall. Some guys were screaming about the kids taking over the campus and all this stuff. And that Sunday they ran the thing on CBS, national network and they just picked, they edited the thing and boom. Monday morning I walked into my office in New York and my secretary said, "Dr. Gross would like you to call him right away". And I called. It was in August. It was a hot and humid day, "What the hell, you come down here!!!" So I said, "I'll be right down." I got on the train and back to New Brunswick and to his office and he didn't like air conditioning. His windows were wide open and this was over in Old Queens. He and I started at it and I listened mostly, 'cause he screamed and hollered and yelled and we finally agreed that we would, you know, he was the president, he would handle it the way he thought he should handle it. And I said I would deal with the alumni the way I thought they should be dealt with and we pretty much agreed.

KP: I have gotten the impression that Mason Gross was a leader that he had this vision and he would listen to people, but he really led.

WM: He had his mind made up when he started, but he would, as soon as he would stop talking, he would listen. And I admired him a great deal. We didn't always agree on things, but if you

talked to Vince Kramer, ... he and Gross were always at each others throats. We got along fine and interesting, again a little anecdotal thing. Just before he died I heard he was quite ill and I called just to see how he was doing. I called, he lived then in Rumson, and I got Julia on the phone and I said, "Bill MacKenzie I just wondered how Dr. Gross was doing." She said, "Why don't you talk to him yourself?" She put him on the phone, so I said, "Mason." He said, "Bill." ... We talked for twenty minutes, I guess a half an hour and was great conversation. He died about a week later. I hadn't seen Julia in years and when they were dedicating this thing down here I came down one day and I walked along and there was a crowd of people assembling and I heard, "Hi Bill!" And I looked up it was Julia Gross. And I said, "For goodness sakes, I was wondering if I would see you." And we hadn't talked or seen ... in a long time. We had a nice chat. Her daughter was with her, Elizabeth. She said, "What do think about the location for this plaque for Mason?" I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "Right near William the Silent?". I said, "Can't you imagine some of the conversations they might be having right now?" [laughter]

KP: Any thoughts of the other presidents you encountered, since you had been very active with the alumni association and president of the alumni association?

WM: I met only briefly William Demarest, William H. Demarest. He had been retired. He lived over here in the corner.

KP: Yes.

WM: And I met him very briefly and then Robert Clothier I knew. He was a very Princetonian-Rutgers person. He was, he reminded me of a secretary of state, Edward Stettinius, that type, you know. That's what Robert Clothier was like. He was a good man I guess, ...tough assignment here. I fouled up with him badly, I guess it was right, probably when I was editor of the *Targum*. Wally Moreland, who was then director of public relations decided it would be a good idea to have some of the student leaders come down and meet President Clothier. Great idea, him and I. So he sat and we gaged around his office. And he talked about things that you ... I'd love to hear some of the things you might improve. I'm looking around and I look on the wall, there's a Rutgers degree certificate and I had seen one or two before and I said, "Well that thing, you know, you figure a guy spends four years here earning that degree and it should be something that's really something." I said, "It should be real sheep skin." It should be this and that, you know." And silence fell over the room and that was the end of it. And we're walking out the door and I said to Wally, "What did I do wrong?" He said, "He designed that thing." [laughter] We had a president that not too many people remember, Lewis Webster Jones, who followed. I think he was a real nice man. He's a very good man. He was, I think he did a transition from the Clothier to the Gross, I don't think they were ready for Gross yet. He was my leading candidate then and a lot of people, but. ... Jones came in and I think he did a good job when he was here. He was, he started the practice of going down to Trenton with your hand out.

KP: Well as a student you were involved in one of those campaigns for a bond issue.

WM: Yes. I spoke down before the legislature. Wally called me up, I guess it was just about the time I was ending as editor of the *Targum*. And he said, "They were having this hearing down in

Trenton and would I come down and speak." And I didn't know why but I said, "Sure." And a woman, named Doris Distler, she was I think president of the student government at Douglass. She and I went down there. And all of a sudden I realized we were speaking to the joint houses of the legislature. I think I had a couple of notes and I just made believe they're not here. [laughter] ... Picture in the newspaper. Another highlight I guess as an alumnus, we used to have an annual dinner honoring an outstanding alumnus. And they had several people and I guess I was vice president of the federation, maybe the association. ... And my job was to organize that dinner. I said, "Why don't we get Ozzie Nelson, he's a natural?" They said, "Oh we've tried so many times, he won't come." ... "So why don't I ask him." "Aw, he won't come." I said, "Get me his telephone number." So I called him up from New York ... in California, got him on the phone. I said, "Ozzie, hey Bill MacKenzie." ... I said, "One reason why I'm calling you." I said, "We have this annual dinner where we honor an alumnus every year." I said, "I understand you've been invited before, but you wouldn't come." I said, "... We would really like to have you." He said, "Bill, I'd love to come back, but I'd always feel as if I were exploiting Rutgers." I said, "You've got it all wrong, we want to exploit you." He came. [laughter]

KP: How did you and the alumni feel about Paul Robeson?

WM: That's a very ...

KP: Because I've heard a lot of mixed things and a lot of alumni, who even disagreed with him politically, really respected him and some of their distinct memories of hearing him in concert, but ...

WM: When he was, I had heard him in concert. He was painted as a communist, I was very much opposed to him politically, you known, in that respect. But I wondered about him at Rutgers, not just a Paul Robeson being at Rutgers, but the time that he was here. I got to know some people who played ball with him. Harry Rockafeller, who was an assistant athletic director, became the athletic director. Bob Nash, who was from Plainfield, who was All American back in those days. And I knew Homer Hazel. I met (Homer Hazel?). And I asked them, I heard these stories about Paul being trampled on and being beaten up and everything else and I asked Harry Rockafeller, who had played on the team. And he said, "Bill, you played football." I said, "Yeah." He said, "What happens to you when you play football?" I said, "Sometimes you get hurt." He said, "That's what happened to Paul. That's what happened to all of us who played then." He said, "He was no more beat upon than anybody else." He said, "I knew Paul quite well." He said, "He never," the few times that we've spoken, he said, "He never complained about that to me nor have I heard it from any other people". Most recently young Bobby Kelley, who's a retired air force general, I didn't know, as long as I've known Bob, I didn't know that the, Frank Kelley had played for Rutgers years ago, was also the one who played at Yale, and was who played, who was a friend of Paul Robeson and the Kelley family were friends with Paul Robeson. I think the stories of his experience here were grossly exaggerated. Whether some of the things happened or not, I'm sure some did, because that's what happened in those days. I was disappointed that Paul Robeson wasn't honored earlier, particularly by the National Football Hall of Fame. I think ... within the Rutgers family, people who knew the athletic department, knew the people in those days, I think Paul Robeson was respected ... for what he

was, a tremendous person. A magnificent musician and an actor and a good athlete, a good student when he was here. The ones that I spoke to, I don't think they were, any reason to cover any things that may have happened. I'm glad that he's been honored by the National Football Hall of Fame and by the Rutgers Football Hall of Fame. I never met him myself. I knew several people who played with him.

SH: Were there a lot of blacks students at Rutgers?

WM: When I went to school. It's funny maybe it's because of who they were or what, there was Carl Thomas, he's dead now. Carl was a tremendous guy. I got to know him real well.

KP: He was active in student council.

WM: Yes, yes, that's how I got to know Carl. I was on the *Targum*, I got to know him then and I guess he graduated, I guess, in '47. But I got to know Carl very well. Then guys in sports, Bucky Hatchett and Hank Pryor and Harvey Grimsley. We're good friends today. ... Hank Pryor, this was an oversight, I am sure the loyal son thing. I'm on the nominating committee, on the committee, and I just realized that Hank ... didn't have the loyal son award and I'm putting him in for it this year, because I think it was an oversight. But we've maintained close friendship over the years. He is a very low key guy, Hank has been.

KP: I could not get him to do an interview.

WM: Really?

KP: Yes. I wrote to him and asked him, because Tom Kindre had given sent me his name.

WM: Next time I see him I will urge him about it.

KP: Yes, because Tom Kindre gave me a clipping about him, and I wrote to him.

WM: Cap and Skull Society, which was a senior honorary society as opposed to an honors society was killed during the Vietnam thing, the students, you know, that was an elite thing and so it got stomped to death. It was revived. And Hank has been very much involved with that ever since. Bucky Hatchett, Buck lives down in Virginia now. I saw him a couple of times in the last couple of years. In fact, the last time I saw him I told him, I was coming back from Florida a couple of years ago I stayed in a hotel in his town. "Why didn't you call me?" But the ones I knew, I knew, when I was in school. There were a lot of guys, well Herb Carmen in more recent years and Lee, my forgetfulness is age, ... but guys that I, guys that I was, let's put it this way, you didn't know ... everybody in school. My freshman class, my entering freshman class was as big as the university had been, the college had been before the war.

KP: Well that's interesting because a lot of people had said, I mean Bill Bauer has talked about this, how Rutgers had changed. When he had gone to school you knew everyone, particularly your class, you really knew your class.

WM: Twelve hundred entering freshman we had. We graduated 900 I think. I think there was the last time I looked. I haven't looked too recently. There were still about 600 alive. But it became big, but there was an element that lasted for awhile. A fellow named ... Earl Reed Silvers was a dean of men and he was of the old Rutgers and the friendly Rutgers. And they had a hello tradition. When you walked down College Avenue and he says hi, he said, hello. And it was continued for a long time after that. And people, you know, you got to know each other. Some of the things disappeared. The freshman green they ... continued that, I guess, at Douglass for a few years. They might even still do it over there, I don't know. But some of the things disappeared. They used to have, the freshman/sophomore competition was carried on for a couple of years. But I guess that got a little childish.

KP: Well it was quite brutal before the war.

WM: ... Frank Long followed me as editor of the *Targum*. I think he was an instigator. They had this big ball that they took out to the stadium and they beat each other up back and forth. It was about an eight foot soccer ball.

SH: The list of all the clubs you were in is quite extensive, but one of the things I noticed you were also involved with the yearbook, the *Scarlet Letter*. I noticed your picture in there many times over the years that I checked out.

WM: Son-of-a-gun. Well I say I was in the editor of the *Targum* at the end of my sophomore year and end of my junior year I served as editor and then there were a lot of things just starting to blossom and WRSU came into being then. And you know, I got involved in the thing. I was in it for awhile ...

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

WM: I think, I like the traditions, because I think they have, add some substance to it. I had a problem when Eddie Bloustein became president. And I had a parallel situation with the company I had worked for many years, they got a new board chairman. He was the first board chairman who was not from the company. And Bloustein was a carpetbagger here too. And I invented the thought and it's not a good one, I guess. ... But I think it has a little bit more truth to it. If you are not part of the tradition, you are sometimes embarrassed by the traditions. And if you're not part of it, you're a newcomer and I think that's what Bloustein did. And I think a new guy, I reckon a lot of them. ... But I think that's part of the thing. You've got a university which is rich in good sound traditions, ... you don't get embarrassed by them.

KP: Which traditions was Bloustein uneasy with?

WM: A conglomeration of a lot of little things. People who had been supportive of long time programs at the university, sort of brushed aside for what became a kitchen cabinet after awhile. Well I guess, I guess maybe the biggest thing and I may be a minority in this respect. We had a great, great sports tradition at Rutgers even up until the '50s. Sonny Werblin, who was a good

friend of mine. Sonny and I got along real well. Sonny was from different kind of world, the world of entertainment. And he wanted to wave the wand and make big things happen here and Bloustein liked the idea very much. ... I didn't like the idea of big time athletics at Rutgers for a lot of reasons. For very sound economic reasons, he was competing with pros in every direction. ... We're not a country college. We're not Penn State out there in "happy valley." We're competing for audiences around here. And to compete with really the best in some of the sport, I think you have to be prepared to lower your standards somewhere along the line, if you're prepared to do that and do it honestly, okay. But you can't have it both ways. Bloustein, I called him on it one time and he said, "Well I don't mean 'big time,' I mean bigger time." I said, "One problem." Bigger time doesn't fit in headlines, big time does and that's exactly what has happened. I think what we've sacrificed are some very, very good people in the process. I'm prejudiced, Frank Burns is a classmate of mine and a very close friend of mine. Frank has the best record at football coaching that anybody's ever had at Rutgers. He was fired, because he didn't win enough games. One of his last, one of his captains, Jimmy Dumont said, "The only thing they gave Coach Burns was a schedule". After Frank was fired they built the fieldhouse. They built this, they built that, they opened up recruiting and everything else. And they gave these other people everything! And I like Doug Graber. Graber's a hell of a guy. I met him when he first arrived here. And I guess nice guys finish last, sometimes.

KP: I also get the impression that you are disappointed that we do not play Princeton anymore.

WM: Very much so. Great, great, great rivalry. I have some good, you know, good love/hate relationship, with some of the Princeton people, good friends of mine down there. Danny Coyle was the sports publicity director down there when I was up here. We ... became good friends over the years. ... Some of the great players they had down there were good friends of mine over the years. It was a great relationship and the other teams, ... some of the other Ivy's and the Colgate relationship. ... I liked it. ... They were great games. We used to get 45,000 people at Palmer Stadium for a football game. In 1950, our baseball game went to the college world series. That wasn't too bad.

KP: I am struck at how the much the late 1940s and early 1950s were really the golden age for Rutgers athletics.

WM: Had a lot of fun, a lot of fun.

KP: You worked for Rutgers. Do you have any regrets you did not stay with Rutgers? And how did you like the job as sports information director?

WM: ... I had a ball, I had a ball. I went with ... baseball team out to Omaha, college world series. .. But I worked full-time, probably 60 hours a week at that. I worked a couple of hours down at the *Home News*. I had a twice a week, half-hour show on WCTC and I didn't make enough money to support my. ... [laughter] I had a daughter. ... After five years I made 3000 dollars a year here. And I was offered 5000 dollars to go to New York and I went. [laughter]

KP: So it really was a question of money?

WM: Oh yeah.

KP: If Rutgers had paid better you would have stayed?

WM: Les Unger, who ... had worked in the press box for me when he was an undergraduate. And about the week I decided to leave, Les walked into my office one day. And I said, "Hey you're out of the service." ... He said, "I just got out." I said, "What are you going to do with your self?" He said, "I'm looking for a job." [I said,] "You've got one." And he stayed for about twenty years, Les did I guess before he retired. ... university life, in case you haven't noticed, is a very good thing if you can work it out and I think the economics of it has worked out a little better. I know quite a few people on the faculty today and they, it's a struggle sometimes, but it's a ...

KP: No, but it is not ...

WM: It's a good trade off. A lot of benefits involved in it too.

KP: How did you like working for Mutual of New York?

WM: At first I had a great time. I've been very lucky in my life. I'll have to exclude the service. And even that had some good points in it. But so many people I know hate their jobs. Rarely have I not looked forward to the day when I got up in the morning. I had a great time working at Rutgers. I worked at Mutual of New York for nineteen years. And I left for five years, and ... I regretted that. And I went back to Mutual of New York ... as a consultant ... until I retired. And that was my choice. They moved our office, their marketing office, over to Teaneck. I had to commute by car up to Teaneck everyday, which was kind of rough, particularly ... winters like this. But I enjoyed it. I enjoyed what I did. I enjoyed the people that I worked with and I had a good time most of the time. When I announced I was going to retire, the guy I worked with said, "You got enough money to retire?" I answered, "You tell me how long I'm going to live and I'll tell you I've got enough money." [laughter] But now I'm worried about that question.

SH: The questions on Rutgers are yours, because this is only my second semester here.

KP: I guess I would like to ask you about Professor Gemaroy in science.

WM: Doug Gemaroy, he was very interesting. ... I took science courses, 'cause I had to take them. I wound up in biology classes with mostly pre-meds. I had anticipated that. I had a Saturday morning lab. I think it was nine to twelve. And, of course, Friday night in the Corner Tavern and then nine o'clock lab over in Jersey Hall right down from here. And I'd walk in and maybe a few minutes late. And Doug would say, "Gentlemen, we can begin now. Mr. MacKenzie has arrived. Be gentle, remember he's a returning war veteran." I didn't get to know him real well. ... He was a good, good instructor, he was good teacher. I think he died just a couple of years ago. Marchand was an English teacher I thought was very good.

KP: You liked the faculty in general.

WM: Most of them I did. Those I didn't like I disliked intensely.

KP: I should also ask people about their least favorite professors. Because I have heard the story of the professor who sold his notes, because he was such a terrible lecturer.

WM: I had some really great teachers. I mean the Nelson's, too, are world famous in the field of marine biology. Thurlow Nelson was one of my instructors here. You know, holy cow that's like, going to Princeton-- Einstein as the lecturer. We were in that cusp period. The old timers were here. They were good and we got a lot out of it.

KP: You had mentioned it, and I should have followed it up earlier, but you talked about battle to take over **Targum**, between the people already here and the newcomers, the veterans. Was there tension between the veterans and the non-veterans?

WM: It was kind of a surprise to us I guess. At least it was to me. But this Tony Antin had been on the **Targum** before the war and he was in service. He came back and Bob Prentiss, he was editor-in-chief, I guess in my sophomore year. Both came back a little early. He was wounded over in Europe. Bob Prentiss, who eventually became my roommate, was the news editor. And in the power struggle ... Bob came out on top as editor-in-chief and I ended up as news editor. ... I think I was there at the **Targum** Council meeting covering the meeting for the paper. I don't think I was ever managing editor. The next year, there was another struggle and I ended up being editor-in-chief. I beleved I was there as a spectator too. I wasn't involved in the struggle.

KP: So you were not passionately involved in this conflict, but you knew there was a struggle between veteran and non-veteran?

WM: I became aware of it. There was a guy named Danny Berman who eventually ... taught at Washington University down on Eastern Shore in Maryland. Dan had been here during the war. He was a real big man on campus. And I think being editor of the **Targum** ... was a real control thing. I didn't realize it. And controlling the **Targum** Council was part of that. They had the chairman of the **Targum** Council. And he lost out on that thing they (wanted?) most.

KP: Yes, I know which one you mean, the old student center.

WM: I walked (?) of the old student center and I was on the corner. Danny came out and he, he used a couple of profanities on me, which I had never heard from him before I had heard them in the marine corps. The closest I ever came to a fist fight on the street was there at that moment. And I realized then that this man was really angry and bitter about this thing. But hey. ... But I guess I was never too much involved in campus politics because ... it wasn't of interest to me. It really wasn't of interest to me. I got elected to a lot of things I wasn't even at the meetings that day.

KP: So I get the feeling that you were a compromise candidate. Did you ever have that sense that you somehow became the compromise candidate without seeking it?

WM: I have no idea. But, what you're saying makes sense, but I ...

KP: It is not something you observed?

WM: ... I don't recall ever campaigning for it. I think the last time I ever campaigned for something was when I was in high school. Somebody said you ought to be president of the class or something. ... Okay, I'll do it. I lost. [laughter].

KP: But you were on the Board of Adjustment for a time?

WM: Yes.

KP: How did that come about?

WM: Rutgers story. Next door to the Corner Tavern used to be a funeral director. Mahar's funeral home. You go out the front door of the Corner Tavern and right next door, that Mahar's was, I think it's a store now, but it was one of those big three story or four story wooden buildings. It was the Mahar's Funeral Home. Jimmy Mahar was the son of the owner of it. And I'd meet him in the Corner Tavern occasionally. And, in fact, the first time I saw a Polaroid camera he came in with one. He had invested in the stock, it had just come on the market. I bought a property and built a home out in Franklin Township and Jimmy was the mayor. And he called me up one time and he said, "How would you like to be on the youth guidance council?" I said, "What's that?" He said, "Well it's ..." I said, "Okay." So I got on the Youth Guidance Council. Later he called me up and said, "How would you like to be on the Board of Adjustment?" [I said,] "What's that?" Well I read up and [say], "Okay, I'll do that." Next thing, I was chairman of the Board of Adjustment. The world of politics was unfolding. I said, I don't want to do this. So I got out of it.

KP: So you did not really have political aspirations. You didn't want higher office?

WM: No. One time there was a guy named John Bullitt. Do you remember there was an Ambassador Bullitt?

KP: Yes.

WM: Years ago, I think he was ambassador to Russia under Roosevelt. His nephew, John Bullitt, was a resident of Franklin Township. ... In fact, he had spent his junior year in Europe and one of his dates was Jacqueline Bouvier at the time. He was of that ilk. And John had great aspirations, but he wanted to get control and politics. ... This was when I was on the Board of Adjustment and he had party one time, he lived along the canal there, I was invited along with some other people. And he said, he wanted me to run for county office or something like that. ... I said, "I'm really not [interested]." [And he said,] "It could lead to this and lead to that and to

state office. And my wife said, ... she's more interested in politics than I, she said, "But you have to be wealthy to get into high office." He said, "No, you don't." She said, "Well you do, you have to have a lot of money." He said, "Well what do you mean?" She said, "What about Averell Harriman?" He said, "Oh, he doesn't have a ... lot of money, maybe three or four million, but he doesn't have a lot of money." [laughter] Well I said, "No, I don't think so." It's been more fun being an observer sometimes. ...

SH: You have always stayed involved in Rutgers though. I mean as I look back through your file.

WM: I got out of it for awhile. And then traditions. The loyal son thing was started back in, I forget when. Jack Anderson was the guy who was one of the founders of it. ... I got up very early, I think my tenth year for some reason or another. And then they started passing the thing out to guys, who were big contributors and this and that or politically and that was not the intent of it. It was for people who had demonstrated their interest in the university. ... So I had been off ... what was called the executive committee, now it's the board of directors for a number of years. And I said, "I want to get back on, to see if we can get thing back on track." Mistake, I went back in and I been on it for about ...

KP: You're still on the loyal son?

WM: Yeah, fifteen years on it now, and I'm trying to get out again.

SH: I was just going to say are there any other question or things you would like to tell us that we have not asked you about?

WM: I told you much more than I had planned to. I better get home before it gets dark.
...

KP: I was going to say that we should probably should stop.

WM: I didn't realize how late it was.

KP: Well, thank you very much.

WM: Thank you very much.

KP: I appreciate it.

WM: ... bury you under so much stuff.

KP: No, that's okay

KP: This concludes an interview with ...

SH: William H. MacKenzie

KP: On February 8, 1996 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler.

SH: And Sandra Holyoak.

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

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