RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD G. SCAGLIOTTA

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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John Ench: This begins an interview with Dr. Edward G. Scagliotta on October 28, 2003 in Manville, New Jersey. My name is John Ench and …

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Dr. Scagliotta, thank you so much for taking time today to sit with us, and do this oral history. To begin the interview, I would like to ask you to tell us where and when you were born.

ES: I was born on June 2, 1927 in Bound Brook, New Jersey.

SH: Not far from here.

ES: Not very far at all.

SH: Well, to begin the questioning, I would like you to tell us please about your father. A little of his background and the stories that you remember of his growing up.

ES: My father was an Italian immigrant, came to this country at the age of nine. His brothers and sisters were kind enough to put together some money so he could come to the United States. His background was relatively limited in the sense that he only had an elementary education. Actually, [he] went to work at age thirteen, fourteen, but did very well for himself. In fact, I'm very proud of my dad because he became one of the noteworthy orchid growers, and he was listed in *National Geographic Magazine*, not once, but twice. … I was so delighted to hear him throw around *genus* and species of plants, which took me many, many years to learn.

SH: Now, can you tell me please, you said his brothers and sisters were they already here?

ES: They were already here in the United States.

SH: So, he was the last of the family?

ES: He was the last. In fact, before coming to the USA, he was raised by an uncle, whose profession was goat herder, and during the summers he would spend his time in the mountains of Messina, Sicily. In the mountains, with little to eat, he learned to enjoy goat's milk and stale bread, and many times at home, this would be a snack that he would enjoy.

SH: Where about did he emigrate to?

ES: Actually, he immigrated to Cortland, New York, and then, from Cortland, New York he moved around a great deal; and then, ended up in Bound Brook where … he lived with his sister.

SH: Now, this interest in orchid growing, did this become a hobby after, in later life, or was this something that he'd learned when he first came?

ES: He started very early working in greenhouses. … He was an expert in gardenias, and one of the problems with the gardenia is the fact that the sepal takes the same color as the petal, but very

often, that sepal is damaged. It becomes brown, if you will, and therefore the flowers are not salable, and apparently he did quite well in keeping these flowers, in keeping the sepals the same color as the petal. He was hired by Thomas Young Orchids, who had one greenhouse of gardenias, but that was soon abandoned. … Then, he moved into the study of orchids. In fact, he worked very closely with the Rutgers School of Agriculture with regard to growing orchids because at that time the profit was very, very high. Not many people are now growing orchids. Now, every Tom, Dick and Harry grows orchids, and Thomas Young Orchids is no longer in operation.

SH: Now, Thomas Young Orchids was here in the Bound Brook area?

ES: It was here in Middlesex. Middlesex, the town of Middlesex, is known as "the flower city." A lot of greenhouses were located in that area primarily because it was rural at the time.

SH: So, did you grow up in that environment where you were also helping?

ES: Oh, definitely. In fact, they used to do all of their propagation in agar, and what we would do is when these little plants came into being, Dad would bring them home and we would plant them; fifty to a pot, and then, later, he would bring them back and it would be twenty-five to a pot, then ten a pot and that was it. What was also very interesting [was that] they used to bring a lot of orchids from the jungles, and they would come in humongous clumps. They would pick out those orchids that they thought were salable, and the rest they would destroy. Well, my father never destroyed those extra orchids. What he did [was that he] … took one section of a potting shed, and grew the orchids himself, and he had a array of these most magnificent orchids that no one even had names for.

SH: Wonderful. Can you tell me about your mother then, please?

ES: My mother was born in this country. She was one of seven children. She only went through, well, a few years of high school, married very young; she was seventeen when she married. I was born a year later, a honeymoon baby, I guess that's what that would be called, but anyway she was a very ambitious woman. Unfortunately, she was not too proud of her Italian heritage, and anyone who did not have an Italian name, she called an American. I do not know where this came from, but apparently it bothered her. In fact, in high school what she did [was] she took the G out of my name, or our name, and it was Scaliotta. Now, why she changed it to that, I have no idea, except [that] in the Italian language, the G is often silent. So therefore, she removed it, and I did not realize what my true name was until I went into the service and saw my birth certificate, and there I had a G. So, when they used to call out this name "Scagliotta," "Scagliotta," I never responded because it was not my name, or [I] thought it was not and, of course, you can imagine the insults I received as a result of not even knowing my own name.

SH: Oh, my word, this is interesting. Did you have brothers and sisters?

ES: A brother.

SH: Younger, I assume.

ES: Younger, approximately four years younger.

SH: Did your father talk about World War I at all?

ES: Not at all, because the only thing he talked about was the fact that, chronologically, he missed it.

SH: I assume from your age and his that that must be true. Tell me about the Depression and how that affected your family?

ES: Being born during the Depression years, of course, adversely affected the family. My father was very fortunate in being able to acquire a job at Calco. Now, Calco later became American Cynamid, and he worked there for five years which really helped the family during this very, very terrible period. … Of course, my brother was born at the tail end of the Depression.

SH: The family, other family members, your mother's family or your father's family, how were they affected and did they have to work together?

ES: We lived on a relatively small farm. The farm had approximately one acre of vineyard and the rest was open land, and a number of fruit trees, … goose berries and currants and everything you can think of, so, in a sense we were quite self sustaining, always had a good, … what do you call a group of chickens?

SH: Flock?

ES: Flock of chickens, thank you, and a host of rabbits, but we had a lot of rabbits. At one time, I can remember we counted over three hundred rabbits, but every Sunday the families, the brothers and sisters, spouses and children, would gather at the farmhouse, and there would be a big meal of both chicken and rabbits. … It was kind of an all-day affair, and people sat around and they ate, and they drank the wine, and so on.

SH: Do you know how your mother and father met?

ES: No, I do not. It is interesting, [a] good question. No.

JE: But she was from Bound Brook?

ES: Yes, and he was also living in Bound Brook at that time. I do know, there were some problems, family problems, and the reason for that is the fact that my father was Sicilian, and Sicilians were not considered to be the upper class in the Italian ethnic background and my mother did not get married at home. She married at an aunt's house. That part I do remember.

SH: Now, the only grandparent that you would have had, would have been on your mother's side that were here in this country?

ES: Yes, and the only grandparent I had was a great, great grandmother. My grandmother perished at age thirty-seven from a ruptured appendix. Grand-pop died at age sixty-two, probably from a coronary problem. He had fallen asleep and never got up.

SH: Was there a bias or a bigotry towards Italians in Bound Book, where your mother was from?

ES: No. Bound Brook was a melting pot of immigrants, Italian, Polish and Irish. In fact, that was interesting, too, because my mother thought that every Irish name had to be American.

SH: This is before the Italian-American, I assume?

JE: It says that your mother's maiden name was Jannone.

ES: Yes, and that is interesting because there are no Js in the Italian language [laughter]. It should be a G. Names change obviously, coming here to Ellis Island. So, many times they could not [speak] English, and names really changed.

SH: There are many stories in our oral histories about that. Let's begin to talk about your growing up years. What are some of your most vivid memories of living in the Bound Brook area?

ES: I had a fantastic childhood. I never realized that we were poor, until many, many years later, because we never went hungry. There was always food on the table, and being on this small farm, in a rather undeveloped area of Bound Brook at the time, gave me access to wooded areas, to streams. … I was really an outdoor kid and just loved every minute of it. My schooling, we walked to school every day, went home for lunch everyday. It was just a marvelous childhood.

SH: Did you belong to any organizations as a young man?

ES: As a child, yes. I belonged to the Boy Scouts, Troop 44, and also belonged to the Sea Scouts for a short period of time.

SH: Oh, really? Where did you go for your training with the Sea Scouts?

ES: Strictly in Bound Brook, once again. No water was there.

SH: There had not been a flood?

ES: No flood.

SH: Can you tell me then about the Boy Scouts, where you met, and a little of what you remember?

ES: Boy Scouts met weekly at Lamont School, their all-purpose room. We also met simultaneously with the Girl Scouts, who were next door, but the separation was always maintained. Scouting was exciting to me because it represented … orderliness, … guidance, a direction. You knew exactly where you were. You knew exactly where you were going. You went from Tenderfoot to Second Class, to First Class, to Star, to Life, to Eagle. … All of these was outlined for you on a very, very direct basis so you were able to move along this line depending upon your own motivation, enthusiasm, eagerness and a little push from mom and dad.

SH: And how far did you go?

ES: Star Scout. That stopped because I found that there was another sex that I had not paid much attention to.

SH: That happens, I understand.

ES: Also, interesting enough, in later years because of my biology background, I taught some courses in the University of Scouting and they were held in Bound Brook High School.

SH: Really? … Where did you go for camp?

ES: Camp was two-fold. One was a YMCA camp, Camp Hugh Beaver in Bushkill, Pennsylvania, and then, the Watchung Camp, which was the Boy Scout Camp in Glen Gardner. Now, I presume it is still there. There was also a very large area in North Jersey, and it was called, Shiff Reservation. [It] had a huge lake, and I understand it was an estate way back when, which was given over to scouting.

SH: Did you ever get into any leadership programs or become …

ES: Leadership was all "on the job." In other words, while you were there you were being taught what to do, how to do, and when to do it.

SH: Did you go back and serve as a counselor? What did you do in the summers as you were in high school?

ES: I went to Bound Brook High School which, of course, is located in Bound Brook.

SH: What was your first job?

ES: I had a lot of jobs that mom and dad thought I should have, digging drainage ditches, hauling, but the most memorable job was that every Saturday I worked as a helper on a mobile vegetable truck. … We went from home to home, and people came out to the truck and bought their produce, and I would carry them into the house for the customer.

SH: Now, was this produce also grown on your farm?

ES: No. This all came in from New York markets. Early morning, the owners would get down to the markets around four o'clock and, by five, be at the shop, and prepare the vegetables and put [them] on the truck. … Then, we would leave and would get back like nine o'clock at night; I was paid a dollar and fifty cents for that day, plus whatever vegetables were left over I could take home. So, I became a family supporter very early.

SH: We talked about your biology, the interest that you had in high school, but what were some of the other subjects that were your favorites, or did you have a special teacher that was a mentor?

ES: There were two college preparatory courses, one was called scientific, [and] the other was academic. The difference was [that] in the academic they had to take Latin, and we took either French or German. At that period of time in order to get into college you had to have the sixteen Carnegie Units, which has since changed, obviously. That was four years of English, four years of math, two years of language, and something else. So, I had a complete array of algebra one, algebra two, plane geometry, trigonometry, biology, general science, chemistry. I guess that's it, oh, and physics.

SH: Your parents had not had the opportunity to go much farther in school, so, how important was your education to your parents?

ES: My father used to go on and on with the phrase, "If you have a sheepskin, you can do anything you want," and the sheepskin, meaning that way back when these degrees were printed on sheepskins. So, he was very much interested in how well I did at school.

JE: It is fair to say then that he already had the thought of you going to college?

ES: No question in his mind, not ever.

SH: Not ever. This is interesting. Were there any discussions in your family about politics?

ES: Very little.

SH: What did they think of Franklin Roosevelt?

ES: Oh, we were there in 1932 at the Fair Deal Rally. I do not remember where it was, but I remember it was great because we had hotdogs and we had ice cream. It was marvelous, but I do remember the Fair Deal and the banners and the flags and everything else.

SH: Is it fair to say they were Democrats?

ES: Oh, they were Democrats early on, but because I had an uncle, who was interested in politics and wanted to break the ranks, they subsequently switched to Republican, just to support him.

SH: Really? The whole family then?

ES: The whole family, everybody did, of course.

SH: Did he run successfully for office?

ES: He ran successfully every year, only to be defeated.

SH: You make that as …

ES: He made that his goal, though he never achieved it.

SH: What about the church? How active was your family in the church?

ES: Mother and Father never went to church. We were the ambassadors. They insisted that we go to church, … we go to catechism classes, … we get our first Holy Communion, confirmation and the whole bit, but we were not at all religious.

SH: You did not participate in any of the church activities as a young kid?

ES: None of the church activities, and the church activities were rather minimal in those days, other than going to classes.

SH: Did you get to do any traveling … as a young man before you …

ES: Not only did we not travel, we never even went to a restaurant.

SH: Did you ever go to the Shore?

ES: To the Shore we did go, sparingly, because transportation was always a problem, but we did go, and I became acclimated to the waves, yes.

SH: I wondered if you learned how to swim being in the Sea Scouts?

ES: I learned to swim at camp.

SH: Tell us then about how aware, in high school, were you of the world's events as they were unfolding in Europe.

ES: Being in school between the war years, 1941 and '45, we were very cognizant of what was going on, and discussions at lunch very often talked about letters from servicemen, family problems, those that were killed in action. We also talked about the draft, and what we were going to do, how we were going to survive. Everyone hoped the war would be over before graduation and, in fact, in a sense this is how I joined the Navy. It was in May of 1945, it's a very hot, very, very warm, unusual day, and I was having lunch with three or four other fellows and we talked about the war, the progress, the draft, and, also, about the upcoming physics test, which none of us were prepared for, and so, one of the guys said, "Well, why don't we go down

and tell the principal that we're going to go to the recruiting office and we'd go to the New Brunswick Pool on Livingston Avenue, we'll swim all afternoon." "Great idea," so the four of us we trekked down to the principal's office, and he listened to our tale, and then, he said, "That's very patriotic of you young men. This is absolutely fantastic. I will call the recruiting office and tell them you're on your way and they can phone me that you are arrived safely." Well, what do we do? We went to the recruiting office in New Brunswick, we went through preliminary papers, and so on, and went to the pool and had a wonderful afternoon swimming. When I got home, my mother had just come out of the front door picking up the mail from the mailbox and I said, "Mom." She usually asked, "What kind of day did you have?" I said, "Mom, I joined the Navy," and she did not say a word. She took the mail, turned around and walked in the house, and she never ever did talk about that particular day. But again, I joined the Navy as a teenager; I was discharged as a teenager. I was a teenage sailor along with everybody else on our ship.

SH: To back up a bit, can you remember where you were when you first heard of Pearl Harbor?

ES: Yes, I can remember … Pearl Harbor, that we heard of Pearl Harbor. We had a family gathering in the Dunellen, what reason I do not know, and we were on our way home when we heard it broadcast over the car radio.

SH: What was the reaction of you parents to this news?

ES: Disbelief, how could it happen, impossible.

SH: What were their thoughts and comments on Mussolini from 1939, 1940?

ES: None. No comments whatsoever. However, I have done some writing, and I did some research on the old boy, and when he first took office, he really turned the political scene around in Italy. I guess, it was his over-enthusiasm that caused a great deal of problems.

SH: Were any members of your family investigated as Italian immigrants?

ES: Well, we knew that over one hundred thousand were placed in "camps" during World War II on the West Coast. It was very interesting because never did we ever associate with Italians as being the enemy. They were just there. They were kind of non-existent. They were not part of the German regime, and there was no bias whatsoever. In fact, South Jersey where they had all the chicken farms, they used to bring Italian prisoners there to run the chicken farms, and every weekend they would be entertained in the homes of Italian families. There was just no animosity whatsoever. Now, one of my shipmates was of German background, and I asked Bill many times: "Did you feel any negativism with regard to your participation?" He said, "Absolutely not." We were Americans, and we were at war with the Germans, … we were not at war with Italy.

SH: What about the perception of the Japanese as the enemy? As a young boy, how did you look at them, as opposed to the Germans, when you were watching the newsreels or reading the paper?

ES: They were considered to be the real enemy, immoral, inappropriate, [and] brutal in every sense. … I remember while I was in high school, there was a *Reader's Digest* article with regard to the Japanese soldier, that on three bowls of rice a day, he was truly the classic soldier; and that he was a person who one would not want to meet on the battlefield. Now, I'm sure that much of it was propaganda, but it was certainly sobering and enlightening. … Maybe [that is] one of the reasons I did not want to find myself drafted in the Army, and I figured being on a ship, the enemy was quite a distance away, wherever they might be.

SH: What about cousins, did you have any of your cousins that were involved in the military?

ES: Yes. I think I mentioned before that cousin Jimmy was killed in the Battle of the Bulge, and I had two uncles, by marriage, in family, one in the Army and one in the Navy.

SH: Do you remember what some of the activities were for those of you who were younger, or still on the home front as far as the war effort went?

ES: We all participated in one way or another in the blackouts. For example, being a scout at the time I had the responsibility of serving as a messenger for one of the town physicians. … Whenever the whistle sounded, … I would put on [an arm]band, and I cannot remember, and a helmet of one kind or another, rode my bicycle in the darkness down to the doctor's office, and waited for whatever to happen.

SH: Did anything ever happen?

ES: Nothing ever happened. Thank goodness, nothing ever happened.

SH: Were you involved in any of the scrap drives or war bond?

ES: Well, yes, in school we were all involved, and we bought a twenty-five cent stamp every week, I guess, and you pasted it in a book, and when it got to twenty-five dollars, or $18.75, we were able to buy a twenty-five dollars bond, yes.

SH: Did you cash your bonds in at a later time?

ES: Oh, much later, yes. Interesting, also, Lucky Strike cigarettes were wrapped in a green wrapper, and whatever it was in that green wrapper was needed for the war, and so, I can remember the slogan, "Lucky Strike Green Has Gone to War;" so we saved all those wrappers and we also saved aluminum … toothpaste tubes and things of that nature.

SH: What do you remember of the rationing, how that affected your family?

ES: The only way it affected the family negatively was because we did not get enough gasoline. Food was okay. We managed, we managed quite well, and being on the farm we preserved an awful lot. We had an adjoining barn that had three cook stoves, and also had the wine presses, and I can remember the women coming in from the neighborhood and bottling jar after jar after

jar, primarily tomatoes, string beans, peaches and pears. … Then, of course, we would pickle, we would pickle peppers and we pickled cucumbers.

SH: Was there any involvement with the Red Cross?

ES: A lot of the women, for example my wife, Louise, she became a Red Cross volunteer, and they entertained servicemen. They served doughnuts, … coffee, … cocoa and what have you.

SH: Did any of the people in your school wind up working, say at the Raritan Arsenal, or any of the war related industries?

ES: I do not remember any of that.

SH: As young men as you were watching the news, I'm assuming that you did go to the movies and see the newsreels, how well do you think they documented, looking back now, the war or how it was presented to you?

ES: Unfortunately, I think the movies glamorized the war effort. It was based upon merit, honor, duty, [and] obligation,

SH: Now, you are talking about the movies?

ES: The movies themselves. They were quite directing all of these, but, I think, for example, when Jimmy Stewart would drive his airplane into a Japanese battleship, that was very heroic, and yet, we do not look at the *kamikazes* as being heroic at all. So, it was propaganda, and I can remember the Fifth Column being [involved with] sabotage; and they did a lot of that because we were supposed to be on the lookout for anything that was suspicious with regard to anti-war effort.

SH: Did you ever see anything in your area?

ES: No, not at all, no. We were a very quiet community.

SH: What about the newsreels, how often did you go to the movies?

ES: Oh, regularly. Movies … [were], I mean, that was the prime recreation, and if we did not have a dime, we would sneak in if we could.

SH: What did you do for fun? We talked about how you worked on Saturdays with the vegetable truck, what did you do for fun as a teenager in high school with the war going on?

ES: [In] high school I was very active in athletics. I do not look like an athlete, but I wanted to be one very desperately, and I involved myself with wrestling because I could wrestle at 102 pounds at that time, and that was very interesting because you talked about Blair. Well, I can remember my first wrestling match was at Blair Academy, and at Blair Academy at 102, they had the State champion. I do not think I took one step on that mat, and I was flat on my back,

and he hung tough. I will never forget that event, wrestling, track and football, and I did letter in both track and football; but as far as being an athlete, I think I was the eleventh man on the varsity and I think on the track team I was the slowest member, but nonetheless, I participated.

SH: What was the reaction to the war ending in Europe in your school, and with your friends? What do you remember of that?

ES: It was jubilation, but we seemed to be so far remote from what was transpiring. As a young teenager, it almost was meaningless except for the fact that it was a very joyous occasion, but the war was still on. We were still scheduled to serve.

SH: Was this announced in school or was this something that all of you came to school already informed from radio and newspaper?

ES: We were already informed. It was not announced in school.

SH: The focus, of course, then changes to the Pacific, and the war effort there. In the reporting that you saw in the paper and the newsreels, was there more emphasis on what was going on in Europe during the years leading up to the cessation of hostilities in Europe, or did it focus on the South Pacific, or was it equal?

ES: Up to the end of the European phase, everything was European. Everything we saw in the newsreel, everything that was in the newspapers, [and] everything that was talked about was the European Theater. However, just as soon as that happened, it move into the Pacific area, and from my observation and … [from] my recollection, it seemed to me that the activity in the Pacific was far more horrendous than what occurred in Europe. The battles seemed to be more severe. We seemed to be losing more and more troops. Our vessels were being sunk. Quite frankly, we did not know we had U-boats off the Atlantic coast until way after the war. Apparently they were there. In fact, I fish a lot, and I'm sure that there were a couple of U-boats that we fished over, and some of the ships that were sunk during that period of time. They make wonderful wreck fishing.

SH: Then, would it be fair to say that there was predominantly a more positive aspect of reporting of the war effort in Europe?

ES: Yes, and then once we moved, it seemed to be very, very positive, right up until the end, and then, all of a sudden, we were moving into another theater where we were nowhere as accomplished as we were in Europe, and so, it seemed to escalate everything.

SH: How was Roosevelt's death reported and what were the reactions?

ES: Very sober, very somber. He was highly respected as a leader. He handled the war effort in agreement with everyone, and people were together, shoulder-to-shoulder, there was a united front. People knew their responsibilities, working double shifts never bothered anyone, and so, when he passed away, it was very, very sorely felt, and that they were very optimistic about Truman moving in to take his place.

SH: You felt positive and not fearful of his abilities or capabilities?

ES: Right.

SH: To back up a bit then, what kind of news did you get about people who were, in fact, striking, the men who went out on strike, or the workforce in different parts of the country that were part of this?

ES: Locally, most of the community members were Democrats representing the blue collar worker so that strikes per se were condoned. They were the rightful objective of all of the workers, and this is the way in which they were able to exert their input, and so, they were approved by the majority of the people, even though there was a war effort in effect.

SH: Thank you. What about the surrender of the Japanese and the decision to drop the bomb? What kind of discussions were going on? This is your senior year, what are you hearing?

ES: When they dropped the bomb I was already in the service. No one knew. No one had any idea. No one even knew the bomb existed from the point of view of [the] military, and we were as totally surprised as anyone when the end of the war was announced, just like that, that is the end, and it was a very abrupt kind of ending.

SH: After your graduation from high school, did you leave for boot camp?

ES: I graduated on June 12th, and on the 14th, I was in the United States Navy Reserve.

SH: Where did you report?

ES: We had to report to New York Grand Central Station. We were mustered there by a petty officer. We were marched to a train, which is very interesting because in these cars they had these little metal plates that condemned the cars in 1914 being covered with sooth. After the midnight train ride, we got to Sampson Naval Training Base at Seneca Falls, [New York]. We got out, and we were still kind of tired and cranky, we were given a salami sandwich and a glass of milk, stripped naked, and stood there for what seemed like hours not knowing what to do with one's eyes. Then, the inoculations, one on each arm, and then, the drawing of blood. We would line up, oh, about ten or twelve, and a pharmacist's mate would start with [the] one on this end, go all the way down and come back, and by that time the tubes were overflowing. Then, from that point, where they would give you clothing, you tell the fellow the size and he'd throw something at you, a piece of clothing, you stuffed it into a duffle bag; then you got to the barracks, and you spent hours stenciling all of your clothing, and then, finally, somehow, somewhere, you flopped in you bunk, totally exhausted, totally out of it, only to get up at five o'clock in the morning. Interesting.

JE: Did your friends that went down to the pool with you that day to sign up; were they with you at the Sampson Base?

ES: No. We were all called up independently.

SH: Were you able to keep in contact? Do you know what happened to them?

ES: None, only after the war, but not during the war at all. Did not know where they were. In fact, interesting is the fact that you feel so alone because you know no one. You immediately try to latch onto some kind of friendship and, of course, you know, soon as you get off the train and that little [group of] friends you have established had disappeared completely.

SH: What is a memorable event that stands as part of your boot camp?

ES: There were several. First of all, the establishment of interpersonal relationships. The chance to develop some camaraderie, the chance to be able to share your feelings, and your emotions. I guess, there were some traumatic situations from a humanistic point of view. I mean, the first realization when you went to the bathroom, the head; there were no partitions between the toilets. There was just one toilet after another, and you had to wait in line. … It was almost as embarrassing waiting in line, as sitting on the toilet, because everyone would say, "Hurry up, hurry up." I guess, one of the most interesting experiences, of course, was the gas chamber. You have instructions, and they show you what to do with the mask. You get into the room and you put on the mask and the gas comes in to give you a taste of what it was like. They would turn off the gas, and you must remove your gas mask, and file, out single column, of a door about three feet wide. Well, it took a great deal not to panic, even though it was not a dangerous gas, it was nothing more than tear gas, but it was irritating enough to cause some fright. The night before we had rain, and outside this door were a couple of puddles of water. I can not tell you how many fellows dived into those puddles just to clear up their nostrils and their eyes. [laughter] But anyway, we survived that as well.

SH: Tell us a little bit about the history of Sampson, when it had been built.

ES: Sampson was kind of an overnight miracle. It was established in 1942, and, obviously, was disbanded by the Navy in 1946. It existed for a period of time, vacant for a period of time, and then, the Air Force moved in for a period. Then, they used it for classes for New York SUNY, [they] held classes there. The barracks were all wooden, so later on they were destroyed. The federal government turned the property over to the State of New York, and they made a park out of it, and so, it is a State Park right now. Now, the only permanent building is the brig, because it is cinderblock and brick, and is now a museum, one of the nicest naval museums you will ever visit. It is very appropriate because it has, it's a rectangle, it is a square, actually, and you walk through the main entrance, and you were in an open area, and we now have bricks identifying sailors who had been there, or family, or what have you.

SH: You talked about your mother's reaction to your announcement that you had joined the Navy. What was your father's reaction, because we talked earlier about how adamant he was that you would go on to college?

ES: Neither one talked very much about it. My dad was a very quiet kind of person, seldom engaged in any lengthy conversation. I felt a very, very strong bonding when he joined me on

our trip to New York. I did not think he would come along, but he did, and when he left me, or I left him, I remember him saying, he used to call me Skipper, for why, I have no idea, but he just said, "Skipper take care of yourself."

SH: They did not say anything about being disappointed that you were not going to go straight to college, or try to go to college?

ES: We were worried about the draft. At that time, practically every eighteen year old was being drafted, and even though I joined at seventeen, … shortly thereafter I became eighteen. It was just something that they felt it was far more appropriate than being [drafted]. My mother never liked water. I mean, she was quite fearful of water for a very simple reason; when I was a baby, she held me in her arms and they had taken a trip on Lake Hopatcong, and she was not a swimmer, and something happened to the boat and just the engine stopped … She panicked, and from that point on she was very fearful of water; but both my brother and I did learn to swim, primarily through camping, and that was it.

SH: Please continue with your experiences at Sampson, and the progression of events.

ES: The work week was always very interesting because, obviously, somebody had to take care of all the necessity at camp. I spent one week in scullery, and scullery was just horrible because we would be there very early in the morning, and not get back to our barracks until around eight, nine o'clock at night. … Of course, food stuff was all over the uniform, over our fatigues, and we decided not to wash them. I mean, "Why wash them when they're going to get dirty the next day?" So, we put them on for the entire week. At the end of the week, we all managed to bury them behind the barracks, so, somewhere in New York State [are] many, many buried dungarees. Then, after that, the second work week was cleaning musician's barracks. Now, every company had a band, and, of course, they would play for our Saturday services, and so on; but they never cleaned, and I learned how to clean mirrors. You just use dry toilet paper and it does a fantastic job. Gunnery was very interesting. We walked into a room that had this humongous screen on which they projected flying airplanes, and the screen was completely covered with little light bulbs, and you had a simulated machine gun. … Every time you press the trigger these light bulbs would show you where yours [hit], and, of course, you were supposed to be able to fire at an aircraft using tracer bullets. So, anyway, we would stand there and everyone would have this opportunity, and as a plane would [move] forward, you would be able to track it very easily. Then, all of a sudden, one would come from the left, one would come from the right, I do not know if I ever hit anything quite frankly.

SH: Were you also taking a battery of tests?

ES: Oh, yes, we always took tests. I mean, it was common. They wanted to know where to place you in the service and even if you pass these tests, they never placed you where you wanted to be placed. Night blindness, the training for night blindness was interesting. They would put you in a darkened room for what seemed like an eternity, but, I guess, it was just a couple of hours. Then, you would go to another room in which there was a screen that had four quadrants, and you were instructed, via PA [public-address system], that they were going to put

an X in each one of the these quadrants and you were supposed to identify in which quadrant the X appeared.

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

ES: I was so embarrassed all I did was call out a quadrant, just so I would be relieved of the responsibility of sitting there *ad infinitum*. Everyone, they wanted everyone to swim and, of course, you had to pass a swimming test, which I did without any difficulty. … Those that did not pass were required to attend swimming instructions every evening after the evening mess, but one of the things that they would do, of course, is abandon ship. It was always feasible, a possibility, obviously, and we would have to jump off a tower into the pool.

SH: Now, was this enclosed?

ES: All enclosed. This was all indoors. At the top of the tower was a petty officer with a long pole, with a padded boxing glove at the end, and on the count was "one, two, three." … If you did not go off on three, you got shoved with a boxing glove into the pool. The most frightening experience was fire fighting school. This was in two phases. They did one with an open tub. That open tub would be a tub of water, huge tub of water, something similar to the above ground swimming pools, and they would cover it with oil, ignite it and you would have to go in, and put that fire out. … There were, I believe, anywhere from eight to ten men on a hose and each one had an opportunity to be the nozzle man, so that you had the effect of not only helping move this hose into position, but also the effect of the heat as you moved into this fire. The second was a simulated ship that was a compartment, and in this compartment they had several columns with fuel oil, which squirted out of, and they would ignite that, and you would also go in, in that same fashion, in putting out the fire. When it became our turn, it was frightening, for the simple reason that the fire got away from us, and, thank God, for the instructor, who was right alongside. He took hold of the nozzle. Actually, the nozzle man panicked, and he wanted more pressure, and he shut off the nozzle. In that way, the thing just flared up, but, anyway, no one was hurt, … fortunately. Let's see, what was another experience? The rifle range. The rifle range was interesting, in scouting, thank goodness, we had rifle instruction all the time, and I was a fairly good shot, so I had no problem to qualify. The only difficulty was using a sling. I had never used a sling before, and I found it confining, as opposed to being helpful. Nonetheless, if you did not qualify, every evening after mess you had to report for instruction, and they did this until the ten weeks were up, and if you did not learn to swim, if you did not learn to hit the targets appropriately, too bad, off you went.

SH: Off you went? Like out of the Navy?

ES: No, out to your next assignment.

SH: What happened to you after the ten weeks?

ES: The second assignment was Newport, Rhode Island. I never knew how cold it could be, but we were in very old barracks, and this was now, I believe, the tail end of September, and I was very fortunate. We were on the third floor of the barracks right underneath a nice steam pipe,

which was very, very comfortable. Again, when you are assigned to a base for the first time, there is a multiplicity of duties, mess hall, garbage, guard duty, you name it, dive bombing. You went around with a rod with a nail on the end and you picked up cigarette butts, any number of activities to keep you occupied. It could be painting, they would paint everything, anything that did not move, the Navy painted. I do not know why, but I was assigned, again, scullery, and I spent a goodly amount of time in the scullery until men were being called, men were being shipped out, men were being assigned to various ships, and I remained in the scullery. But it worked out very nicely because I became head of the scullery, which meant that every weekend from Friday afternoon mess until Monday morning breakfast, I had liberty. So, I was able to come home all during that period of time.

SH: How did you come home?

ES: Well, we used to take the, first of all, we would take a bus from Newport to Providence because [that is] where the train was, [I would] get on the train on the New Haven Railroad, get into, I can not remember whether it was Grand Central, then had to get over to Penn Station. From Penn Station get a train to New Brunswick, from New Brunswick, now it's one o'clock, two o'clock in the morning, hitchhike, in a black Navy uniform, but we had no problems then. Everybody picked up servicemen. So, I used to arrive home around one or two o'clock in the morning.

SH: As you were going through the ten weeks of boot camp, and when you were sent to Newport, what are you hearing of what was going on with the war?

ES: Nothing. Everything was involved with training. Whatever was happening with the war we were kept uninformed.

SH: Were you writing to people here?

ES: Oh, yes, constantly. I mean, this is what we did for recreation quite frankly. In most cases, we just wrote letters and received letters.

SH: To whom were you writing, and from whom were you receiving letters from?

ES: Primarily, my parents and I was writing to my wife at that time.

SH: She was your girlfriend at that time?

ES: She was, yes.

SH: Had you met in high school?

ES: We met, well, [I'll] tell the story anyway. My cousin, we were twelve years of age, and my cousin was having a party. Well, being a very masculine little boy, boys do not go to parties where girls are. So, they had the party and my Louise was there, and she had borrowed, they had borrowed some silverware from my mother, cups and saucers, whatever it was, but across the

street from the party was a playground. Well, the playground was extremely primitive. We had put up a swing, a tire swing, from one of the huge oak trees, and the tire swing went across a drainage ditch. Well, boys were pushing one another on this swing, and the girls came out and they wanted to ride on the swing, and so, Louise got on and I did the pushing. Well, the higher I pushed, the higher her skirt went up. I pushed and I pushed, fell into the drainage ditch a couple of times and that is how we met, and we constantly joked, it was her yellow panties that brought us together; but we were twelve and, of course, in high school, since she was two years behind, I paid no attention to her. I had come home for a weekend, and went to a high school dance, and although I danced all night, I did not dance with her. But I decided, I don't know why, that the last dance, I figured nothing bad could come from it, so the last dance I asked her, and from that point on we continued to date. … I remember that. Well, when I transferred … at Newport, although I was training, I was training as an electrician's mate aboard the *Coral Sea*. The *Coral Sea* was still being built at that given period of time, and they trained all these people at Newport, and then, you would be assigned. Well, orders came in for me to leave Newport, and [be] assigned to the USS *Huntington* at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. That weekend I was supposed to go home, and we were supposed to attend a formal dance. Well, I was unable to do that and the fifteen fellows that were being transferred were not in a very good mood, they pulled our liberty cards, we could not do anything but sit around and commiserate how difficult the situation was. When one of the fellows popped up, he said, "Hey," he said, "I have a postal pass. I can get off the base. Get off the base, and bring back all the liquor you can …" Well, we really got a little bit too much that night. Slept well, missed the muster call, almost missed the truck out to the train, oh, goodness. Well, anyway it was very disappointing to Louise. Everything was there, of course, and Father raising orchids, well, obviously, you know, that she always had orchids to wear, which was considered to be quite elite, but it was a very sad time. She did go to the dance with her brother-in-law, who was about seven or eight years older and, of course, she became the talk of the town that she had been dating this very old man.

SH: … Please continue with how your assignment unfolded?

ES: Being aboard the *Huntington* was interesting. The only other ship I had been aboard was the USS *Macon*, which was a heavy cruiser. The *Huntington* was a light cruiser, the difference being in armament and protective plate, and also the size of the ship. We had a complement of about 923 sailors, seamen and officers. The ship was commissioned early in January.

SH: Were you part of the commissioning?

ES: No. [When] I joined, it must have been October, November.

SH: So, it was nine months later?

ES: Right, and we were scheduled to leave in a very, very short period of time, and the purpose was, of course, the shakedown cruise, which was going to Guantanamo Bay. That was the time Castro was in the hills, and I can not remember the name of it, can not even think of the title of this, this fellow who ruled Cuba.

JE: Fulgencio Batista.

ES: Batista, thank you, because, I do know, we did some shore work with Batista's troops, and so on, but aboard ship, if I had my choice I would never be on land. I would stay aboard ship. It was a marvelous experience, a very exciting experience for someone who had never been at sea. [On] the USS *Macon*, during the training, we did get to Bermuda, and that was interesting as well because we moved into the tropics, and then, moved right out again.

SH: What was your rate?

ES: Seaman, second class.

SH: Where were you assigned?

ES: I was a deck hand, the O1 level. I was responsible as a handler, a loader on a quad four, .40-mm. These things used to fire like this, back and forth, and I was shocked when they took them off the battleship, *New Jersey*. Well, the quad fours were good for tracking propeller-driven aircraft, but when the jet aircraft came into being, they went back to utilizing the advanced Gatling gun, which had tremendous firepower.

SH: Please, continue with what you experienced.

ES: Aboard ship was very routine, nothing different about it. You had your assignments, you swabbed the deck before you went to mess, and during mess, or after mess, you would go on with the daily routine of the ship. You had [to] man battle stations. You would have man over-board drills. You would fire your SC-1s which were the seaplanes, they would take off every day for the purposes of bringing back mail and movies, basically routine work, and at night there was always a film on the fantail. On them we had an opportunity to enjoy geedunk. A geedunk was an ice cream, which came out of, we had ten years supply of ice cream mix, but what was interesting. I met, I should say, two of the fellows that trained at Sampson, not in my company, but in other companies. One was a deck hand on the main deck, and the other was in charge of the print shop. Now, this print shop was a kind of little cubby hole squirreled away where no one really bothered. So, every night, the three of us would meet, and we would sit there and we would gather, we would have a very nice time. Well, since both Walter, the other deck hand, and I were responsible for loading the ship with supplies, whenever we brought aboard a case of peaches, or pears, or jam, we would drop these case, inadvertently, and while picking up all the stuff, we'd … squirrel away a can or two, later taking it and storing it in the print shop where we had a picnic every night. Well, this worked very well until at sea they called for a general inspection of the ship. Now, what to do with all these canned goods stuff that [were] squirreled away in the print shop? Well, fortunately, the fellow, Seymour, who was responsible for the print shop had an agenda. He had a schedule of where this inspection was. Well, try to keep ahead, we gathered everything, put it in boxes, and we were one step ahead of this investigator, this inspection party, very, very comical, and we circumvented the whole ship and got the stuff back in the print shop again.

SH: You really had cause for celebration that night.

ES: Yes, we had cause for celebration. Gunnery, we had a gunnery practice, [that] was very, very common. We did it almost on a regular basis, and would either shoot at a floating target, or a target pulled by aircraft. Only on one occasion did we do any shore bombardment. They picked up some little island somewhere, and we started with the five-inch guns, and then, went in close with the .40-mms. That was the time, well, it was a horrific situation because they used to use a PBY, Catalina twin-engine sea-going airplane, to spot, and we have been pulling on this island, and we were using our .40-mms, and as we started at the shore, and went up the side of this little hill, well, as we got to the top of the hill a PBY surfaced from behind the island and we hit it. … We immediately saw smoke and, of course, it disappeared behind the island and we didn't know what damage was actually done. Fortunately, the plane emergency landed, no one was hurt, but our, I do not know how they figured that our gun hit it because we could not [hit] the side of a barn, but, nonetheless, they accused us of hitting it, and we certainly were reprimanded properly and confined to quarters for a period of time.

SH: When you traveled like this on a shakedown and these practices, what other ships were involved?

ES: Well, the USS *Kearsarge* was along with us. That was an aircraft carrier, and I had the opportunity to board the aircraft carrier because we did not have a Catholic chaplain and the *Kearsarge* did, … [so] we had this opportunity, every Sunday, to attend services there. Oh, another incident, if we go back, while we were in Newport News, we went to Newport News to demagnetize the ship, again, no chaplain aboard. We were asked if we would like to take the whaleboats, go to shore services and come back. Well, coming back, the area got rather white-capped and we were starting to take on water. So, all these sailors in their white uniforms took off their caps and were bailing out the water. Well, we bailed and bailed, but to no avail, and lo and behold, we settled in the water. Now, they have compressed air tanks forward and aft of these lifeboats so they do not sink, but they were about this far below water. So, we were sitting there in this boat, water up to our chests, well, anyway, they did get a message aboard, they eventually picked us up, and it was the first time I had a shot of whiskey courtesy of the United States Navy. Another time, first of all, we were allotted a can of beer per day. Well, they do not allow you to drink aboard ship, obviously, but you have this accumulation of beer that you are entitled to, so, they would pick out an island somewhere, a certain number of crewmembers would take their case of beer, carry it aboard to this island and we would "picnic." The cooks would pack sandwiches, and so on, and we would sit there and get drunk. Nothing to do on this island except use the cases, the cardboard boxes, flatten them out, put them on a dune, and you came sledding on it.

SH: What islands?

ES: Who knows what they were. They were just uncharted islands.

SH: Somewhere here in the Atlantic?

ES: Yes, they were out there, and they just flopped us aboard. I'm sure they were on somebody's chart.

JE: So, you were aboard ship when you heard the war was over?

ES: No, probably, we were at Newport at that time, that was prior to being aboard ship. But the ship itself, after the shakedown, that whole area in Guantanamo Bay was very interesting because of the fact that I had a tremendous amount of freedom. I became a deck hand on an LCM, which was a landing craft and it was ship-to-shore, so, most of the time I spent on this landing craft. [The] landing craft had four sailors, the coxswain, a motormac and two boat handlers, and so, we carried supplies back and forth, we carried sailors back and forth on liberty.

SH: Now, this is from the *Huntington* to the base?

ES: To the *Huntington*, to the base itself on Guantanamo. I had an opportunity to eat on the base so we seldom even ate on the ship, and what was interesting. On the base for forty-five cents you could buy this humongous steak, and a forty-six ounce can of pineapple juice, and all the bread you could eat. It was just absolutely marvelous, and when we would go in for supplies, we would buy a stalk of bananas, a whole stalk, this humongous stalk of bananas for fifty cents and we would eat bananas, oranges, pineapple all day long; but one of the trips which we had taken was a kind of surprise trip. We were notified that we have to pick up a group of chief petty officers, who were partying in some remote place on the island, and we figured, "Well, if they were partying, gee, you know, we might be able to participate in this party." We figured, "This is going to be great." Well, lo and behold, a lieutenant comes aboard. "Oh, oh, we're in trouble now." Anyway, we take a landing craft, we go through these little passageways of flat land, swampy areas, we got a flashlight, well, it was a huge spotlight on the landing craft, and we were trying to find out where we are going. Well, all of a sudden the light picks up this dock. There, on the dock, [there] are umpteen chief petty officers with umpteen women all in the all together. Anyway, I will not go [on] with anymore details than that [laughter], but it was interesting because we lost our lieutenant for about a half hour. I do not know where he went. Those were crazy times.

SH: Can we safely say that these were native women?

ES: Yes, they were all natives, yes.

SH: Are you in the Caribbean at this point?

ES: Right, all the native women. Prostitution ran rampant in all of these places. It was just a common, ordinary practice, and you would go into a bar and, of course, you would be solicited in the bar, but no activity was allowed in that facility. Most of it was in the taxicab, and that was to keep the taxicabs in money, to elicit the kind of business that kept the economy going, and kids used to sell their sisters for five cents, ten cents, whatever. It was not, as you know, not a very pleasant situation.

SH: In the Caribbean again?

ES: Caribbean, right, this whole area. I had a chance to go to Puerto Rico and see the El Morro Castle, and that was interesting, because they had a unit of Puerto Rican Army stationed at the

Castle, at that time, and they had a marvelous USO in Puerto Rico, in San Juan, just gorgeous. It had been a ballroom. It had been a professional ballroom, and it was just a very, very, nice place to be.

SH: Were you dancing?

ES: Oh, yes, always, whenever I could, even though I did not know how to dance. Who cares?

SH: When you were on board the ship, and you talked about how you continually trained and stayed ahead of the general inspection team and all that, what other things did you do to entertain yourselves, or take up your spare time because watch was only four hours, if I'm correct, a watch was usually four hours?

ES: Your watch was over and above what anything else you did. So, many people, say, oh, we only have [a] four hour watch, but that was twenty-four hours a day.

SH: Oh, I understand.

ES: And what they did, of course, is simulated war conditions, which meant that a third of the guns had to have a full crew operating twenty-four hours a day, so, that there was very little time for "recreation" and most of the recreation was letter writing.

SH: If you went to general quarters, was your battle station, the guns?

ES: It could be, depending upon what code was used at any given time, and there were times when you stood watch on different battle stations.

SH: What was the most harrowing experience when you were on the *Huntington*?

ES: Well, it all depends upon the definition, harrowing, not to me, well, no, not any. We had one of our aircraft crash and that was harrowing in the fact that you did not know. We did not know what happened to the observer, and the pilot, but fortunately, we were able to pick them up and they were sitting on the pontoon, the plane was upside down. Sent a whale boat out, had to send two whale boats out because everyone got deathly sick. The seas were quite rough. We spent most of the day, about twelve hours, trying to salvage the aircraft and that proved futile. Oh, we had, for example; the food in the Navy was very good. We had as many fresh vegetables as we could gather. The first time we were out, we noticed that there were these little specks in the bread, which were weevils. Well, nobody ate the bread for about three or four days, and as time went on, you could see the fellows picking the weevils out of the bread, and then, a little bit later just eat it, forget it.

SH: What were the rumors? What did you think that the *Huntington* was going to wind up doing or where it would be sent?

ES: Well, we knew exactly. Being on a shakedown this is pretty well prescribed. You go through a whole series of operations, and those who complete within a time frame, and you

return to your home port. Everyone pretty much knew that the ship would be going out again because they were talking about goodwill tours after the war being over. They wanted as much visibility in the foreign countries as they possibly could, and the ship did go out, I did not go out with it, but the ship did go out after that and toured the Mediterranean, and a tremendous number of places. We talked to some of these people, and they related this as the most wonderful experience they ever had, and, I guess, I kind of missed it. I wanted out. I wanted out, primarily, because I felt that I wanted to go on with my life. I wanted to go on with my education. I knew that I was going to go to college, and, thank goodness, for the GI Bill. But when I got out, I got out of the service in 1946, every Tom, Dick and Harry was getting out at the same time, and it was very difficult to get into school. So, I enrolled in Union Junior College, which is now Union College, and did two years there, received an AAS degree then transfer into Rutgers; that became very easy and completed the two years there, and then, went on for Master's, and so on.

SH: When did you first become aware of the GI Bill?

ES: During indoctrination at Lido Beach, New York, during the discharge. They went through all the insurance, all of the benefits. The fact that we had, we were involved in the 52/20 Club, twenty dollars a week for fifty-two weeks, if you so desired. I had no desire to do that. When I came out of the service, knowing I wanted to go to school, I was not sure really what I wanted to do, and I never had any money. I could not find some money in my pocket, so I took a job as a draftsman at American Cyanamid, Calco at that time, and went to school nights. I enrolled in the University College in an engineering program three nights a week, three hours, I mean, it was just terrible. After one year, I said, "I can't do this anymore." I mean, it just ate into your entire life, although I did make a few dollars at that time. During that year in University College, the VA [Veteran's Administration] was carrying on a number of testing programs, aptitude tests, hopefully to identify a possible career.

SH: Now, was this done under the auspices of the University?

ES: No. It was done at the University under the auspices of the federal government, the Veterans Administration, and I took these examinations, and went through a whole series of interviews. … Finally, the conclusion was that they had no doubts that I would be able to survive in engineering courses, but I would come out probably an average student and, that given period of time, they were only taking topnotch engineers. However, they thought I might be good in education, so, I switched and moved into the School of Education.

SH: Did you remain in University College?

ES: No, I transferred from University College to the men's college, excuse me.

SH: Rutgers College.

ES: Yes, right.

SH: We talked about the shakedown cruise, let's finish that out, and then, we will jump back to Rutgers.

ES: Okay, what else on the shakedown cruise? Was there was an exciting situation, oh, no, I can not think of anything right now.

SH: So, when the cruise was over, where did you come back?

ES: Came back to the Philadelphia Navy Yard and, at that time, they were, of course, processing potential discharges, and I wanted out, and they shipped us to Lido Beach where we had this complete indoctrination. I was discharged from Lido Beach, went into New York with several of the sailors, celebrated with my 'ruptured duck' on my uniform, which was the discharge symbol, and returned home, and began to live another life.

JE: At that time, you were still going to live at home with your parents?

ES: Still lived at home.

SH: You had a question about Mr. Scagliotta's father.

JE: Yes, when he said goodbye to you, I was wondering, since he had been born in Messina, did he speak English in the house?

ES: He spoke English very well and, in fact, he even wrote English quite well, which is unusual for a lot of the immigrants, but he was a very structured and controlled individual. Everything he did, he did with a great deal of thought, pre-thought. Had it all worked out in his mind. If he were doing electrical work, he would sit and stare at it for maybe a half hour and then, his hands would move and he would know exactly what he was going to do. In fact, when the Thomas Young Orchids sold out to a New York corporation, and all of the board meetings were held here in New Jersey; but when the company sold out, two doctors who had been amateur biologists, they loved orchids, they bought out the greenhouses. Well, by that time there was no one … to really guide and direct the orchids, and my dad had the entire orchid program in a booklet. He knew every[thing], what amount of light, what amount of heat, what amount of shade, to make an orchid blossom. Oh, there's a very interesting story. Every year back then, the photo magazines, they used to be very popular, *Look*, *Life*, a number of them, and *Look* magazine used to do a whole series on the Easter clothing. … They would bring the models out to Thomas Young Orchids, and they would use the orchids as a backdrop. … I used to tell my dad, "You make sure I am there when those women are there," and it was just a delightful experience, and … also, during the holidays [I] worked at Thomas Young, and we delivered orchids to New York and Philadelphia, usually [I] drove a truck.

SH: How did you control the temperature? Are they not very sensitive?

ES: Now, this is all controlled electronically. It's controlled by hand, and he would just watch temperatures, and open and close the vents accordingly.

SH: He was able to transports them and not lose any of that?

ES: Once they were flowered, he would be able, for example, if they needed a hundred thousand orchids at such and such a time, he would make sure that [they] would all bloom at the same time. But it was interesting, too, because [during] the year, the sales people used to come of the office, and they would actually cut their own flowers to send to their customers. So, they would pick out the prime flowers. Well, at Easter-time, Christmastime, no way could they do this. So, many of these customers would reject these orchids at the holiday time, and my dad would take them and just [put] them in the storage and he would bring them all home. We would have a house, no exaggeration, with hundreds upon hundreds of orchids every holiday, just a marvelous, marvelous array of color.

SH: Did you keep any of that up? Do you still have orchids in your home?

ES: We have tried time and time again to grow them. He was offered the position at Doris Duke's Farms and he turned that down because she was a very dogmatic individual. You know, "You do as I say; I do not care if you are an orchid grower." She was quite a woman.

SH: I understand that is true. Let's go back then and talk about when you came back, what kind of welcome did you receive?

ES: Very blasé. It was something that was going to happen, and it happened to practically every family in the community. It was not a big deal. There were no parties thrown, to my knowledge. It was an expected event, and culminated, and there you were.

SH: Did you ever wear your uniform after your discharge?

ES: Only during funerals, which there were a number of us. They brought bodies back, as you well know, but, no, never wore the uniform. In fact, it is hanging up in the shed.

SH: You probably can still wear it.

ES: Oh, no, I doubt it.

SH: You talked about working and trying to go to school, and how taxing that was, and how you are able to go to Rutgers College to the School of Education.

ES: Full time, right.

SH: You already have your associate's degree from Union Junior, and you have done one year in the engineering program at University College. Where are you in your standing when you go in to the graduate school? Are you considered already in the graduate program at that stage?

ES: It would not be the graduate program, it would be the undergraduate program in a full standing. The only problem is, I lost about a dozen credits, but that did not prove to be a problem at all. Once you became acclimated to the University, and, again, we were commuters, so you went in [and] took our classes. Now, where the Livingston Hall is located, there are three dormitories. They were Quonset huts then, and we [would] just have to go in at eight o'clock in

the morning and light up the heat in the Quonset huts during the winter months, and during the summer it was just unbearable. Those metal huts would absorb the heat, keep it all day, but they were obviously replaced as time went on. Much of Rutgers was, it was called a university, but it was more a college in a sense. So, many of the buildings changed for their purpose. Ballantine Hall used to be the gymnasium, then it became classrooms, then it became a library for a period of time. So, a lot of changes were in effect. About the only building, I guess is still there is the School of Education. Still sits on Seminary Place? Now, much of the research I would do would be across the street in the Theological Seminary because they had a fabulous library.

SH: The Sage Library.

ES: Yes, and, of course, they allowed us in, at that time, and, of course, … now they do not let anybody in there. Those are some of the experiences we had on campus.

SH: When you were commuting to campus were you driving or taking the bus?

ES: Anyway possible, hitchhiking, trying to hitch a ride from somebody, taking a bus.

SH: Were there other people in your neighborhood who were doing the same thing that you were doing?

ES: There were a number of them, but doing it at different times. Our schedules were so different. College for me was not what college [is] for many students today. My whole purpose was to get through it as quickly as possible and, what I did actually in the amount [of time] I completed all of the requirements in three years as opposed to four, because I went on through summer schools. So, that way, I started in [the] summer. I took a summer program, then a summer program after that, and a summer program after that, and actually completed the full year just through summer programs. I wanted to get out in the field. I wanted to be able to go out and do things, and, then, when I did graduate there were no teaching jobs.

SH: When did you and Mrs. Scagliotta marry?

ES: We married in 1949, September 3, 1949.

SH: Now, you had finished by that time?

ES: No, I was still in school. Came out of the service in ‘46, kicked around for a while, … [until] ‘47, graduated. ’47- ’49 were at Union Junior College and in between there, of course, so, we got married at the end of my junior college, in September of that year.

SH: Where were you living when you were going to Rutgers?

ES: Once we married? We lived in a small apartment in Bound Brook. We had rented a small apartment. Louise was working full-time at American Cyanamid and I was reasonably receiving, I think, it was 100 dollars a month stipend by going to school, so, we managed. We managed fairly well on that.

SH: When you finished your degree, did you attend graduation? Did your family come?

ES: Oh, yes. I was working at Sears Roebuck at the time. The graduation was in the evening, and I went to my supervisor and I said, "I don't think I'm going to be able to work the hours this evening." He said, "Why?" I said, "I'm graduating from the University, I'd like to have the time off." I rushed over to the football field, the stadium, grabbed the outfit, put it on and the whole bit, and off we went, but Mom and Dad were there, yes. My brother was there. Louise was there, of course, my wife, and then, her family. Nothing great about it. I do not think we even had a party, probably a little reception. It was a matter of course, once again, and I went right on to the graduate program, and I did that part-time. I did find a job teaching, not in secondary education, not in my major, but in elementary education, which meant that I had an emergency, or provisional certificate, had to take X number of courses in elementary education in order to be certified in elementary education to keep my job legally and go to graduate school. All of these were happening simultaneously.

SH: Did you enjoy education?

ES: I remember one time saying that if I had an opportunity I would be a professional student. I was not a good student in high school. I would say [a] good student; I was not an exceptional student. I'm probably above average, but not much above. It was in college that I understood the system. I understood what was being done by the professors. I know, I'm not proud to say, I remember one course just basically out of experimentation, I did not crack the text. All I did was listen to the professor, practically writing down verbatim what he said, and took the examination. I was number one in his class. It was embarrassing for me, yet knowing what was expected from this individual allowed me an opportunity to excel, and I learned that in life [if] you establish appropriate interpersonal relationships, you usually come out way up on top and in my profession, in [my] profession later on, it was interpersonal relationships that made the program successful.

SH: You were teaching, going to school, both undergrad and graduate level at the same time.

ES: Right.

SH: Did you see any changes in the education system from the time you started until …

ES: Vast changes, vast changes.

SH: For the better?

ES: It is hard to say. High school, because of Sputnik, went into the math and science programs, and they were hitting it very hard, requiring from high students far more than they were requiring from college students in preparation, in time, in energy. Elementary education began to grow. Everybody seemed to be in a hopper, everybody seemed to be developing programs. Programs were coming off the walls. What was it, the sixteen alphabet language, the reading program where these kids were able to read overnight, yet when they picked up the newspaper [they]

could not understand a single word. Many, many programs that were supposedly the epitome of education … fell flat on its face. They took as [you] well know, they took geography and history, made social studies out of it, combined that, and, I think, we missed both ends of the scale. They seemed to be a catchall, a lot of duplication in your programs. You seemed to go into the next grade, and you would be doing some of the stuff over and over again. It was good for me because, again, it broadened my own horizons, and allowed me an opportunity to see the whole gamut of education, and later [I] went on to teach at the University; but those times were, again, based on need, and we were in the field, [and] there was no one else in the field, and they needed everyone they could to come in as an adjunct.

SH: And what were you teaching?

ES: I was teaching a methodology course in teaching the neurologically impaired and emotionally disturbed, and a supervisory course in administration of special education. … Both of these were done, again, at Rutgers Graduate School.

SH: So, you have maintained your affiliation with Rutgers really throughout?

ES: Through most of the time because what happened was that special education was moving by leaps and bounds. All of a sudden, there it was and it was a monster. It was humongous in size, and there was no information, nothing coming forth, no dissemination. One parent, very energetic parent, got together some people they got [from a] mental health clinic from New Brunswick, Midland School, the psychology department from Rutgers, Middlesex …

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

JE: This tape two, side one of an interview with Dr. Edward G. Scagliotta.

SH: Please if you could just restate the group that is coming together to discuss special education?

ES: A parent, who had a child who was disabled, neurologically impaired, wanted to disseminate information and she brought together a cadre of people from Midland School, psychological clinic at Rutgers University, the psychological clinic at Douglass, Middlesex General Hospital, and probably a couple of others that I had forgotten, and we met regularly at Rutgers for the purposes of bringing together the experts in the field to disseminate information at a program we called, Symposium. Symposium was affected at Rutgers for an excess of twenty-five years. We started out with some very, very, small numbers, and ended up at that time of about sixteen hundred participants, indicating the success of this program. We brought in special education people from all over the country, all over the world, who were renowned in the fields of research application, and it was fantastically successful.

SH: Was this the first time this had been done anywhere in the country?

ES: This was the first time it had been done anywhere in the country. Subsequent to our initiation of our program, the Association of Children with Learning Disabilities also had national programs along with, with the National Education Association, NEA?

JE: Yes. Doctor, you had mentioned the Midland School, and some of the research I did said that you had founded the Midland School.

ES: Yes, I was one of the founders of the Midland School, along with a set of parents who had a child neurologically impaired. While I was in elementary school there were a number of children who were not permitted to attend school, for whatever the reason, maybe, behavior, an accident of one kind or another, and this was an opportunity for me to tutor and bring additional income for my family. I also must indicate the fact that, at that time, we had a daughter who was born deaf, and I had taken some courses and probably one of the few people who had any background in special education. So, this provided me with an opportunity to serve these youngsters, with a limited background in special education. From that point, after working with these parents for a period of time, we did a great deal of investigation of programs on the East Coast from Maine to Florida. We found that there was practically nothing in existence, and that we would have to develop our own program if we were ever to succeed in establishing a viable educational circumstance. We decided to bring together a group of people, friends, relatives, whoever was interested, and we put together a plan of operation between 1957 and 1960. During that time, we were able to investigate some of the programs, and do some adaptation of these programs. We zeroed in on Montessori, initially, primarily, because Maria Montessori had worked a great deal with disabled kids in asylums in Italy and in Switzerland, and, also, she was a very dogmatic in her approach for structure in the child's environment, and she felt by structuring a child's environment, by controlling that environment, that environment then became a pragmatic place for the child to learn and develop. … She did this by, primarily, through the various senses, the sense of smell, the sense of touch, the sense of hearing, the kinesthetic sense, and so on. So, our initial program was geared on a controlled structured basis, with regard to developing a program of naturalism and normalization. Normalization being that you offered these disabled children the same form of academics you would provide for every other child, only you do it on a very specialized basis. We felt very good about it, and incorporated in April of 1960. We also had some problems with non-profit and the federal government, at that time, said you had operate for two years before you can become a 501, C3. Okay, a lot of these things I forget. Anyway, we operated and so, we decided we would start right away. Our experimental program was held at an abandoned school in Pluckemin, the old Pluckemin Schoolhouse, and that was very appropriate for us because it had four rooms and a lot of space. We had one full-time student and two part-time students. In the meantime, affiliated with Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, primarily [the] speech and language department, and with Dr. Sam Livingston from Johns Hopkins University, primarily because he was the leading expert in seizures and had done a great deal of research in just the broad area of neurological impairment, and he really became our consultant from that particular point of view, whereas Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center began to feed some of these youngsters into our program. From that very early stage, from that one full-time, two part-time, we had four or five full-time students our first year.

SH: Are they bussed in or they boarded?

ES: These were all private. There was no federal money at that given time, no state money, no public dollars at all available. This is in 1960.

SH: So, their families were bringing them there?

ES: Some families were bringing them in daily, picking up the financial responsibility.

SH: How old were the children?

ES: They ranged anywhere between five and eleven. They were relatively young children. It was a one-on-one basis, for the most part. With the children coming in from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, it was necessary to hire a teacher, whom I tutored. I was still working in public education. However, that only happened for the first year because it was impossible for me to do all of that. So, I decided to leave my position in public education, gave up my pension, and moved in as a director/teacher of the program, and from that point on, primarily, because we were delivering a service that no one else was delivering, the growth and development of the school happened very, very rapidly, so, that each year we kept adding students.

SH: Please continue.

ES: At that point in time, we were very much interested in our own facility. The building that we were in was a public school building, which was given to us gratis by the local board of education, which quite frankly was an illegal act. We knew we had to move out eventually, and one of the other problems, which were kind of an off-side situation, was that the superintendent of that program had a license to operate a hypochlorinator. There was a health law in effect that [said that] in order to operate a public building that has well water, the well water must be chlorinated. You have to be a technician in operating a hypochlorinator. Well, during that period of time, since he was not doing it, he taught me, it was very simple, his license lapsed so we were in violation of … the Department of Health. Well, they gave us a time to either hire someone or train someone on staff, and receive the license. Fortunately, a gentleman here in Manville, a friend of mine, was the Water Commissioner. When I brought this problem to him, he says, "Ed, no problem at all. I'll teach you all you have to know about water to take the exam." Well, no one knows how much has been written about water. There are volumes upon volumes, a library unto itself, but, anyway, we went through the procedure and I thought I was prepared enough to take the examination, which was going to be at the War Memorial Building in Trenton. Assuming there would be a half a dozen or so people, I went down, could not find a parking space, got into this building and there were literally hundreds of men taking this examination, trying to elevate their lives in public water treatment plants. Well, there were two young proctors who were giving this examination, and they went through the whole spiel of that you had to leave all of your stuff outside the room, you could not leave unless you handed your paper in, and this was at least a three hour examination, possibly more for some, and they went through the whole regime. Well, okay, fine. That was it. Received the examination, looked through it carefully, as I normally did. There were twenty essay questions. Okay, I started to write. I'm writing, I'm writing, I'm writing; okay, now I'm finished. Forty minutes had gone by

[of the] three hour examination, forty minutes. I went back and reread and I said to myself, "All I know about water is on this paper," went up to one of the proctors, he said, "Do not tell me you have to go to the bathroom already?" I said, "No, I'm finished." He said, "You cannot do the exam?" I said, "No, I completed the exam, I'm turning it in." He said, "Oh." Well, anyway, I successfully passed the examination, and I'm sure not because I knew the subject. I bet these guys knew far more than I did, but I had a command of the English language that many of them obviously did not have, which is unfortunate. Anyway, so, I got the license, we were able to stay there a little longer.

JE: Was that before you had written a book about water? Didn't you write a book called *The Wonders of Water*?

ES: No, that was way after.

JE: That was after, okay.

ES: That book was a step in trying to produce children's literature.

JE: I was just trying to get some linkage with the word "water."

ES: Yes, *Water of Wonders*, or *Water of Life*, you are right, that was back in 1957. Anyway, so here we are, we were now looking for a property. We figured, well, there are a lot of big estates in Somerset County, Morris County, we would look at some of these, and we did, and we finally found what we wanted. We found a castle, we found an authentic German castle, in a way off place in Warren County, long winding road, totally isolated, no one would bother us, completely wooded. Well, we were able to rent this piece of property, and we took paint and Spic and Span, cleaned it all up. We were ready to operate. Ready to go, we had our own facility. Seven or eight days before the school was to open its first classes, we had a hurricane, wiped the trees out on that piece of property, like you would have, impossible we had no money to be able to get through that drive. Everything was just completely down the tubes. This is when, this was published in the newspaper, and the board of education at Pluckemin called and said, "You could [use] our building, on a temporary basis for no rental at all. It is abandoned, clean it up and it is yours to use," and that was where we moved to Pluckemin. Once at Pluckemin, a program was well established. We were receiving students. Our dissemination of information was getting to parents, and so on. We started looking at physical property, and we found that this piece of property was really a farm that had been farmed by a family that had group homes in Somerville, and they were bringing these people during the summer to an annex building in Branchburg Township so that they could work on the farm, candling eggs. It was a chicken farm. Well, during the winter, one of the homes burned in Somerville and, of course, whoever was responsible, the State's responsibility for this home wanted to know where their people were. Well, they were at this annex building on the Branchburg property, unheated, no toilet facilities, no running water. So, they yanked the license, and so, these people now had no income and they put the property up for sale. It was sixty-five acres of land that had a farmhouse, a carriage house, a barn and a whole array of chicken coops that ran the perimeter of Chamber's Brook. They wanted for sixty-five acres they wanted forty thousand dollars. Well, we did not have forty thousand dollars. However we could get a down payment with ten thousand dollars. Well, we

did not have ten thousand dollars, so we temporarily abandoned the whole concept. During that period of time, I happened to be going to our local drugstore, and Max Halperin, who was the druggist, said to me, … "Ed, I understand you're looking at a piece of property in Branchburg." I said, "How in the world did you learn about that?" He said, "Well, I'm a member of Somerset Realty Company." He said, "I'm a partner in the program." I said, "Oh, I didn't know that." He said, "Do you really want that property?" I said, "Wow, we certainly do." I said, "Don't have the ten thousand dollars down payment." He said, "Well, that is no problem. I will give it to you." [I said,] "Whoa, Max, wait. You are going to give us this money." "No, I'm not going to give it to you, I'm going to lend it to you, no interest, and you can buy the property." I said, "You are going to give us your money to buy property that [is] your own? Is that good business?" He said, "Absolutely not." I said, "Then, why?" He said, "I believe in what you're doing." I get goose bumps when I think of that, and he gave us the money and we purchased the property. Fortunately, thereafter, one of our parents inherited some money, and so, we were able to pay him off right away, and all we had was this mortgage that we had to consider. The property was sixty-five acres. It was next to Silver Saddle Ranch, which was then owned by Buster Crabbe. You do not know Buster Crabbe? Buster Crabbe was my idol. He played Flash Gordon in the serial every Saturday, and here we were adjacent to Flash Gordon. Now, this was just [an] exciting period of time, and they had a whole herd of horses, [laughter]… and it was an exciting time. At the time, we were having capital campaign to see if we could raise the money to erect a building. We did not operate any classes in that program. We brought the group over during the summer because we could operate out of the house, and we had summer programs there. So, what we did was; we went into the community, talked to women's groups, clubs of one kind or another, corporations, you name it, we tried to approach. Well, we hit on one family, very prominent in the community, the name was Cowperthwaite and Cowperthwaite, Victoria, was a cousin, niece or cousin, of Diamond Jim Brady, and they had quite an estate in Branchburg, but they were very much involved with the Chubb Company, and the company ran a program, Victoria Foundation, and through Victo, we were able to get a seventy-five thousand dollars grant to erect a building that cost 102,000 dollars. Our first building [had] eight classrooms, office space, period. We moved our program there in [the] years [of the] 1963-64 school year. [We] began our '64 school year out of that program. Subsequent to that, again, the program [was] growing by leaps and bounds, we began to add structures onto that original building based upon the kind of income that we had. We never borrowed any money. In fact, as the school stands now, it is totally debt free, including the property, which we sold off some property. We now have fifty-seven acres and they are going into another capital campaign, which is in the future, but, anyway, the school began to grow by leaps and bounds. We did a lot of dissemination of information both [on a] local level, state level and, internationally, via professional journals. It was our goal to get out at least one professional article per year, but we managed to do sometimes two or three. There was so much to be done, so much to share with other people. We became internationally known, and the success continues to be.

JE: Was the education supplemental to regular public school or in replacement of?

ES: Good question, John. In 1967, because there were no programs, public school programs for the emotionally disturbed. The State of New Jersey said, "We will allow these children to be educated in private schools that had appropriate programs," and there were a number of private psychological clinics that had day programs for children with emotional disorders. Well, once

that happened, since they were taking care of the mentally retarded through the Beatleston Law, back from 1954, these two groups were left out, the emotionally disturbed and the neurologically impaired. So, parents of neurologically impaired said, "Hey, wait it a minute. You are doing this for the emotionally disturbed, you are going to have to do it for us, too." They did it for everybody, so that, if a public school child study team could not provide a program on their premises for a diagnosed child, then they were allowed to send that child to a private school, and that private school would receive funds from the local district. So, the filter down process is federal government for special education, the 1975 law, through the state government, to the local district, to the private school, and that is what is in effect today.

SH: What about educating teachers who would be adept at providing the type of education that your program wanted to provide?

ES: Once the state accepted handicaps in the public school, the colleges and universities immediately began to educate within that realm. However, we found in our particular situation that we were not dealing with neurologically impaired, but with retarded individuals, per se. We were dealing with kids who were hyperactive, compulsive, disinhibited, preservative; these were kids who were off the walls. Very difficult to manage these youngsters, but once these kids were evaluated by a child study team, they were then permitted to identify a school that would meet this child's need, based upon the approval of the parent to send that child to the school. They picked up the tuition as well as the transportation. Now, when it came to the education of teachers, we found that teacher's colleges were not offering what we were looking for, so we provided our own instructional level, in now what is a permanent fixture at Midland, as an organized group, as the Learning Institute, and they carry-on, not only in-house teaching instruction, but we also opened the doors to other people, so the people would come in to do their practicums at Midland School.

SH: Now, in the courses that you were teaching at Rutgers, was there something that you had, basically, learned that you wanted to see implemented in the Graduate School of Education?

ES: This was strictly implementation, although we used several texts. No, this was strictly implementation, and the whole program is based on structure and control and "this is what you do." For example, all of our classrooms now at Midland are going to have to change, but they were all made very small, to physically control the environment. Our desks were the desks with the open end, and the open end you would push against the wall, so once a kid got into a desk, he was a captive audience. Oh, they would climb up, do not get me wrong, but we were dealing with very hyperactive individuals, violence, seizure problems. These were difficult kids to work with, and eating habits, potty training, I mean, all of the stuff we did. Now, we have developmentally disabled, and they are running across the board. Most of them have physical handicaps, so we now have to knock out walls to give the wheelchairs and the crutches a little bit more room, but we have changed with the times.

SH: So, many of the schools have now implemented programs, in-house, so-to-speak, so, you have had to adapt to what is not educable in the public school system?

ES: There are still youngsters that manifest difficulties that public schools cannot cope with, and as a result they sent them to private schools. Our enrollment has grown every year. The current enrollment, just in the day school itself, is 245 students.

SH: Now, is there a boarding situation as well?

ES: Boarding situation is only about, we have an array of community residences, and the reason for that is because we think the home environment [is] viable to the development of the child. We have a tremendous number of parent training programs, [on] how to deal with their children. We have full time psychologist, full-time social worker, child study team is there. Many of the supervisors are very adapted, carrying on programs in helping parents.

SH: What about early identification?

ES: Early identification is primarily that of the parent, and through their own doctors and organizations. However, public schools are not doing testing with children below the ages of three. So, there are programs in public education where they are taking the youngsters at three. We do not take them until kindergarten age, which is five, six.

JE: How rewarding was it to you personally?

ES: [The] most rewarding job in the whole world. What I used to do, periodically, the school is located on a slope, and, periodically, when things got rough at school, I would leave my office and walk up the slope and look over this whole array of buildings and programs, and just marvel at how it grew, and the growth was there because of need. All I did was make certain those needs were met, but it was all there. I tried to tell people that I want some emotional feeling about this, and I never have. It was such a natural thing to do. I just happened automatically, and there were people there who were there automatically. They were always there, the hospitals [were] there, the clinics were there, the schools were there, the parents were there, and the kids are the most lovable in the world. It just seems to all fall into place, and sometimes I felt useless.

JE: You functioned as the administrator or the lead teacher?

ES: The executive director. The program was totally my responsibility. Now, interesting enough, the organization of the school is just recently changed, but the initial corporation was formed and as new concepts came into being, rather than to tie them into the parent organization, we developed a new corporation. So, we have the Midland School, which was strictly elementary. We had at one time [what] was called the Special Services, these were services, advanced services, Midland Advanced Services, and then, we have the foundation. The foundation is separate, and then, we had the fourth organization, which was the residential component. Well, this is subsequently changed. Now, there is a parent organization. There's the Midland School, strictly academic, Midland Adult Services, which goes into job, career training, placement, and … [there is] the Residential Facilities. There are five residencies now. There is [a] twelve acre farm. There's nothing on it but farmland, and, then, we have a couple of pieces of property that were given to us by local municipalities, which we will probably develop in the future. But in our adult program there are about sixty adults, who work out of a program

on a regular basis, and they are matched with a senior citizen, either on a volunteer basis, or somebody there for a long time, and they pull whatever the base pay situation is. So, it was a lot of people [that] made this so. It could [have] never be done by one person.

SH: You talked about your daughter being deaf. What kinds of programs did you find available for her education?

ES: That's also a very interesting story. Spencer Tracy, the actor, [his] son, John, was born deaf. Mother Louise became the prime teacher of John. John was educated at home and mama did a tremendous amount of research. She met, or heard of a man named John Wright. John Wright started an oral school in New York City, along the East River. John Wright was an oralist. He believed in teaching only language. He bucked Horace Mann. Horace Mann was a manualist. It was strictly signing. So, what he did to prove his point, John Wright went to Japan, learned to speak Japanese and taught a deaf Japanese girl to speak. He put together a total program, brought it to New York, opened up the Wright Oral School, private. When Louise Tracy found out [about] this program, she took it and, personally, adapted it to a home training program. Daughter Janice, our oldest, daughter went through that training program with Mother Louise. Janice also spent one year at Wright Oral School. Interesting, the tuition was, the tuition for one year was more than my salary. You can imagine what little savings we had went right down the tubes. But Johns Hopkins, where they were doing all of our, where we did all of our work wanted her to be oral. So, we pulled her out, and that was when she started with the John Tracy Clinic. John Tracy Clinic is an established clinic in San Francisco, I believe, and to my knowledge it's well developed, and still going on, but it was all done at home. Now, Janice, my Marlene, my second daughter, is also deaf, and Janice went to regular public school with a tutor, and [with] as much speech therapy as we could provide. Janice has a fantastic language. She actually is an accomplished writer. She has been published. Her speech is poor because, again, if you lived with her long enough. We seldom sign at home. We spell a word out, we may sign on occasion, but I will tease, for example, when I will say, "Come to eat." So, we do tease periodically, but she is oral, and so is our other daughter who lives in Arizona, married, lives in Arizona. I learned a lot obviously by just doing the research, and working with our children, and a lot of these were transferred to working with the neurologically impaired and, mostly, disturbed, coupled with a number of practices we brought in. Perception training, for example, what Louise Tracy did, was a foundation-based sense training. You train all of the senses simultaneously, hoping that one would take hold that you can capitalize at another time. Now, this became the basis for perception training, and I'm trying to think of the woman that did all of this stuff, again, names.

JE: In your biography, Doctor, it also talks about getting a doctorate at South…

ES: Southeastern University.

JE: I assume that's in the South?

ES: Greenville, South Carolina.

JE: When did you find time to do that?

ES: I had wanted to go on. Now, I got my master's in '54. Got my doctorate in '74, twenty years elapsed. Now, the reason for that is that I was totally occupied with what I was doing. A couple of the people that we began working with on the university level came out of the University of London. I found out that the University of London, along with the University of South Africa, was part of the University Without Walls. So, I began investigating University Without Walls, found out that Southeastern University had a program, and I entered the program and, that was what it was. We extended over I do not know how many years and finally, accomplished all of the requirements, and there it was. [I] did not have to attend classes, per se, and it was a marvelous situation. Now, we have [one] in the State of New Jersey, Thomas Edison.

JE: I'm a student there.

ES: Both of my daughters got some credits out of that program as well. So, it was a marvelous way to study because you get a chance to meet and interview a lot of people. With Montessori, I mean, I went to the Netherlands and studied the program there with Maria's bastard son.

SH: Do you have any other questions, John?

JE: No.

SH: Is there anything that you would like to leave on tape before we conclude the interview?

ES: No, I think, basically, that is it. I cannot think of any profound words that would sum up in totality all the words that we shared today.

SH: Well, I thank you so much.

ES: Oh, I thank you. It's a delight.

SH: It's been wonderful, thank you.

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

Reviewed by Wendy Castillo 10/26/04
Reviewed by Sandra Holyoak 11/14/04
Reviewed by Edward Scagliotta 12/30/04