RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLAN B. PRINCE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Professor Allan B. Prince on July 19, 2001, in Exeter, New Hampshire, with Shaun Illingworth …

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: … Sandra Stewart Holyoak …

Greg Kupsky: … Greg Kupsky.

SI: Professor Prince, I would like to begin by thanking you for taking the time to sit for this interview. We would like to ask you a few questions about your father. What can you tell us about his background and his parents?

AP: Okay. My father was a New Englander. He was born in Worcester, Massachusetts. His mother and father were also natives of New England. As a matter-of-fact, my ancestors go back to the early days, of the 1600s, in Salem Village, and so, I always have to give a little side anecdote. I'm really a warlock, because I'm a direct descendant of a convicted witch in the Salem witchcraft trials. My great, great, great, how many greats there are, grandmother was married to Robert Prince, from England. He died, and she married the overseer of the farm that Robert Prince had, and his name was Osborne. So, when the Salem witchcraft hysteria hit, around 1692, she was one of the ones fingered by the children. She died in a Boston jail before they could hang her. She had two sons by Robert Prince, and I'm a direct descendant of one of those sons. So, that's … how far back we go in New England on my father's side of the family. At the age of twelve, or approximately twelve, my father and his parents moved to his grandfather's home in Webster, Massachusetts. Nearby is a lake, that I spent many a summer at as a child, that's known as Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg. When it comes time to transcribe this interview, I wish you luck in spelling that name, because there are forty-four letters in it. [laughter] At any rate, that digression having been said, [laughter] my father attended college. He went to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and got his baccalaureate degree, majoring in chemistry, and went on to Massachusetts State University to get his Masters degree in chemistry. He proceeded to his first job at Rutgers, where he was hired as an analytical chemist, analyzing things like fertilizers, for the College of Agriculture. Eventually, he moved into a teaching position and became a faculty member in the Soils Department in the College of Agriculture. I'm not sure that that college goes by the same name anymore. Most land grant colleges changed their names, as far as agriculture was concerned, [laughter] but, at any rate, it was during those early days that, through a friend of his, he met my mother, who came over from Scotland at the age of about fourteen or fifteen. She attended, for a couple of years, Northfield Mt. Hermon School, and went on to become an RN in Springfield, Massachusetts. At any rate, they got married and …

SH: How did your parents meet?

AP: Through a mutual friend, who was … also from Massachusetts, and had been dating my mother before my father cut in and [laughter] settled the issue. About a year later, after they were married, I was born, on July 23, 1924. About four years later, my sister was born, and we lived in New Brunswick, … I even remember the number, 25 Handy Street, about a half a block from the Agricultural Campus. I spent many a day, when I wasn't in school, playing on the grounds of that campus, since it was only a half a block away. I remember flying kites, and

playing tackle football on the lawn, and getting chased off, because we were wrecking the lawn, [laughter] and those sorts of things. Of course, it was during the Depression period and I have, as my generation does, … many memories of the hardships and how fortunate I … was to be with my parents, who had a stable job. My father took, I think, at least two cuts in pay. Rutgers had to cut back during that period, … but, I remember, distinctly, the people who were moving around the country. They were jobless. Some people called them bums, but, they really weren't, they were just people who were less fortunate. I remember my mother feeding some of these people on the back porch of our home. Some of them were college graduates. It was … kind of an impressive thing, even though I was relatively young, and I never forgot it, actually. There were things that my children and my grandchildren have never been exposed to. I remember things like the iceman, and the junkman, and the fish monger, and the vegetable man. All of these people delivered to the door. … They came down the street and you'd go out and buy the kinds of things that you wanted. Even though the age of the automobile had been in a long time, in New Brunswick, there were occasions when the streets were not well-plowed, and I remember Paulus Dairy, [I don't know whether that name is familiar to anybody in New Brunswick anymore. I don't know whether the dairy exists even.] would occasionally use a sleigh to deliver milk. I remember hitching a ride on the back of the sleigh with my sled. So, these are some of the memories of that period in the '30s, when times were tough, but, people pulled together, and it wasn't all that bad. We didn't have much money, but, we didn't know we didn't have much money. … Well, anyway, maybe I'm rambling too much.

SH: Do you know why your mother emigrated to the United States?

AP: She was the last of ten children in Scotland. She was born in the Glasgow area, lived with an aunt in Hamilton, which is a suburb of Glasgow. Her mother died shortly after she was born, and then, a few years later, her father died. Her oldest brother, the oldest in the family, had preceded her to the United States and settled in Arlington, New Jersey. He was a maker of sand molds in a foundry, for castings. … I'm not sure just how it came about, but, he must have encouraged my mother to come to the United States, to have a better life than was possible in Scotland. … When she lived with her aunt in Scotland, it was in one of those stone, one-room houses, … that were centered around the coal mining area outside of Glasgow, where she slept in an alcove, with a curtain across it, near the fireplace. It was that kind of a setting and [she] came to the United States. How she got linked up with [the] Northfield Mt. Hermon Schools in Northfield, Massachusetts, I don't know, but, she didn't graduate from there, she just spent about a year or two, and then, went into nursing in the Springfield, Massachusetts area. So, that's all I know about that part of her life.

SH: Did your father serve in World War I?

AP: Yes, he was drafted. He didn't leave the country, … because, by that time, he had a fair amount of training in chemistry under his belt at Clark University. They stuck him in the Medical Corps, as a lab technician, and he spent his whole time at Fort Devins in Massachusetts, not very far from where his home was, actually. He used to tell stories about the worldwide flu epidemic and how it had struck even in the Fort Devins area. He said he remembers warehouses with coffins stacked from floor to ceiling. So, it was kind of a dramatic demonstration of how serious that flu epidemic was across the world. So, that was the story of his war experiences.

SH: While you were living in New Brunswick, since your roots were in New England and Scotland, did you ever go on any trips or vacations to New England or Scotland?

AP: Much, much later, in the 1980s, my wife and I took a package tour, of England, Wales and Scotland. I didn't get a chance to see the little town where my mother was raised by her aunt, because the tour bus kept to what we call "interstates," M-I-something. I could see the steeple of the church in the distance as we rolled by, and that's as close as I got. [laughter] When we got to Glasgow and stayed overnight in a hotel, I picked up the phone book to look up my mother's maiden name, which is my first name, Allan, [the] Allan Clan. When I opened it to that part of the phone book, it was just like Smith, there was page after page of Allans, so that ended my genealogical research right there. … Yes, I did get back within sight of where my mother was raised.

SH: Did you ever visit your father's family in New England?

AP: Yes. As you know, in the coastal plain of New Jersey, in the summer, it's pretty miserable, [laughter] and my father did his best to send us north to New England, first, to my grandparents' home at that famous lake that I quoted to you. Then, later, my parents got attached to Maine, and so, we would go to different places and rent cottages along the coast of Maine. I got New England in my blood right from the very beginning, even though we lived in New Jersey. … When I was about twelve, we did move over to Highland Park, on Lawrence Avenue, and I was there until I finished with my work at Rutgers.

SH: Being the child of a Rutgers faculty member, do you recall if your father belonged to any faculty committees or organizations or if your mother was associated with any faculty wives' organizations?

AP: Well, he was very much involved, professionally, with a specialized area where he was a referee on methodology for analysis for certain chemical elements. He would go to Washington, just about every year, and present papers, which brings back another memory, this is kind of rambling, [laughter] but, when I was, … I must have been about ten years old, then, my father suddenly said, "I'm gonna take you out of school for a week and you're gonna go with me to Washington, DC, where I'm having my meetings." My father had a lot of faith in my ten-year-old judgment, because, while he was in the meetings, he turned me loose in Washington to see the sights. … At that time, there were five Smithsonian buildings, the old, … red brick buildings. I went through all five of them [laughter] rather fast. I didn't climb the Washington Monument. I took the elevator up and walked down. I remember, distinctly, one scary experience. Washington still had trolleys at that time, and the streets were wide, and there were double tracks, and I got caught in the middle of the street, with a trolley coming in each direction. Well, the trolley conductors must have known that there was enough room to spare, but, I wasn't certain, [laughter] so, I sucked my stomach in as these trolleys passed each other in the middle of the street. You know all of the usual sights I went to, … the Treasury Building, where I saw money being printed, and to the FBI Building, and, of course, to the Congressional Library, and sat in the Gallery for a short while, while a debate was going on in the House of

Representatives. So, it was a lot of fun, and it was a real education, and I thank my father for that. …

SH: Were you ever involved in Scouting?

AP: Yes. When I moved to Highland Park, one of the first things that a friend got me involved in was the local troop. I think I said to you on the phone that Bob Ochs, who, you interviewed, actually was a member of that troop. It's Troop 22, I even remember the number, [laughter] and that was fun. It was sponsored by the American Legion, and one thing I remember, now, compared to Scouting today, was that, because the Legion sponsored it, it tended to be militaristic. There was a lot of spit-and-polish, and standing at attention, and that sort of thing, because the leaders were involved with the American Legion. Bob Ochs, as you know, is a very large man, physically, and he was large, as a young man. We had a drum and bugle corps for the troop, and he played the bass drum, [laughter] because he was the biggest and could carry it.

SH: At the time, was Highland Park heavily populated with Rutgers faculty members?

AP: There were quite a few living in that area, as well as in New Brunswick, different parts. There used to be a new development, I think, out at the outskirts of town, as you go out Livingston Avenue [Is there still a Livingston Avenue?] called Colonial Gardens, and there were a number of faculty that were in that new development. …

SH: Did you ever attend any Rutgers football games as a child?

AP: Yes, I did attend a few football games with my father as a boy and, also, basketball, especially after the "new" gymnasium was built. It also had the swimming pool in it, with the folding doors that closed off the court from the pool. … Also, on the academic side, when I got old enough, he would take me to Sigma Xi lectures. … When he saw a scientific subject that would be of interest to a high school or even a grammar school-aged person, I'd go to those, and, eventually, I became a member of … Sigma Xi.

SH: Was your father a member of Sigma Xi?

AP: Yes, I'm trying to think of any other sport that we took in. At that time, of course, the stadium hadn't been built across the river, and so, football was played on what was called Nelson Field, across from the field house. Also, this isn't answering your specific question exactly, but, I also remember my parents going to formal affairs at that gymnasium where they opened up the pool and decorated it, sometimes with potted palms and that sort of thing, for a theme, and my parents coming home and describing that to us, to my sister and I. Then, later, of course, as a freshman, I went to dances there myself. So, those are some of the memories.

SH: Did you attend any concerts on campus?

AP: Oh, yes, … I had forgotten that. I remember, once, seeing Paul Robeson at a distance. Also, commencements, every once in awhile I'd get taken. One time, and it was in the early '30s, I believe, I may be a little off on that, but, I think you gave an honorary degree to, …

Admiral Byrd. I remember … seeing him in the hall, just passing by after the commencement, and that was quite a thrill, because I remember listening to him on the radio from Little America [Admiral Byrd's base in Antarctica].

SH: Concerning Paul Robeson's concert, do you remember which instruments accompanied his performance?

AP: No, I really don't. I feel lucky that I can remember that much. [laughter] Years later, I knew about the controversy with respect to him and his political beliefs, that sort of thing.

SH: Do you remember any discussions about Robeson's affiliations at the time?

AP: No, no, I don't remember that at all. I also remember my parents, getting all dressed up to go to plays. They were held on what is now Douglass Campus, it was then NJC, and I remember the person who instructed the students, or directed them, her name was Inge. You might want to look up the history on her. She was apparently quite good, a member of [the] faculty. So, I remember my parents talking about Mrs. Inge's plays that they would go to see.

SI: Did you attend the famous 1938 Princeton-Rutgers game?

AP: When the [new]stadium was dedicated? I had tickets, and I gave them to my parents. So, I listened, I think it was broadcast. I remember that dramatic end to the game, when Rutgers pulled it out. [laughter] It was a pass, I think, … with a spectacular catch, yeah, yeah. My parents saw it, because of my generosity. [laughter]

SH: Was your father involved in the Bergel-Hauptmann controversy at NJC in the late 1930s?

AP: … No, he wasn't. I'm sure they must have talked about it. It would have been the talk of the campus. … I remember, based on my subsequent experiences as a faculty member myself, my parents discussing campus politics, and who was getting promoted and who wasn't, and how wrong it was, and all that. [laughter]

SH: Did your father work with Dr. Robert Clothier?

AP: Well, he knew Clothier as president. I'm not sure he had any kind of close relationship or anything of that nature. I remember him talking about President Clothier.

SH: What about President Demarest or Dean Metzger?

AP: Again, those are all familiar names to me. I remember my parents talking about these people, but I don't remember [what they said].

SH: Did your father and mother host affairs for other faculty members in your home?

AP: Frankly, I don't recall if they did. They had friends. For instance, Robert Starkey, who was a microbiologist, was a close friend. They were in our home, but, I don't think they hosted parties for faculty during that period in the '30s.

SH: I was just wondering about the social world of the faculty in that era.

AP: Well, within the department, and, the connections made by going to events at Rutgers, such as plays and concerts.

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

AP: She was a typical person for that period. When she got married, she dropped her nursing career and devoted herself to being a wife and mother. She picked up on it, [nursing] even though she felt very obsolete, during World War II and volunteered at Middlesex [Hospital, now Robert Wood Johnson], where I was born. She volunteered in the surgery section, but, as far as I know, that was the only work she did, after she was married, that was connected with her training.

SH: What were your interests in grade school and high school? What were your favorite subjects? What kept you busy on weekends and after school?

AP: Well, one of the things, while we were still living on Handy Street in New Brunswick, and very shortly after I became five years old, my parents had decided that they didn't like the local public school, didn't think that it was up to standard. That's not news today. [laughter] So, they decided to send me to Rutgers Elementary School, which, was connected, although I didn't know this at the time, to the Department of Education at Rutgers. I went through all eight grades there.

SH: Did you go on to Rutgers Prep then?

AP: Well, once I got through the eighth grade, I didn't go on to the preparatory section, which was next door, on the corner. I remember, a large building, 'cause I did manual training in the basement. [laughter] When I was in the eighth grade, we moved to Highland Park, and I attended Highland Park High School. After I completed my third year, my parents decided that it wasn't going to be possible for them to send me off to another college, that I would have to take advantage of the faculty benefit and go to Rutgers. But they wanted me to have an experience away from home, so, that's when they sent me to Mount Hermon for two years. [Mount Hermon would not accept anybody for less than two years.] I actually got five years worth of high school level [education].

SH: Where was Mount Hermon located?

AP: It's right across the Connecticut River from Northfield school, in western Massachusetts. It's part of the same school founded by Dwight L. Moody, back at the turn of the century, who was a great evangelist. … My mother, of course, had gone to Northfield, so, she knew about the schools. That experience was one of the turning points in my life. It made a big difference to be away from home, to be living in a dorm. Mount Hermon had a work program. Everybody had

to work twenty hours a week, and the jobs were all connected with operating the school, so, some worked in the laundry, some worked as waiters in the dining hall, and, of course, my interest in the out-of-doors got me on the farm. Eventually, second year, I got skilled enough to run the creamery on the hired hand's day off on Sunday, pasteurization and that sort of thing. It was a good learning experience for me; as a city boy. I always wanted to be a farmer, but, never got the capital, [laughter] so, I had to settle for something less than that. I'm not sure I'm getting at what you're interested in on the school end of things.

SH: What were your favorite subjects?

AP: Oh, yes, you mentioned subjects. Obviously, from what I got into later, I was interested in the sciences, and I remember, at Mount Hermon in particular, a physics teacher who really caught my interest. … He would take us out in the field to demonstrate certain basic principles. For example, we'd go out to the Boston and Maine Railroad tracks with stopwatches, … measure the distance, clock the train coming, and then, figure out the horsepower that the engine was developing. He would … take us down to the school power plant and we'd calculate what the generators were putting out, as far as generating electricity was concerned. He'd … set up a rifle on a lab bench, and a place to trap the bullet, and we'd calculate the velocity of the bullet from the gun. He brought the whole subject alive and … that really set me on the course of science. So, that's one real standout. On the other end of the spectrum, I had a terrible time with Latin. [laughter] That was in high school. Miss Filene despaired. [laughter] The only thing I liked about it was Caesar's *Gaelic Wars*.

SH: How involved was your family in the church? How important was religion in your family?

AP: … My father came from a Methodist background as well as my grandfather. The Methodists back in those days would hold summer camps, they weren't revivals, exactly, the Methodists didn't have revivals. Anyway, that was his background, and my mother was a typical Scotch Presbyterian, very stern and strict, and worried a little about what we did on Sunday in the way of games. [laughter] My father decided to become a Presbyterian when he married my mother … and they were both heavily involved in church affairs. My father became a deacon of the church and, eventually, an elder in the Presbyterian Church. I attended Sunday school regularly. The church was located on George Street. It burned, years later, and [was] rebuilt out on Livingston Avenue. When my father was in charge of the communions, because he was a chemist, he figured out a way to fill up all those little glasses with the grape juice, I've forgotten how many, across on the tray, but, he'd do it all at once. [laughter] He rigged something up from the lab to do that, and I remember, as a kid, [being] fascinated with him doing that. Of course, my mother was cutting up the bread into little cubes. [laughter] … I don't know whether it's done today in churches like the Presbyterian Church, but, they had a period when the children from the Sunday school would come into the sanctuary, and the minister would tell a little story, and then, we'd go out again. I remember that sort of thing. So, yes, I was brought up in the … church!

SH: Were your parents politically active?

AP: Oh, I can tell another anecdote about that. They were Republicans. [laughter] I don't know how this happened, but, somehow or other, a friend next door and I decided that we'd heard about this thing called NRA, and there were flags with "NRA" on them. So, we decided to make a flag. When my father came home and he was fit to be tied, because NRA, I think, … stood for the National Recovery Act that Roosevelt put in, and it was declared unconstitutional. My father said, "You get rid of that flag." [laughter]

SH: Were they opposed to Franklin Roosevelt's policies or the President himself?

AP: I think it was more how Roosevelt was dealing with the Depression, like this NRA incident. I don't remember that they were rabidly anti-Roosevelt, the way some were. The story goes, you either hated him or you loved him. There was no in-between. I think there was an in-between. I think my parents fell into that category. We used to listen to his fireside chats, and then, later, we used to listen to Hitler [laughter] on the radio. …

SH: How often would you hear Hitler's speeches on the radio in New Jersey?

AP: Probably three or four times, I really don't [recall].

SH: Were his speeches commented on? How were they portrayed by the American media?

AP: Well, you know how he delivered his speeches. It sounded to me, as a young person, that he was shouting and almost hysterical. Of course, we were also listening to someone, translating … the essence of what he was saying on the radio. So, that's about all I remember about that.

SH: Was there a genuine concern over Hitler's rise to power or was it viewed as only a problem for the Germans?

AP: … I didn't [notice]; maybe I just wasn't attentive enough at that age. I know that my parents were concerned, but, I wasn't particularly concerned until Hitler invaded Poland. We were on our way back from Maine, right around Labor Day, I remember my parents were still asleep when the word came on the radio. I remember waking them up and telling them. … Earlier, I remember, as a Civics assignment, dealing with the Sino-Japanese … war in Manchuria and cutting out articles from the newspaper in connection with that project. I don't recall, though, getting involved in any projects subsequent to that. Of course, Hitler was in the process of rising to power in the '30s; but I don't remember getting involved in a discussion.

SH: Do you remember any children coming to Rutgers via the refugee program?

AP: No, I don't remember or recall anything like that, no. I do remember my parents talking about the *Bund* and the head of the *Bund* … in the New York area. I remember them talking [about him], I don't remember the name now, but, there was talk about that and whether they were really spies for Hitler or what.

SH: Do you remember any demonstrations over isolationism, intervention in Europe, or the Lend-Lease program?

AP: I remember, the controversy over Lend-Lease, … and, now, I'm getting mixed up with what I read later in life and what I really knew at the time, but, having said that, I remember that there was a controversy, and then, later, learning how Roosevelt got around the legal aspects of Lend-Lease. I remember the destroyers that were sent to England.

SH: What was it like for you to enter Rutgers as a student?

AP: Well, Rutgers was a very different place than it is today, not only in terms of size, but, [also], because of the way the academic world was then. Chapel was compulsory, as you know. There was always somebody up in the balcony behind us who had a seating chart, so, we were monitored, in terms of our attendance. I remember one of the first chapel sessions, the Dean saying and I'm sure he said it every time, "Look at the person to your left and look at the person to your right; one of them is not going to be here in a couple of years." … That really put you on the spot. [laughter]

SH: Do you remember who sat to your left and to your right?

AP: No. [laughter] I probably didn't know who they were. ROTC, for the first two years, was compulsory, so, I very soon got a uniform to wear. The course work was pretty much prescribed for freshman year. I don't remember exactly, but, I'm sure there was a history course, and an English course, and so on, and math. … One thing about that first year, I was eighteen, and I knew that the draft was coming, and it was hard to stay focused on the course work. I regretted that later, because I missed being Phi Beta [Kappa] by something like a tenth of a point, because of my freshman record. [laughter] You know, it wasn't bad, but, it wasn't good enough to make Phi Beta. My mind was wondering when my draft number was gonna come up.

SH: How prevalent was the draft in your conversations with other students?

AP: Oh, it was quite prevalent, because people kept disappearing and getting drafted all through my freshman year. My number came up somewhere around March or April.

SH: Was there any chance that you might get deferred because of your course of study?

AP: No, not at that point. … I'm not up on the history of what happened on deferments. I got drafted, … it would be the Spring of '43. … In my freshman year, in the fall, I went out for football, and, as you can tell, from my size, I might have qualified for the 150-pound team or something like that. I went to about three practices and suddenly discovered, in the evening, when I was trying to study, that all of a sudden, I'd wake up, and it would be after midnight. I said, "Boy, if this is the way it is, I'm not gonna make it, academically, if I get that tired playing football," so, I dropped it. Later on, I went out for cross-country, after I got back from overseas, but, that was the extent of my athletic involvement in my freshman year, except for the fact that there was required physical education. By that time, there was a lot of focus on physical fitness,

because they knew we're going to be drafted. There was a lot of rope climbing and other things. …

SH: You were a student at Mount Hermon when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

AP: Yeah.

SH: What was your reaction to the news?

AP: Oh, I was in my senior year then, and it was on a Sunday, and we were in the dorm at the time, and I remember somebody running down the hall, saying that Pearl Harbor had been attacked, and that's how we found out about it.

SH: How did the Mount Hermon faculty address the crisis?

AP: I wish you had told me you were going to ask that question. I would have dug deeper into my memory. I don't honestly remember. [laughter] I remember one of the effects of the attacks. They tacked on another hour to daylight saving, so that it was still dark during our nine o'clock classes in the morning. During vacation periods, I was involved with Civil Defense in New Brunswick, … in Highland Park, by that time. I was a courier, ran around on my bicycle, delivering messages when they had a mock air raid attack, and I guess my father was an air raid warden. … Again, I'm digressing, but, as long as I'm remembering that, I remember the painting of the upper half of the headlights black. The reason was that they were trying to cut down the light level along the coast at night because German submarines, could use that to silhouette ships that they were going to attack. All the neon lights were turned off. It was quite dark at night in New Brunswick. [laughter] I remember the blackout shades that were required, and the drills, when the air raid sirens would go off. …

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SH: Did your mother still have family in Scotland?

AP: Oh, yes. There were two brothers that came to this country, besides my mother, and all the rest remained in that general area. One brother is an exception. He studied engineering and was a manager, for a number of years, of a gold mine in South Africa. By the time World War II came along, he had retired, at a fairly early age, and had a home on … one of the Channel Islands off the French coast. … Anyway, the Germans took over, … the Channel Islands, … and, apparently, some German officers actually occupied his home during the war, because he went back to Scotland while that was going on. My mother corresponded, with one of her sisters fairly regularly, but, the family got pretty scattered, those ten children, and I don't have a lot of history on them, which my oldest son regrets, because he's into genealogy. He's trying to get me to write an autobiography [laughter] before I toddle off this mortal coil.

SH: I was just wondering what they were doing during the Battle of Britain.

AP: No. I don't have anything on that, unfortunately.

SH: How did the war affect Mount Hermon, its routine, its curriculum, and so forth?

AP: Well, I think, being located where it is, fairly isolated, was a factor. There may have been some conservation efforts of one kind or another in the local community, which was a rural community, and still is. There may have been, various drives for aluminum and that sort of thing, but, I don't think that Mount Hermon had to change its way of doing things a whole lot during that period.

SH: Did anyone discuss the possibility of gaining conscientious objector status?

AP: I wasn't really aware of that until I joined the American Field Service, which I assume you want to come to later in the interview, but I don't remember my folks talking about it. World War II, … it sounds awful to say this, but, it was a popular war with Americans, and everybody wanted to be involved one way or another. Now, there were some, who wanted to take advantage of the war to make a lot of money, and I remember my parents talking about that, but, I don't remember them talking about conscientious objectors. [laughter] …

SH: Were you still a student at Rutgers when the accelerated program was instituted?

AP: … The acceleration happened after I left, at the end of my freshman year. While I was gone, Rutgers went to the quarter system, which, to me, is an accelerated way of [operating]. As a matter-of-fact, I finally got my baccalaureate in three-and-a-half years, because we were on a quarter system when I came back. … Then, while I was away, the Army began its programs. The ASTP was on the campus when I came back from overseas.

SH: Can you tell us how you went from your freshman year at Rutgers into the American Field Service?

AP: Well, my draft number came up, as I indicated earlier. I was told to report to the induction center in Newark, New Jersey. … I think Camp Kilmer was … pretty much in full operation by that time as a transient [camp] for shipping troops overseas. I remember train after train coming into that camp. Anyway, I reported to the induction center, and took the physical, and got turned down, because I had punctured ear drums. At that time, they were a lot fussier than they were later on in the war. There was a lieutenant at the exit point from where we took our physicals who would answer any questions you had. I said, "Why? … I'm perfectly healthy." He said, "Oh, you guys are always getting middle ear infections and you spend more time in sick bay than doing your job," That was his answer. Well, I was determined not to be left behind, and so, without even going back to home, [laughter] I went up to 50 Broadway. 50 Broadway was the headquarters of the Merchant Marine, and I thought, "Well, I'll apply to the Merchant Marine Academy." I got to the counter, and I asked for an application form. The man put it down on the table, and he said, "Oh, by the way, what's your draft status?" I said, "4-F." He said, "I'm sorry, we have the same requirements as for the Navy," and he took the application back. [laughter] I said, "Well, what can I do?" and he said, "Well, you could go downstairs and maybe sign on as a seaman or something like that." You may recall, at this time, we were shipping goods, not only to England, but, to Russia, by way of Murmansk. They were losing ships right and left, and they

were desperate for crews. So, I went downstairs and inquired, and they said, "Well, you have the seaman's papers?" and I said, "No, I don't have any seaman's papers." [laughter] … "Well, we could sign you on as a mess man," which is the old equivalent of a cabin boy. [laughter] So, I got photographed and got mess man's papers, and he said, "Would you like a ship tonight?" [laughter] and I said, "Well, I think I'd like to go home first." [laughter] I got home, and my father was fit to be tied. [laughter] He said, "If you're determined to get into this war, you can do better than that." [laughter] He recalled a salesman who used to come around to the lab on the Agricultural Campus, who used to regale him with war stories about World War I and the outfit that he was in. It was the American Field Service, which later became a part of the Transportation Corps of the US Army in France. Anyway, he remembered that and he said, "I'm going to see if they're still operating in this war," and, sure enough, they were, and that's how I got into the American Field Service.

SH: How did you get out of serving with the Merchant Marines?

AP: … While I was overseas, there was a notice that came from the US Passport Division, wanting to know what happened, and my father wrote back a letter and said that I was out of the country and let them know that I hadn't followed through on becoming a mess man on some ship.

SH: Where did you report to? Where was the American Field Service located?

AP: The American Field Service, in this country, was headquartered in New York. I've forgotten the exact address, but, in Lower Manhattan, and I had to go through, again, another physical and get a lot of shots, because the American Field Service, at that time, was operating in the Middle East and in the Burma-India theaters of war. I was always shaking from the aftereffects of the shots. I just waited to be called and managed to finish freshman year. Towards the end of June, … I got called to New York, and, along with other recruits for the American Field Service, we were put up in hotels in different parts of Manhattan. We were told to call in every day, and, one day, we called in, and they said, "This is it," and, "Come down to headquarters." They loaded us on a bus, and we went over to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and got on a ship. … At this point, no training. They suggested that, if we wanted to, we could learn a little bit about mechanics, taking care of engines and that sort of thing, knowing we were going to be driving an ambulance. There were people ranging from innocents like me, at eighteen years of age, to people in their early sixties who were well beyond the draft age, but, wanted to do something. So, we had a whole range of ages in the American Field Service. To get back to an earlier question, there were a few conscientious objectors who joined up as a way of performing a service, but, most of us just wanted to participate directly in the war. The average level of education was high, as you can imagine, because some of these people were already professionals, and a number of them had traveled in pre-war Europe, knew their way around, were college graduates. Some were in various stages of their college education, the way I was. Some, of course, were not. My best friend during that period was high school educated and wasn't in college. So, it was a very interesting group.

SH: Did anyone from New Brunswick or Highland Park go with you or did you do this on your own?

AP: No. Oh, you mean joining it? It was through the efforts of my father, locating the American Field Service, and then, making an inquiry as to its operations and whether they were accepting people. Of course, they were desperate for people. So, that's how I got involved. … There was no one else from my community, that I was aware of. I'll tell you, later on, about another connection with Rutgers to do with that. Anyway, we got on a pre-war freighter, … the [SS] *Robin Tuxford*, and I remember, distinctly, it was evening when we arrived, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and … this gives you an idea of the pace of things then. They were loading the freighter, and, after the hatches were full, other than those hatches over where we were to sleep, they put big packing cases on top of the hatches with airplane parts of one kind or another. They were painting all this stuff battleship gray. So, literally, when we arrived, the painter was backing down the gangway, finishing the last patch of bare wood. [laughter] We boarded and went out into the harbor, near the Statue of Liberty, and anchored for awhile. We thought, "Well, we'll go in a convoy." Not the case, because of where the parts were going, which was to India, we went without a convoy. … Right after the 4th of July in 1943, we went down the coast, past Cape Hatteras, [There was a storm, and we all got seasick.] … we got our sea legs, finally. Right off the coast of Florida, between Cuba and Florida, we lost all power on the ship. This was in sight of where the Germans were sinking [freighters]. So, we all were up on the deck, with our life vests on, while they repaired the generator that had shut the whole ship down. We were just drifting, but we got away with it, and no submarine was sighted. We pulled into the eastern end of the Panama Canal, and got off the ship for an evening of carousing. We went through the Panama Canal the next day, which forgetting the war, was a wonderful experience. If you've never been through that canal, it's really a spectacular thing. I can remember, at the western end of the canal, looking down at all of the locks, like stepping stones to the Pacific. It took us all day to go through, … barrage balloons and guns all over the place protecting the canal. It was evening, when we got out into the Pacific, and I remember the lights of Panama City. That was the last land I saw for quite some time. We went down the west coast of South America. The further down we got, the more winter-like it got and the stormier it got. [laughter] They had us doing things on the ship to relieve the boredom, even though we weren't crew members. We stood watch, and I was a first aid man on one of the guns. When we had a drill, I'd run up to a three-inch gun where the Navy gunners were, with my little kit, [laughter] and go through the drill. The next land I saw was when I was standing watch going around the Horn. There was a snow storm, and the snow let up for a minute. … The snow parted, and I saw a bleak island off the Horn. Then, we proceeded across the South Atlantic, and I didn't see any more land, didn't see the Falkland Islands, didn't see the Cape of Good Hope, on into the Indian Ocean. The first land I saw again was the northern tip of Madagascar. We were running out of fresh water; the stills couldn't keep up with demand. We didn't get any water at Madagascar, because they were suffering from a drought. So, we went across to Mombassa, East Africa, where we were to transship anyway. The *Robin Tuxford*, eventually went on to India … The AFS unit got on another ship that had even been used in World War I, it was that old, along with a bunch of troops and natives from the interior of Kenya who were either recruited, or conscripted to work on roads in the Middle East. They came on board on the lower decks, and we were put on the boat deck. The ship proceeded up through the Red Sea to the southern end of [the] Suez Canal. …

SH: Were the troops on the ship Americans?

AP: British troops. On the freighter, going from New York to India, we had three or four different units, … the American Field Service recruits, OWI (Office of War Information) personnel, plus US Navy personnel to operate the guns. A group of British sailors who had been sent to the United States to train on the maintenance of Pratt and Whitney aircraft engines were now being shipped to India, with the airplane parts, and then, there were some … US Army Medical Corps people. All these people were together on the freighter. When we got to Mombassa, East Africa, then, it was all British, plus, the natives.

SH: With so many countries and branches of the service on board, how was a chain of command established?

AP: … Each unit had its own hierarchy and control, so, somebody, and I've forgotten who it was, in our unit, an older person, was in charge of us and apparently, arranged with the Captain and the hierarchy of the crew of the ship, for us to do certain things, to keep us busy. Somebody else with the British Fleet Air Arm, was in charge of them and you'd see them doing KP sometimes. Sometimes, we would also be doing KP. So, it was kind of a mixed thing.

SH: Was the ship manned by merchant seamen?

AP: There were merchant seamen running the ship, but, there was a contingent of, I don't know, maybe half a dozen, or perhaps a little bit more, of Navy personnel to operate the guns. They had a three-inch gun on the stern and on the bow of the ship, and .20 mm antiaircraft guns hung over each side of the ship. As a matter-of-fact, I stood watch next to one of those .20 mm guns and, when the ship rolled, you would be looking down at the water. It was kind of scary. [laughter]

SH: Did the different units mingle? Did you play cards?

AP: Oh, yeah, they did. There was, apparently, a twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week poker game going on and there was a lot of talk about where the money was going. [laughter] We did other things to relieve the boredom. On Saturday night, we'd put on skits of one kind or another, that sort of thing. I had my nineteenth birthday in the Pacific, going down the west side of South America. For a person who'd never been further north than Maine, or east of Asbury Park, New Jersey, [laughter] or west of Hershey, Pennsylvania; it was quite an [experience].

SH: How long did the voyage from New York take?

AP: I finally reached my primary destination, Cairo, Egypt, in mid-September, so, we're on a ship for the better part of two-and-a-half months. …

SH: Who was in charge of the Kenyan unit?

AP: A British officer, it was a little bit like something out of a Conrad or Kipling story. The natives lived on the deck, and cooked their own meals. This British officer would go up and down amongst them with his swagger stick, keeping order. They had their drums with them.

SH: Were they dressed in British military uniforms?

AP: No. They were in just ordinary clothes, surprising, you know. It was really hot and humid, but, a few of them caught pneumonia, and … we buried some of them at sea. This was my first experience with something like pneumonia in a climate like that, but, you can get pneumonia anywhere. [laughter]

SH: Being a young man who had never been north of Maine, what did you see in that first port where you changed ships?

AP: Well, … leading down to the docks, there was a wide street, unpaved, back then, stores and shops on either side. Eventually, it led to a field and I remember seeing a group of black, young men playing soccer in their bare feet. I always thought … you had to wear shoes for soccer, [laughter] what they called football. I remember watching that for a little bit, … and then, going into a hotel bar and having a drink, and buying trinkets of one kind or another to take home later. We were there only for a day before we were put on the other ship.

SH: How were you received?

AP: In Mombassa? [We were] really not there long enough to determine whether they liked us or didn't like us. I guess they looked upon us as sort of tourists.

SH: What was the name of your second ship?

AP: It was called the *Lancashire*. It was a British ship. We took off from Mombassa, and, for whatever the reason, we stopped in Aden for a day or so, I remember getting permission to swim off the ship, and that was another experience, if you've ever … jumped off a ship that size. It's a long way down, [laughter] and then, climbing the Jacobs Ladder to get back up is another experience. [laughter] I'm sure they were kidding us, but, after we had done that and we were up on the deck, some guys came back from being on the stern of the ship, and they said they were fishing for sharks. [laughter] I'm sure they were kidding us, but, these memories really stuck because I was so impressionable. The Red Sea was another experience. The hot, dry winds off the Sahara would hit that body of water, pick up all that moisture, so that there was a constant haze, sort of like a Maine fog, [laughter] but, not quite that dense. The humidity was just right around one hundred percent all the time. You just sat there, and water would run off you. … Later on, when I was on my first job after college, I was asked if I were interested in the "point four" program. They were sending people, agronomists and others, to different under-developed countries. They … asked if I wanted to go Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, [laughter] and, fortunately, I knew a little bit about what it was like in that area. To make a long story short I turned them down. We arrived at the southern end of the Suez Canal and got on a train to Cairo. I remember how dramatic it was, going across the desert and, suddenly, tropical vegetation started rolling by. … Of course, it was all irrigated from the Nile. We stayed a few days in Cairo, went to an outdoor theater, for the first time, and saw *Gone With the Wind*. I remember going to Shepheards Hotel, which, after the war was burned during a riot. It was a great treat to finally have white tablecloths and a more civilized meal for a change. … Some of those OWI, Office of

War Information, fellows who had been on the ship with us were sitting at another table. We went over to greet them, and, out of the corner of their mouths, they said, "Get away from us, get away from us." They were undercover. [laughter] Cairo was loaded with spies at that time, both sides, and they didn't want to have any connection with us, [laughter] so, we retreated to our table.

SH: Did you have a uniform then?

AP: Oh, yeah. The uniform that the American Field Service had us buy looked a lot like the Marine green dress uniform, not the kind you see in the White House. New York City was just loaded with all kinds of uniforms, you name it, and many different nationalities representing our Allies. When you walked down the street and you didn't know whether to salute or not salute. [laughter] So, we always saluted, just to be safe.

SH: What kind of military discipline or order were you under in the American Field Service?

AP: Well, technically, we were civilians (non-combatants), and we carried what is known as a Geneva Card. That entitled us to certain privileges as a civilian, and one of them was, if we were captured, we were supposed to be in the first exchange of prisoners. Ultimately, we were under British military law. We could get sent to the stockade if we got … in trouble. So, there was a military hierarchy over us, in addition to our own officers, who held ranks in the British system. They were not lieutenants, they were "leftenants" [laughter] in our organization, and captains, and so on, who were directly over us, but, we were attached to the British Empire Forces. When we went to Italy, we became part of the Fifth Army Group, which was a whole conglomerate of different military units, not just US, also units representing different parts of the British empire, free French, and free Poles.

SH: Did you have a rank or a rating?

AP: Eventually, I became an NCO of a group of about half a dozen of us, five or six ambulances, but, basically, we were known as drivers.

SH: Please, continue with your story. You were at the Shepheards Hotel in Cairo.

AP: How much detail would you like? [laughter] Well, I should shorten this up, but, it is fascinating, and I've said to my wife, years later, "It was worth a year of college." It really was, if you leave out all the unpleasantness. Because of the group I was with and the exposure I got to different nationalities in different parts of the world, all of that, was very educational. It helped a lot to be amongst people who had traveled in that area prior to the war. They were able to tell us things that you wouldn't, as an eighteen or nineteen year old, … notice. So, anyway, after four or five days in Cairo, we were loaded on a train in the evening, went across the Sinai Desert and, eventually, detrained at Haifa, what was then Palestine. I have to keep reminding myself that it was Palestine, not Israel. [laughter] We were met by some trucks from the American Field Service in Haifa to transport us to our ultimate destination, which was Baalbek, in the Bekaa Valley, between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Ranges. So, we went further up the coast, to Beirut, went up the hill to the American university, went to the student union and

had ice cream, the only safe ice cream in the Middle East at that time. The American university was the only one that had pasteurization equipment. So, we ate ice cream as a break before going up over the mountains into the Bekaa Valley. When we arrived in Baalbek, we discovered that the American Field Service was headquartered in some old French Foreign Legion barracks. If you recall your history, the French had been very heavily involved in Syria and Lebanon. It was an interesting spot, and it was just down the road from the ruins of Baalbek, which was, pre-war, a tourist attraction. The town of Baalbek was small at that time, with some touristy-type shops and that sort of thing. Then, there was a British canteen that you could go to in the evening. There was the old Roman aqueduct that came into the Foreign Legion barracks and fed the showers and the toilets … in that section of the walled compound. There was a tank up on the roof that this Roman aqueduct, fed the water [to], which automatically flushed when it reached a certain level. If you know anything about the Middle East and bathrooms, there are no toilets, there's just a hole. Well, you didn't want to be caught in there when that thing automatically flushed. Yet, most of … us were suffering, by that time, from intestinal problems, and so, timing yourself so that you didn't get caught in there [was a challenge], because you'd be wet to the knees when that thing flushed. [laughter] That was kind of a stand-out. After awhile, I was assigned a British Humber ambulance, and that's when some of the training started. We had some first aid training on the ship, basic first aid, but, other than that, no training. Training began on the maintenance of the vehicles and the British were really sticklers for that. The grease nipples on the engines had to shine. We used a toothbrush, [so that] you could get all of the grease out of the little cracks, spent a lot of time on maintenance, and, in that area, where there was a lot of dust and so on, it was a constant battle. Well, after about a week or two of that, I was assigned out with another person to Homs in Syria, across a segment of the Syrian desert in the general direction of Turkey. There was just a little medical aid station with some British medics, and we were assigned there as ambulance drivers. It was boring! [laughter] There wasn't much going on, the campaign in North Africa had ended shortly before we arrived, and so, the next step was Italy, … Sicily first, and then, Italy. I remember my roommate Brooks Cooper, who was a little bit older and was a student at Oberlin College. Oberlin produced a lot of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. To relieve the boredom, we'd lie there, under our mosquito netting, and Brooks would sing all the Gilbert and Sullivan songs to me. [laughter]

SH: What else did you do to keep busy?

AP: Well, we did make some ambulance runs. I made a run with a sick civilian, to Latakia on the coast, and … I took somebody to Damascus. There were sick people to be dealt with, some civilians, some military, but no wounded.

SH: How often were you sent out on an assignment?

AP: Oh, there'd be days that'd go by and nothing [was] happening, but that's part of the story of war. It's hurry-up-and-wait and days and days of nothing happening.

SH: Did you transport any civilian who needed aid? Who determined which civilians received medical care?

AP: There was a medical officer, and some of the locals would seek aid from the military. So, somewhere along the line, a medical officer decided that a person needed to be transported to a hospital. Hence, I took a person to a hospital in Latakia, on the Mediterranean Coast.

SH: What was the relationship like between the natives and your unit and the British?

AP: Well, in Homs, for example, there used to be an Arab *Gendarme* who would drop by just to chat with us. We couldn't speak Arabic, but, he could speak French, because of the French influence. Brooks and I would haul out our high school French to communicate with him. We became quite friendly with him, to the point where he wanted to show us where he lived. So, he took us into the town of Homs, … There were walls with little doors on narrow streets. He came to a little door, and opened it up. We walked into this beautiful, quadrangle garden, with little rooms off of it. He and his family lived in one of those rooms, with rugs and pillows on the floor. He introduced us to his wife, and then, he took us to an Arab café, where there were Arabs sitting around, smoking water pipes, and we played dominoes. That was my introduction to that culture. As far as who told us what to do, we were always attached to a British medical unit, and, usually, it was a medical officer who was giving the orders as to what should happen and, deciding that … they needed an ambulance. Then, we were to transport them from [point] A to [point] B.

SH: What security measures did you take?

AP: Well, right from the word "go" it was, "Loose lips sink ships," type of security, [laughter] but, … once I was in the American Field Service, we were admonished, quite frequently, not to write anything that would give aid to the enemy, so, our commanding officer would censor all our mail. Sometimes, we would try to get word back about what we were doing. Later on, when I got home, my parents had saved all my letters, some of them would look like mice had been at them, [laughter] where the censor had taken a razor blade and not just blacked it out, but, cut it out. … So, there was that kind of security going on.

SH: Obviously, you fraternized with the *Gendarme*, but, were you ordered not to mingle with the native population?

AP: The only time, and this was much later, that I encountered that was, I got assigned, very, very briefly, to a South African unit, and I started to talk to one of the black natives, and a white South African officer came up to me and said, "You don't talk to them," and this was my first encounter with apartheid. They were very strict about that, and that irked us, as Americans, it really did. That stuck with me, and years later, when we were all talking about apartheid, that memory came back. [laughter]

SH: How did the French and British interact with each other?

AP: There were some … so-called Free French units operating in Lebanon, and some of our people did get assigned to them, but, I never did see them. There were French units in Italy, later, when we invaded Italy, but, I had no contact with them. Many times, when you were on the road you didn't know what language to expect because there were Free French, Free Poles,

Sikhs, Gurkas, South Africans, Canadians, Scots, Englishmen, and Americans all mixed up in Italy. not necessarily in the Middle East. I was stationed, for awhile, with a New Zealand division left over from the North African campaign. They were sent to Italy while the Australians went back home to fight the Japanese.

SH: Basically, you would just get in your ambulance and drive to, say, Damascus, or wherever your assignment took you. That seems like quite a drive.

AP: [laughter] Well, at ten miles to the gallon, you had to carry extra gas with you. I had a British Humber ambulance and, unfortunately, I had a bad experience with it. When I was traveling back to Homs, to my post, from the headquarters in Baalbek, I was transporting a British medical officer. We're out in the middle of the Syrian desert, on a macadam road, could see for miles. There was a group of Arabs working on the road, with a steam roller. Well, as we came up to the steam roller on one side of the road, the Arabs all lined up on the shoulder on the other side. Behind the steamroller was an Arab who decided he wanted to be with his buddies on the other side, and he jumped out in front of me. Instinctively, and remember, this is a right-hand drive vehicle and I wasn't used to it, [laughter] I swerved to miss the Arab, and I hit that big wheel on the back of the steamroller. The front end of a Humber ambulance is a really complicated thing, and I must have bent everything out of shape. Well, just about that time, fortunately, the American Field Service acquired a whole fleet of four-wheel drive Dodge ambulances, like the US Army was using. I got a brand-new ambulance. [laughter] My commanding officer, as I was filling out all the military forms about the accident, said, "Next time, hit him; back over him to make sure he's dead and it'll only cost you the price of a blanket to bury him in." He was kidding, I'm sure, but it does say something about the value of life in that part of the world. I would prefer that not go into the transcript, in case that gentleman is still alive. [laughter]

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

SI: This continues an interview with Professor Allan Prince on July 19, 2001, in Exeter, New Hampshire, with Shaun Illingworth …

SH: Sandra Stewart Holyoak

GK: … And Greg Kupsky.

SI: Please, continue.

AP: The Bekaa Valley, at that time, was a very high malaria area, and so, one of the first things we did was start taking Atabrine. I don't know whether they even use that [today], they make better drugs now, but, one of the side effects of the Atabrine was your skin got yellow. So, we all looked kind of yellowish. [laughter] We had to take quite a bit of care, sleeping under nets and that sort of thing, to avoid getting malaria. Some did. There was another "bug," [laughter] a fly that was very small and transmitted what they called Sand Fly fever. A number of our people got that disease. The mosquito netting was finer than the average mosquito netting that you'd use around here, trying to keep those flies out, as well as the mosquitoes. So, there were things like

that that were bothersome. Being Westerners, there were a lot of bugs that affected our intestinal tracks, so that many of us were suffering from that. British food, terrible, [laughter] just terrible; I lost a lot of weight, and I'll say more about that a little later, but, my first encounter with really bad food was when I got on that ship in Mombassa. … The bread, and we were supposed to be privileged on that ship. We were up on the boat deck with the officer class, but, … the bread, there were weevils in it. We would sit there picking out the weevils like raisins before we'd eat the bread. Being an old ship, it was totally infested with cockroaches. My buddy and I were in the same cabin together. He was on the bottom bunk, and I was on the top. Going through that Red Sea experience, we'd just lay out there, naked, and sweating away. You'd turn the lights out, and then, the cockroaches would come out; they'd come up out of the drains, [laughter] and they were big, about two inches long. They were big! You'd lie there in the dark and one of them would run across your chest. [laughter] The first time that happened you'd turn on the light and there were all these cockroaches, all scurrying for cover. So, the health problems started about the time we got off that American freighter, where we complained about the food, but, we never had it so good, [laughter] … We were first warned about food when we got to Cairo. [They said], "Don't eat any fresh vegetables or fresh fruit," and, probably, they're saying the same thing today, but, it was very hard to avoid it, and so, we all were pretty slim, skinny, but, you asked about going to Damascus.

I was transporting, a military officer, a patient, and it was a long enough trip to stay overnight. Before I went back, I remember going to a bookstall, and buying a book called *Through the Lands of the Bible,* [laughter] to try to educate myself about the area. Maybe it's time to move on. [laughter] Eventually, the British forces that were located in the Palestine-Lebanon-Syria area were pulled out to go to Italy; we went along with them. Another educational thing that was dramatic for me, is, we came out of Lebanon and passed by Mount Hermon. Halfway down the hill, going towards the Sea of Galilee, I passed a sign that said, "Sea Level." [laughter] I'd never been to Death Valley or any place like that and I just couldn't believe it. I saw the sign, and I could see the Sea of Galilee below me and the town of Tiberius. So, we went back in the direction of Cairo, and traveled across the Sinai Desert, didn't go into Jerusalem, went around it. We'd stop in the desert for overnight. The conditions were such that you couldn't use grease on the car, on the universal joints. You had to use heavy-duty oil, because the sand would get in there and act as an abrasive with the grease. So, every night, you had to crawl under the vehicle and pump fresh, heavy-duty oil in there to avoid wearing those parts out. You can imagine getting under there, with one of these little adapters, and it would get all oily and slippery, and you'd start to pump, and it would slip and fall into the sand, and you'd have to crawl out and wash it all off. [laughter] … So, those were the kinds of things we were going through. We had Thanksgiving dinner on the fender of a vehicle on the way to Egypt. We happened to come along at the right time; when we were approaching the Suez Canal, … we couldn't see the canal, it just looked like a plain, and, all of a sudden, a ship came sailing by. [laughter] I had heard stories about this, but, it was still a dramatic sight, to see the upper half of this ship going across the sand. [laughter] and that's when we knew we'd reached the canal. We went into a staging area outside of Cairo, to prepare our vehicles for battle conditions. We had extra racks welded on the side for extra gas, camouflage netting that we put on the roofs. We're all in tents … on the desert, next to a canal called the Sweetwater Canal. I'm sure it was called something else in Arabic. … There were about, I don't know, more than half a dozen, maybe ten or twelve of us, in each tent. The flies were just incredible. Our food was served … out-of-doors. You'd go along with your mess kit and it'd just be black with flies. … In spite of the heat, we'd climb into

the ambulance, shut all the windows, kill whatever flies were in there, and there were many, before we could eat in peace. … Otherwise, you'd pick up a forkful of food and it'd be just covered with flies. Well, this leads up to something. The fellow sleeping next to me got up one morning and said, "I don't feel good. … I can't feel anything in my right leg," and, the next thing we knew, he had polio. It was Howie Nomer; Howie is a Rutgers graduate, so, you might want to look him up in the directory. I saw him, once, after I got back in college. He was in a different program entirely, and our paths didn't cross, except to say hello to each other. I found out that he got loaded onto a hospital ship and was shipped home by way of England. … He was walking with a cane when I saw him at Rutgers. That incident put the fear of God into us, and we wondered who was next. That should give you some sense of the health conditions. Eventually, we moved next to the Giza Pyramids, outside of Cairo. We were encamped there, along the highway, and, while we were there, there was one of those summit meetings involving Churchill and Roosevelt. A cavalcade of limousines … went by that, presumably, had Madame Chiang in it, and who was representing Chiang Kai-shek at the meeting. During our previous stay in Cairo, we had been out to the Pyramids and gotten the standard picture, with a donkey and a camel, in front of the Sphinx. Probably, the Arab photographer's still there. [laughter] We then moved to outside of Alexandria, getting ready to get on a ship. We went in a convoy from there to Sicily, and, on the way, we were attacked by some German airplanes, coming out of Crete which was still occupied by the Germans. That was kind of exciting. …

SH: Were you ordered to battle stations at that point?

AP: At that point, we didn't have any. We climbed out in the open, under a sheltering part of the deck, near the bow. … This was the first action we had actually seen, … tracer bullets were going in all directions. We were out there on the deck gawking at what was going on, and the officer up on the bridge was shouting at us to take cover. About that time, a British fighter plane, … I guess it was a Spitfire, came by at about bridge level, chasing a German bomber. I guess one ship in the convoy did get hit. … It looked like a 4th of July celebration for awhile and that's the way it is, as you've seen in the movies. … We pulled into … a port in Sicily, within sight of Mount Etna, in December and spent Christmas Day on the ship in the harbor. It was kind of sad. We were all homesick, [laughter] and then, we pulled anchor and went into Taranto, at the southern end of Italy, off-loaded the ship, and proceeded up the peninsula. By that time, the front was just north of Naples, and so, we proceeded to Naples and worked in that area for about a month before we went to the front. By that time, the front was at Cassino. (You've heard about the Battle of Monte Cassino.) I was assigned, along with a couple of other fellows, to a New Zealand unit that was in front of Cassino, at what is known as an ADS, which stands for Advanced Dressing Station. We were relieving another American Field Service unit which was being sent elsewhere. I was talking with one of the men we were relieving, and, as I was standing there in an olive grove, the leaves kept fluttering down, and I said, "What's going on?" and he said, "Oh, … the German shells are landing on the other side of the hill and the shrapnel is going through the tops of the trees," and clipping off leaves, and twigs. Well, I got a little shorter at that point [laughter] and the fellow I was paired off with, he and I started digging a hole pretty fast. … We had a pretty nice set-up, actually. We dug a pit wide enough for two sleeping bags. There were empty wooden boxes that … .75 mm shells came in, which we filled up with dirt, piled those around the edge of the pit. Then, we put our pup tent over it. … We had a pretty nice, cozy little place, and we'd lie there at night and listen to the shells going over,

laying bets with each other, as to which ones would explode and which ones would be duds. The wounded would be brought in, usually, on one of those jeeps with a rack on the back, the kind that you saw in *M.A.S.H.* That was the mode of transportation from the actual pick-up site. … [In] the British system, they had what is known as an RAP, Regimental Aid Post, and then, an ADS, MDS, and main hospital. So, the wounded would be picked up, and given very little treatment at the RAP, loaded on a jeep, and brought to the Advanced Dressing Station, where they'd get further attention. Then, we would transport them back to the MDS, Main Dressing Station, and then, from there, they'd go on to a military hospital, with the exception of the hospital all of these posts were in range of German artillery. The front was static enough so that the Germans had all of the key points zeroed in, using their observers. They could shell, at will, wherever they wanted to, if they observed something. So, we did a lot of work at night, without lights, to avoid being spotted, not because they didn't respect the Red Cross, but, you often got mixed up with other kinds of traffic, like trucks bringing ammunition up, which were legitimate targets. If you got mixed up in one of those situations and the Germans spotted it and started to shell, tough! You're Red Cross, but, so what? [laughter]

SH: Were you transporting only British troops or were you transporting other Allied soldiers?

AP: It was a mixture. When I was with the New Zealand outfit, it was mostly New Zealanders. As I told you, there were many different units, which together was known as the … US Fifth Army Group. Yes, you would, occasionally, get somebody else. … I was assigned a Maori Indian, as an orderly to hep me transport the wounded. He went by the name of Wonga. I used to kid him all the time, called him "Wonga, the Wonder From Way Down Under." [laughter] He was especially valuable at night when there wasn't any moonlight, because, sometimes, he'd have to get out and walk ahead of me. You'd have wounded with kinds of wounds that any little jar would cause a lot of pain, so, we would try to avoid the holes that developed in the ambulance track, either from mines being taken out, or from shells. He kept me from going into the ditch or into a hole. Eventually, we got out onto Route 6, which runs north and south in Italy. It's all bypassed now by an interstate-like highway, but, then, that was the main route. We would proceed through our own artillery emplacements. Back to the MDS. We did that for quite awhile. I was there for the bombing of the abbey, and, as a matter-of-fact, almost got killed on that one, because I had been sent to the rear to pick up extra stretchers, in anticipation of the battle. I was on my way back when the first wave of bombers, US bombers, came over, and one of the lead planes mistook an Italian community behind our lines for the target. That whole wing dropped their bombs on this lead plane's "say so." The first thing I knew [that] something was wrong was, … when officers standing in the field, with their binoculars, watching "the show," started hitting the deck. Just about that time, I felt as if a huge hand had lifted up the rear of the ambulance and slammed it down. It was the concussion from the bombs that our own … planes had dropped. I felt that was as close as I wanted to get to that sort of experience. [laughter]

SH: Did the concussions bother your ears?

AP: Oh, that's an interesting point, given what that lieutenant said back at the U.S. induction center. First, since I spent most of my time out-of-doors, I didn't have a cold. … I had a cold when I left New York, because of all the air conditioning, which was lousy back then. They were always set too cold. I had a terrible cold when I left New York, and I didn't have another

one until I came back to the United States. Second, later on, I was attached to a … Canadian artillery unit with antiaircraft guns, which have a very, very sharp crack to them, and, with the holes in my ears, the pressure was always equalized. There were fellows coming in, with split ear drums, but I had no problem. So, you win some and you lose some. [laughter]

SH: I thought that your ears would be very sensitive, but, obviously, they were not.

AP: No. … I'm more sensitive now. This hearing aid amplifies high frequencies, and, when a little child shrieks, that really gets to me. [laughter]

SH: What kind of first aid did you apply?

AP: Well, for example, one night, I was transporting one or two wounded, and I came to the place on Route 6 where I went through … our own artillery. It was at night, and there was a duel going on between our artillery and theirs, and there were wounded, American wounded. They stopped me and asked me if I could pick them up, and I did. I loaded them on the floor of the ambulance, there wasn't room for more stretchers. I got them all back alive, but I don't know whether they all ultimately survived. It was pretty gory, bleeding … all over the place. You did your best. Occasionally, I would be transporting somebody on an IV. They would ask me to take the IV out when the bag ran dry, but, not a whole lot of first aid. We were basically transporters.

SH: I was just curious how often you were called upon to do things that you really had not been trained for.

AP: Yeah. Some of the American Field Service personnel may have gotten involved with things like that, but, … I, and the people I was with, didn't have that kind of an experience.

SH: How quickly could you make a run from, say, the ADS at Monte Cassino to your MDS and back?

AP: Oh, I might make three or four runs a night, actually. It wasn't that far, but, it was slow. Three or four runs would be a lot.

SH: I assume you were pushed to your mental limit by what you did and witnessed each day.

AP: Well, the effect of that really didn't come until after I got home. One thing I failed to say. You signed up with the American Field Service for a specified tour and the tour, at that time, was fifteen months. When that fifteen months ended, they would ask you if you'd like to sign on again. I happened to be just outside of Siena in Italy. By that time, I was very tired and sick physically. I had spent five months within range of enemy fire. A number of us were in that kind of condition, so, we didn't sign on again. We were shipped home. So, I came home before the end of the war in Europe. … It was about September 30th when I got back to New York, in 1944.

SH: Where were you sent after Monte Cassino?

AP: The Germans were masters at making use of the terrain for defensive purposes. That was also true further south, at Salerno. You've heard about that landing and how calamitous it was. The Allies got stalemated, again, at certain rivers, and then, at Cassino. Cassino anchored a chain of mountains that went across Italy, part of the Apennines. The Germans were well-entrenched and had the high ground. That sort of thing. So, the Allies decided to try to go around, at Anzio and cut the Germans off. Well, it was a SNAFU. [laughter] You may have read about Mark Clark and what happened. They caught the Germans by surprise with that landing, but, they had a schedule that they were keeping. They were supposed to take … so much ground [the] first day and so much the second. Well, when they got to their original objective, instead of keeping going, they stopped, and that gave the Germans time to recover, the high ground, so [that] all those poor folks on the Anzio beachhead were under intense fire from the Germans. Well, finally, they broke out at the same time we made a massive assault at Cassino. They were supposed to cut across and cut off the Germans, who were between us at Cassino and them at Anzio. Mark Clark, according to the story, and I don't know whether it's true or not, but, it's written up in history books, was so anxious to be the first in Rome that he turned north instead of going east to cut off the Germans. The Germans slipped out of the net and went north of Rome. Of course, we proceeded through Rome, and on further north and battled the Germans step-by-step, and, by the time I left, the Germans were still in Florence. By the way, you may remember that Rome was declared, early on, an "open city". So, the city wasn't damaged by the war. As a matter-of-fact, later on, when we were north of Rome, we got some leave, went into Rome. … There was one in the group who, from pre-war times, knew a Swiss lady who was living in Rome, and he made contact with her. She put us up in her apartment, which was just around the corner [from] the balcony from which Mussolini used to expound. Then, down the street was the Victor Emmanuel Monument, which looks like some of our monuments in Washington. We arrived in an ambulance, which she put in her garage for safekeeping, so, we didn't have to worry about it being stripped by kids for parts. We went to the Coliseum. … The Constantine Arch, which is outside of the Coliseum, was still sandbagged to protect it. [The] Coliseum was sort of like the Grand Canyon. You get one impression from the pictures and another when you're there. The Coliseum didn't look as big to me as it did in the pictures, [laughter] but, nevertheless, impressive, and the Roman Forum. We also went in the catacombs and all those touristy places.

SH: All of those places were open and available to you.

AP: Yes. The city was undamaged, because it had been respected, by both sides as an open city. I went to St. Peter's. We were going through the Sistine Chapel, and, suddenly, there was a stir, and it turned out that the Pope was coming through, on a litter, with his Swiss guards. He came through, and blessed everybody on either side. I'm not a Catholic, but I had souvenirs, … a crucifix and that sort of thing, to send back to my Catholic friends, and I was told that they were blessed, too. So, I was able to tell them, their gift had been blessed by the Pope. [laughter] So, that was interesting and a nice relief from what we were doing.
Another interesting place that we stayed at for awhile to do evacuations to planes that were set up to handle wounded, was Orvieto. Orvieto was one of those hill towns in the northern half of Italy, where you go up a very narrow and steep road and through an archway into the town. We took over a little park in the town, drank up most of the Orvieto wine, [laughter] and transported

wounded that had been brought down from the north and were being loaded onto these hospital planes for transport to a military hospital.

SH: How did the Italians receive you?

AP: Oh, with open arms. My wife and I have been back to Italy twice now and Joan likes it so much that she said, "If I had to live somewhere else, I'd live in Italy," good people. We went to both Sorrento, where I was located for awhile, and then, to northern Italy, parts of which I hadn't seen during the war. We fell in love with the people. They're great.

SH: What were the conditions like in the areas that you passed through?

AP: When I got to Naples, during the war, … there was a typhus epidemic underway. They were dusting everybody with DDT, which, of course, is outlawed now. So, there were a lot of sick people and a lot of hungry people. I remember, when I delivered a patient to one of the medical units for further treatment, sometimes, I'd get a meal through their mess line. There'd be these little Italian kids with large fruit cans. They put a little wire on them for a handle, and wait at the end of the line. When you were through eating and you were scrapping [out] your mess kit, with whatever food you didn't want to eat, they'd get you to scrape it into their cans, rather than into the garbage can. It was kinda touching … to see that. A lot of them were orphans. A lot of them were thieves. You had to watch that they didn't steal stuff off your ambulance. … I remember being in a town, I don't remember which one now, parked for some reason, waiting for somebody. On the side of the ambulance was a rack where we kept the gas and oil cans. There were old people sitting on the sidewalk, on the steps of one of the houses right opposite me, and I looked at one of them. I could tell he was watching something, and then, I looked in the passenger side rearview mirror, and here was this kid, trying to steal stuff off the ambulance. [laughter] Wherever we left the ambulance, around populated areas, we'd always take the rotor out of the distributor and pocket that, so that they couldn't drive off with the whole ambulance. … [laughter] There were British mechanics and "cooks" assigned to our units. When we were not posted out, while we were in our own headquarters, the rations would come in, and the British cooks would cook them. Sometimes, we'd just get fed up, and we'd get into the kitchen and make something out of those rations, but, even so, … the British food was so bad, we would trade for K rations. [laughter]

SH: Did you have anything in your kits that you could trade, such as chocolate?

AP: Yes, cigarettes, chocolate. The British gave us, even though we were civilians, … an honorary rank of warrant officer, and that allowed us certain PX privileges and certain other privileges when we got to a unit where there were separate messes for sergeants, and Tommies. So, as an honorary warrant officer, I got a bottle of scotch each month, Americans would trade a tank for a bottle of scotch! [laughter] That's an overstatement, but, the trading value of that scotch was incredible. Soap, … was a prime thing with the civilian population of Italy. … Sometimes, we were able to get our clothes washed by a local woman, we'd supply the soap to her, and we'd supply candy and things like that, and even help out with some food, in trade for doing our laundry. …

SH: Did you see any black market activity in Italy?

AP: Well, yes and no, especially in Naples. I don't know whether you've ever seen a hearse, a horse drawn hearse, in Italy? You've seen those, how ornate they are? and they have a window on the side and black horses with plumes. Well, they were all over the place in Naples and I was told that there weren't always bodies in there [laughter] black market. Another interesting first experience for me was, when we got to Naples, we hadn't had a bath since we left Egypt, just a sponge bath. Well, there were some public baths in Naples and that was heaven. When we went to those public baths, I think I filled up the tub three times before the water ran clean. [laughter] But, we all smelled the same, so we didn't notice.

SH: Were you able to get wine with your meals in Italy?

AP: Yes, we did arrange it on occasion. For awhile, I was stationed in modern Pompeii, not the ruins, [laughter] the ruins were next door, and we got friendly with an older couple, who had two daughters. … They were mature, that is, they were not children, and one of the daughters ran a little embroidery shop, and behind the shop was their home. Well, they agreed to cook for us, and three or four of us went there for several nights. They had a little phonograph, and we'd dance with the daughters. Then, we … arranged for a party, went out and bought wine, and invited girls in, who were well-chaperoned by their parents. [laughter]

SH: Did you visit the ruins at Pompeii?

AP: Oh, yes. They weren't open, so, we climbed the fence, and a lot of the ruins were not yet excavated. My wife and I, when we went to Sorrento a couple of years ago, and visited the ruins; they were a lot more exposed by that time. You may remember, during 1944, Vesuvius erupted again. By that time, I was up at Cassino, but, I remember looking southward, and you could see a red glow on the horizon. Then, later, when I got back to the United States, I happened to see a US Army film of that eruption, showing the lava coming down, the way you've seen in Hawaiian shots, pushing trees over, and catching fire. A different area than Pompeii was affected. I don't know how much more of this kind of thing you would [want].

SH: Your stories are very valuable. We have never interviewed an American Field Service veteran or an ambulance driver. We have interviewed litter bearers and medics, but, never an ambulance driver.

AP: … I should say that I didn't have any direct contact with Germans, other than their shells coming over, [laughter] … except once. On one of those dark nights, I was sent down to the outskirts of Cassino to pick up wounded, right near one of the bridges we were attempting to maintain over the Rapido. By that time, part of the town was occupied by Germans and part by various troops, New Zealanders, US Army personnel. US Army engineers maintained the bridges, and it was pretty scary, because that monastery, just loomed above you, and you were sure they were looking right down your throat. In reality, the Germans weren't even in there. In the beginning they respected the monastery, and we bombed that monastery unnecessarily, but, we didn't know that then. We thought that it was a prime observation point. We just assumed they were in there, but, at any rate, we were loading wounded in the dark, and one of them was a

German soldier, who looked to me to be about sixteen years old. He was that young looking. Well, he was on the stretcher and we were shoving him in the ambulance. I was in the back, receiving the stretcher, and they were shoving him in, and, all of a sudden, he started screaming, "*Kamerad, kamerad*." Well, I was getting annoyed. You know, any kind of noise attracted attention I didn't want [laughter] and I tried to shut him up. Well, when I got to a point where there was some light, I realized why he was screaming. He had a compound fracture of his arm, and his arm was sticking out over the edge of the stretcher, and it was rubbing down the side of the ambulance. I felt awful.

GK: Were you able to correspond frequently with your family and friends in the United States?

AP: Oh, I wrote to my future wife, and I wrote to another girl I dated at NJC. [laughter] Of course, I wrote to my parents quite frequently, and one or two others, but I'm not a letter writer. I imagine I wrote, maybe, once a month, something like that, to my parents, less frequently to others. You didn't feel much like writing, because a lot of what you wanted to tell them, you couldn't tell them, because you knew that your lieutenant was gonna censor it. The other thing that inhibited me a little bit was having a stranger read my letter. I don't know whether you've encountered that with other interviews with people who have been in the military, that inhibiting influence of writing something that you know somebody else is gonna read, and, frankly, my compositions left a lot to be desired, too, misspellings and all of that. There I was with this highly educated group. [laughter] I wondered what kind of impression I was making. [laughter] … Near Pompeii, there was an airfield that had B-25 bombers flying in support of the Anzio beachhead. There was a … B-25 bomber pilot who somehow linked up with us … on legitimate evening leaves. I discovered that he had the required number of missions completed, and he could go home for awhile, to Alabama. He did agree to sneak a letter home. So, I wrote a letter about all the things I had done up to that point in Italy, nothing of military value, but, I wrote a lot more than I would have if my lieutenant was gonna censor it, and, sure enough, his word was good. [When] he got back to Alabama, he re-mailed it to my folks and I saw the letter when I got home.

GK: Were you able to receive letters from home?

AP: Yes. … There were two ways that we sent mail; one was on that real thin, onion-skin paper and the other was the so-called V-mail, where they would photo reduce your letter. There was a standard form that you wrote your letter on, would be about this big, and it would end up about this big. I shouldn't be saying this into the microphone, [laughter] three inches by three inches. So, if your penmanship wasn't real good, it was hard to read. I saw some of those V-mails when I got home and I appreciated why my parents were a little bit critical. [laughter] So, those were the two ways we sent letters back to the US. Usually, the stuff from my parents, or, from the girls I wrote to, came by way of air mail, through an Army Post Office, APO, address, on thin paper. Letters would come in bunches. It took awhile to catch up to wherever we were. My mother sent [packages]. I got some packages when I got to Cairo, on my way to Italy, for Christmas. I wish they had sent a spoon, because the food my mother sent was just a box full of crumbs, [laughter] but, I started smoking cigars, and my father sent me a box of Dutch Master cigars. Nobody else got them, so, I passed out cigars, [laughter] … One unfortunate thing happened; a lot of the Christmas packages came in mailbags that didn't get opened right away

and were loaded into one … or two of the ambulances that were then put on the ship to go to Italy. … When we finally unloaded the ambulances off the ship, we discovered that somebody had gotten into those mailbags, so, some of the packages were gone. That was unfortunate, it didn't help the morale much. Another incident, in Cairo, as we were again moving in the direction of Italy, after being in Lebanon, we were in a convoy, going through the center of Cairo, and it was warm, so, … we had the windows down on the driver and the passengers' sides. All of a sudden, what we thought were Arab paperboys rushed to the ambulances, jumped on the running boards, reached through the windows and grabbed whatever was loose. …

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

AP: … Before we went to Italy, we carried gas masks. At that time, we were still worried that the Germans might use gas. They never did, of course. We were also issued helmets, which were the old, pie plate kind. [laughter] When I got to the front in Italy, I found an American helmet laying across the road belonging to somebody who'd gotten wounded or killed. I grabbed onto that, and I turned in that pie plate. [laughter] I figured there's a lot more protection from the American helmet than that thing. Then, shortly after that, they called in all the gas masks and you realized that gas wasn't gonna be a problem. So, we got rid of those, didn't have to have those slung around our [necks].

SH: Were you re-supplied fairly regularly?

AP: No, not always. We had a disruption of supplies in the Naples area, and we ate nothing but cauliflower, out of the fields, morning, noon and night, for about two days. I couldn't face cauliflower for years after that. [laughter] That was the one and only time we ate off-the-land. A lot of times, the supplies were very meager. You'd stop for a meal and they'd give you a chunk of bread, a cup of tea, in an aluminum cup, … tea that had been boiled in a big bucket. What they did was they … got a can, poured some sand in it, and poured gasoline on it to make a burner under the bucket, and brought the water to boil, dropped in handfuls of tea, and then, cans of condensed milk. Well, you ended up drinking this tea, straining the tea leaves through your teeth. Then, they'd give you a chunk of bread and margarine, which, if you remember back then, was like lard, and maybe a can of sardines. I hated sardines. So, I'd end up with bread and tea a lot of times and you don't gain weight on that. This was *en route*, in the field, and then, when we were stationary and there was a chance for supplies to accumulate, we got a little better food than that, but, the cooks still managed to ruin it. [laughter]

SH: Can you tell us about Cassino and your assignments after that battle?

AP: Well, … at the final battle of Cassino, when we finally broke out, my commanding officer was killed. What happened was, he was visiting one of our units, making the rounds. You've heard of air bursts, where the shell explodes in the air? It's an antipersonnel device, not designed to hit a tank, or a building, or whatever, and a piece of shrapnel from that air burst got him, and so, we lost [him]. It was quite personal, in the sense that he was our direct commanding officer. Then, we went on, from there, northward. The gentleman who took his place had also caught polio in Egypt and was delayed by that. He recovered enough so that [he was not sent home]. He had a very mild case, so, he caught up with us and took over command. Subsequently, after

the war, he got into public broadcast television. One day, I was in … Washington, DC at a meeting, and I came down the elevator in a hotel to where there was a newsstand. There was a fellow standing there, and I said, "He looks like Ward Chamberlain," and, sure enough, it was him. I've seen him since, in New York, where he's a senior vice-president of Public Broadcast Television in New York City. We had lunch, and reminisced. So, we did manage to keep in touch. My best man at my wedding in 1945 was my slit trench mate in the war. Joan and I met on a blind date in 1942. Then, after the war, we got married. So, I count myself very fortunate. [laughter] We've been married almost fifty-six years now.

SH: You moved north after Cassino.

AP: Northward, yes. … The Germans were retreating, and there were all these rear guard actions, so that you were always at risk that they'd left somebody behind to shoot at you, to delay you, and I had a couple of close calls. … There were three or four of us going out to a post and we'd gotten misdirected. We were told to go to a certain place, but it was too soon. There was a jeep leading us, and, suddenly, in the road was a British reconnaissance car, with a guy in it, and he said, "What are you guys doing here? If you go any further, you're gonna get captured [laughter] or shot at." He said, "You better get out of here." So, we turned around and started heading to the rear, and the Germans spotted us and started shelling. There was this huge geyser of dirt that went up on one side, and then, another geyser of dirt went up on the other side. I said, "Well, they've got us bracketed. This is it," but the third shell never came. Maybe they saw the Red Cross, finally, and stopped, I don't know. [laughter] As I say, for the most part, the Germans respected the Red Cross, unlike the Japanese. The New Zealand outfit I was … [with] at Cassino, was located next to a stone farmhouse, and, on the side facing the enemy, there were huge Red Cross flags, so that the Germans could see that a medical unit was located there, in tents. We dispersed our ambulances when we weren't driving, out in the field around this location, in such a way that they could see them. So, they'd shoot all around us and over us, but, there was always a risk, that one would fall short. One did, right across the road from us, and put holes in our tents. I don't think it was intentional, I think it was just misdirected. As I say, we used to lay there in our trench and listen to them go overhead. [laughter] The Germans were very effective with their rear guard actions all the way up … the boot of Italy, and, sometimes, we would be at risk, and, sometimes, it'd be less tense, like the experience at Orvieto. [laughter] … Those hill towns are very interesting. I'd like to go back to Italy for a third time and cover that area. I did go back to Cassino, a couple of years ago, and went to the abbey. It's completely restored, it's beautiful, they've done a marvelous job, and the Italian government, along with other governments, kicked in the money to restore it, and I'm glad. … There were, tours through the abbey, the public parts, and there was a little shop area, where you can buy postcards, and I found a monk who spoke English. I said, "Are any of the monks here now who were there when it was bombed?" He pointed down to the end of the counter and said, "That gentleman," … a very old man by then. He didn't speak English, so, I didn't speak to him. … It's kind of interesting to go back. … The changes, after fifty years, it just completely disorients you. To begin with, the road system is different. For once, I could look down [on] where I was in 1944, from the other perspective. I had a hard time orienting myself. There was one spot where there was still evidence remaining that there'd ever been a battle there. The town was completely restored. You would never know there had been a war there. When we left it, it had been so

heavily shelled, and there were so many mines, we said, “They’ll never rebuild this. They’ll move over and build it somewhere else," but, they’ve rebuilt it. It was just amazing to see it.

SH: After your fifteen-month tour was complete, how were you released?

AP: There was an ambulance, excuse me, there wasn’t an ambulance, it was a small British truck, that the American Field Service had, and there were a number of us whose tours were up. We still had a headquarters, still, in Naples, it was a villa they had taken over. It was a rest and recuperation area for American Field Service personnel. So, from Siena, we drove south, through Rome, back to Naples, to await a ship that was going home. There were two or three of us who got tired of waiting … for the word to come that there was a ship available, and so, we decided to take a little vacation out on the island of Ischia, in the Bay of Naples. While we were out there, there was a ship [that] left with the rest of the guys. [laughter] So, when we got back to Naples, we still had to wait, and, finally, two of us got on an empty Liberty ship and went due west, to Norfolk, Virginia. The only exciting thing that happened on the way was, you folks had a hurricane on the East Coast, and the swells from the hurricane hit us [in the] mid-Atlantic, in this empty Liberty ship. So, we had a little rolling going on for a few hours. [laughter]

SH: How many people were on board the Liberty ship?

AP: In that case, there was just my buddy and I on as passengers, and the crew. The Captain was an Italian who spoke broken English and we ate at the captain’s table. I remember one thing that was very amusing to the Captain. We were having breakfast and there was one of those bottles with the squeeze thing that you use for maple syrup. … I had pancakes, and I reached for it, and I poured it on, but, it wasn’t maple syrup, it was olive oil. [laughter] He got a big charge out of that. They use olive oil for everything. … There were happy spots in this whole experience.

SH: Did you stay together when you returned to the United States?

AP: … Oh, we scattered when we hit land. We couldn’t get home fast enough. [laughter]

SI: I think Sandra meant to say, "Were the men in your unit in Lebanon the same men that you left New York with?"

AP: Oh, did we stay together? Yes. No, there was some redistribution to other units. I was in C Platoon of [the] 485th Company of the American Field Service. Some of the folks that came over with us on the ship might have been sent to D Platoon, or A Platoon, or B Platoon. Those who went to India and Burma went directly from New York. They weren’t … mixed in with us, that wasn’t the case. We stayed together, pretty much, until we went to Italy, while we were in the Middle East. Then, the platoon began to fragment, and we'd get assigned out to different units. Some wanted to change units and they would put in to have a [transfer]. They'd developed friendships in D Platoon, as opposed to C Platoon, that sort of thing. I tried to arrange a reunion recently, but I waited too long. A lot of them that I knew were dead, or, health-wise, were unable to travel, or just weren’t interested. I consulted with Ward Chamberlain, who was my commanding officer after the first one was killed, about it ahead of time and with the folks at

the American Field Service, which is now the Student Exchange program. I remember him saying, "You better hurry up," [laughter] and I didn't hurry enough. [laughter] So, I haven't had any reunions with them. I have had one reunion with the man who was the best man at our wedding. We hadn't seen each other for almost fifty years, since the wedding. We picked a motel in New Jersey, and met for a day-and-a-half, reestablished our [friendship]. We had exchanged Christmas cards, but, you know how that goes. It gradually fades away, you miss a Christmas, and then, pretty soon, you lose all contact. What happened was, I got on the Internet for the first time and decided to use the national telephone directory to see if I could find some people. I plugged in his name, and came up with two Joe Helfrich's both of whom lived in New Jersey. So, I had two telephone numbers, and I picked one, and I dialed it. His wife came on the line, she had been at the wedding, originally, and I said who I was, and I said, "Is Joe there?" and she just took off, [laughter] blew her mind, and he got on the line, and he was so excited. He had been wounded at Cassino. As a matter-of-fact, I had transported him to the rear. He was one of the ones that got mixed up with some trucks and got shelled, and, being a civilian, was never recognized. He finally got his Purple Heart, years and years later, and he put me on to the fact that Congress, recently, and I think it was around 1990, passed a bill to recognize various volunteer outfits. Remember the women … [that] flew airplanes, the Air Transport Command, units like the American Field Service not, strictly speaking military? Well, you had to meet certain criteria. You had to be in a theater where there were American forces, and you had to have been involved in one or more battles In other words, if you were serving at a canteen with the American Red Cross back in Naples you weren't eligible. Well, after over fifty years, I finally got an honorable discharge from the Fifth Army of the United States, and they sent me my Good Conduct Medal and my Victory Medal. [laughter] It all came in the mail to me, after I sent in the documentation. A year later, I went over to Manchester, New Hampshire, where the nearest Veterans Administration is, and, sure enough, there I was, in their computer, as a veteran, finally, and I always say it was the longest AWOL in history, [laughter] but, that was kind of nice, and my buddy was the one who put me on to it, who had finally gotten his Purple Heart, finally, after all those years. An interesting sequel. [laughter]

SH: How did you return to Rutgers?

AP: Oh, yeah. We haven't even gotten to that, yet. [laughter] I came back, and, as you know, Rutgers was on the quarter system. I got back at the end of September, so, I didn't go right back to school. I needed to rest and recuperate and so, it was whenever the second quarter started, I guess, shortly after Christmas when I went back. I enrolled in what was called then [the] "Preparation for Research" curriculum, which was more heavily into the sciences, than in a standard curriculum for agriculture students, and majored in soil chemistry. Along about the end of my junior year or early part of my senior year, I can't remember exactly the timing of it, my major professor in the soils department, who was chairman of the department, approached me one day and said, "The International Minerals and Chemical Corporation has a fellowship." They wanted a certain study done, and it was enough for a Ph.D. So, in my senior year, I had already acquired a fellowship, which paid the magnificent sum of a hundred dollars a month, which meant my wife, necessarily, had to work. [laughter] So, I actually started on my Doctorate before I'd finished my undergraduate work, because there were certain experimental plots that had to be prepared, and there was a lot of manual work to do with that. I graduated in '47. At that time, I was asked whether I wanted to be [in] the Class of '46 or '47, and I decided that I

wanted, you know, [it] to be a four-year affair, so, I said, "'47." and then, I got my doctorate in 1950. The class officer, Joe Saldarini, do you know Joe Saldarini? He said what happened to us is a handicap with respect to reunions, because some of us picked '47 and some of us picked '46. He said, "It's hard to get a decent sized group together," and, of course, we're all older now, and some of us aren't around anymore. …

SH: How soon after you returned to the United States did you get married?

AP: We were married on December 22, 1945. I started dating her again almost as soon as I got back to the United States, reestablished contact, other than by mail. [laughter] So, after the Japanese surrendered, I proposed marriage, and we picked December, during the vacation period, so that we could have a little honeymoon before school started again. [laughter]

SH: Had your wife graduated from NJC by that time?

AP: She only went two years. She's a maverick, independent, and they wouldn't let her take the courses that she wanted to take, so, she quit [laughter] at the end of her sophomore year. Since, the war was still on, she went into a war plant, as a secretarial type. Then, eventually, … when I caught up with her, when I got back to the States, she was a telephone operator at a hospital outside of Philadelphia, in Fox Chase, a hospital devoted solely to cancer patients. Subsequent to that, she became a special ed teacher at Woods School in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, which is devoted totally to handicapped children, and that helped support me in college. I had the fun, [on] one of our anniversaries, of surprising her. I put a hundred dollar bill in the card that I gave her and the significance of that is on one side of the hundred dollar bill is a picture of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Well, I proposed to her on the bench that's in that picture, on that hundred dollar bill, at Independence Hall. [laughter]

SH: That is cute.

AP: I couldn't top it, though. [laughter] I couldn't think of anything else after that.

SH: Please, continue.

AP: Well, our first child was born when I was finishing my Doctorate, writing my thesis, the last year, in 1949. His name is Roger. Eventually, he went to Dartmouth, then, on to Oregon State, and then, to Brown, for his Doctorate. He's now working for an oil company, Chevron, and, right at the moment, is in Bangkok, Thailand, with his family, [his] wife and daughter. Our second child came after I got on my first job at Clemson, South Carolina. Clemson College, then was all male in 1950, and it was a quasi-military school, not as bad as [the] Citadel, but, they wore uniforms to class, and they drilled twice a week. So, our daughter, Penny, came along, after I got on the job there, and then, the year I left there to come to New England, our third child was born, David. They're all married. My daughter has four children, all, except one, grown up now. I don't know what further you'd like about that aspect of my life, but, one of the things that encouraged us to move to New Hampshire not only was the availability of a job that interested me, but, also, that was 1954, and that was the year of the Brown decision on segregation in schools. Our oldest boy was just ready to go into first grade, and South Carolina

was one of the holdouts, trying to fight that decision. They were talking about privatizing the schools, and then, when that didn't work, they were talking about a tax to set up "separate but equal" schools. We just didn't want to get mixed up in that. Besides that, we were Yankees in Rebel territory. [laughter] Are any of you from the South? [laughter] So, we decided to move north. … Maybe we better wind this up.

SI: Can you summarize your career for us?

AP: Oh, okay. I started out at Clemson and, there, they had a separate research faculty. It was a research faculty and a teaching faculty, so, I was on the research faculty. When I went to the University of New Hampshire, which was the next step, in cooler climate, not segregated, I was there as a soil scientist, eventually, became a department chairman, got more and more involved in university-wide affairs on various kinds of committees and in the faculty senate. … At that point, I had had one sabbatical at Duke University School of Forestry. Then a program came up that the president was interested in, in academic administration. It was put on by the American Council on Education. … The idea was to give promising faculty members a chance to experience administrative affairs at some host institution. So, my president nominated me for that program. There were about 110 applicants, and I didn't expect to be selected. I thought, "The competition is fierce for this," because they were only picking twenty-three, and, lo and behold, I got it, and I had the wonderful experience of being interviewed by the president of Harvard, the president of Wellesley, and the president of Northeastern. So, I went off for a year to Seattle, to the University of Washington. … I had a great mentor who was provost, and I had a wonderful year out there, and I got hooked on administration. So, I went over to "the enemy," according to the faculty, [laughter] and started out in research administration, because I knew a lot, … being a department chair, about various sources of research funds and how to manage them, both federal and non-federal. So, I got involved with that and was asked to develop the federal overhead rate proposal, and then, argue it with federal auditors, in this case, the Air Force. Well, apparently, I was successful enough at that, because the president said, "I'm losing my executive vice-president. He's going off to be a president of a college and he was in charge of the budget. Will you take over the university system budget?" and, from then on, it was downhill. [laughter] Every so often, I'd acquire another responsibility and another responsibility, and ended up Vice-President for Finance and Administration. I was in that position until 1980, when another president, who had left UNH to be president of Whittier College in California, asked me to come out and be his Executive Vice-President in Charge of Budget and Finance, and all that good stuff. So, I went out there for eight years, and then retired back East. My wife and I quickly decided that Southern California wasn't for us, but we'd already sold our home in Durham, New Hampshire. So we bought a condo outside of Durham. Just about a year before I was due to retire, we had a major earthquake in Whittier and my wife, Joan, said, "Why am I sitting here amidst all this mess from the earthquake when I have a perfectly good condo back in New Hampshire?" [laughter]. So, she took off, and I commuted on the red-eye for the better part of an academic year, until I retired. Just as I was leaving Whittier, the day before, the president of the University of New Hampshire called me up and said, "You're coming back. Will you take your old job back, until I get through recruiting a permanent vice-president?" So, I took my old job back, same problems that I left eight years ago. [laughter] Eventually, I retired again, when the new person got his feet on the ground. About that time, the University of New Hampshire Foundation was formed, just like the Rutgers Foundation. I was asked to be treasurer of it, and

so, just as I retired from that, they lost the president of the Foundation, and they asked me to be interim president of the Foundation. I did that for four or five months, until they recruited somebody. At that time, I promised Joan that this retirement was for keeps. So, that's a snapshot of over fifty years in the academic world. I still feel that teachers are born, they're not made. Teaching was always a struggle for me, and I was in a field that wasn't static. You couldn't use the same lecture notes that you'd used the year before. It would be doing a disservice, because, you know, I was teaching an upper level course, not a freshman course. I'd get up at 5:00 AM or earlier, working on my lectures, and it was always a struggle for me. … Every once in awhile, a former student, would come up and say that I made a difference, but, I wish there were more. [laughter] It is heartwarming to have somebody do that, … come by and say, "Yeah, you made a difference," but, I didn't get that impression when I was teaching them. They were all sitting there and I was wondering if they were even hearing anything. [laughter]

SH: Well, I believe that a good administration leads to good teachers.

AP: Oh, yeah. That reminds me [of] one thing the president said to me when he asked me to take over the budget. I said, "You know, here I am, a soil chemist, what do I know about accounting? I know something about it, because I handled these various sources of funds as a department chair, but, that's different." He said, "That's exactly why I'm asking you." He said, "I don't want an accountant. I want somebody who can talk the faculty language and act as the bridge." So, I bought into that, [laughter] and I learned on the job. I had a good controller, and he'd spout jargon at me, and I'd say, "Now, in plain English, what were you saying?" and he'd say it in plain English. I'd say, "Okay, why didn't you say so in the first place?" [laughter] and we'd go on from there. …

SH: Was your father still on the Rutgers faculty during and after the war?

AP: … When I was at Clemson, in the early '50s, he was still on the faculty. He was in his early sixties, and his health deteriorated, and so, he was urged to retire. He was largely doing research, towards the end of his career, and he did some teaching. As a matter-of-fact, I took a course under him. Never take a course under your father, because you've got to be absolutely perfect. All the other students are looking at you, "Is he getting away with something?" [laughter] So, that was a unique experience, but, it was the major I chose, and he was teaching a particular course that I had to have. … So, he retired early and … it was too bad. His health deteriorated further. He'd had a heart attack and, eventually, died of another heart attack, later on. He published … a lot, particularly related to the analysis of nitrogen compounds. …

SH: How had Rutgers changed while you were overseas?

AP: Well, of course, what was different was, the place was swarming with veterans, more so after [V-J Day]. When the war ended, and then, they really came back in droves, so, it was a much more serious place. The fraternity that I belonged to, the house that they occupied was rented, and the furniture was stored in somebody's barn over in Bound Brook. One of the things I got involved with was trying to bring the fraternity back together with some of the brothers who had come back from serving. They met in my parents' basement for awhile. [laughter]

Now, I understand, from the newsletters that I get, that they have a nice house on campus. Can you confirm that, TKE?

SI: Yes, they have a nice house.

AP: [laughter] Okay, I'll take that. The TKE chapter at UNH got kicked off the campus. I used to chaperone with Joan, when they still had chaperons, but, they turned into an animal house. … Across the Raritan river there was a married student housing complex, a barracks like facility, to which … Joan and I were not eligible, because, technically, I wasn't a veteran. … So, we rented a third floor attic apartment to live in when we were first married. There were a lot of things at the time, I kind of wished I had, especially the GI Bill. Now, I'm eligible for veterans' benefits and I don't need them. [laughter] A lot of the veterans were married and, they were ready to get down to the business of studying. The football teams were all recovering from the war, there were spectacular scorers [that] Rutgers had. I remember a quarterback by the name of Tranovich, who was a star during that period, ran up terrific scores.

SH: Who were some of your fraternity brothers?

AP: Bob Smith and Emil Plavetski. They were both from Bloomfield, New Jersey, so, they were fairly local. Of course, I mentioned Howie Nomer, who was in the American Field Service, but not in my fraternity. I didn't attempt to keep in touch after I graduated. I went to Clemson and I was preoccupied with family and career. …

SH: Are there any questions that we forgot to ask?

AP: That's enough.

SH: Thank you very much.

AP: You're welcome, more than you bargained for, probably. [laughter]

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 7/31/02
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 8/1/02
Reviewed by Allan Prince 10/22/02 & 10/26/02