

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK
AN INTERVIEW WITH JERRY SHULMAN
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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AND

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KURT PIEHLER: This begins an interview with Jerry Shulman on October 31, 1997 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and Mark Weiner. I guess we would like to begin by asking you a little about your parents. First your father who emigrated from Russia.

JERRY SHULMAN: Yes. He emigrated from an area in Russia called Bessarabia. It is the border between Romania and Russia proper. When my father was a little boy the area to the South was controlled by the Turkish government and the area that they lived in, which was near the border, was controlled by the Russian government. But, it's called Bessarabia. It is a very fertile area. They had some more, it is a warmer climate than we have here and a lot of produce grows in that area. My grandfather was in the same industry that my father was in and that I am and my daughter are in at this time.

KP: Your father's father served in the Russian army.

JS: That is correct.

KP: And he actually fought in the Russo-Japanese war.

JS: That is correct.

KP: Did your father's father also immigrate to the United States?

JS: No, when he came home from his service after the Russo-Japanese war he was pretty much perturbed by the fact that a man could be called upon to defend his country and possibly give his life, but not be able to purchase land in that country. You had to be, one, a man of that country and therefore I believe not Jewish. Europe they had a system in most countries at that time where every boy was in a class, especially in Russia, we will refer to that country that was the situation there. When you became fifteen years of age, you registered in that class and when that class was called up, you put your service in. Well, he made up his mind that when his two sons, my father's older brother Harry and my father, Abraham, just before they reached that age, he would send them to a sister who lived in Newark, New Jersey. So my Uncle Harry immigrated to Newark, New Jersey about three years before my father did and when my father was about fourteen my grandfather then prepared his paperwork and sent him to the U.S. My grandfather did come to the U.S. just shortly before my older brother Nat was born. My mother told me that he came to visit them, and see how his two sons were doing and to see his sister. Actually, it was his sister-in-law, because my grandmother had died shortly after my father was born. It was to his sister-in-law that he sent his two boys and that is where they started in the U.S.

MARK WEINER: How did they manage to immigrate to this country? How did he get over here?

JS: My father probably went by train through Europe and then I am almost positive that he sailed from England, from Liverpool, England. And because you asked this question, if you do not mind, I would like to digress for my children to remember this story. Not many people knew English in the small village where my grandfather lived with his sons therefore, he turned to the

local orthodox priest, who I believe had some knowledge of English, to write the address where my father was headed in the USA. Whoever heard of a place called Newark, New Jersey? So when he wrote the address down he wrote Newark, New York. My father traveled by train across to England and he boarded a ship that I believe had to be in Liverpool. Because of subsequent events, this leaves me to believe that was it. He traveled to the U.S. and when he arrived in the U.S., because he was a minor, he could not debark from Ellis Island. He could not come into the U.S. unless someone picked him up who was of legal age. And since a postcard was sent to Newark, New York, although there is a place called Newark, New York, there was no such address returned as “address unknown.” The obligations of the steamship companies in those days was, if you were rejected by the U.S. Government and the Department of Immigration, they were obligated to take you back to the port where you came from and that is what happened to my father at the age of fourteen. He was taken back and put off of the ship in Liverpool, England. A kid, fourteen years-old, all by himself, and he made his way off the pier. He told me this because when I was a little boy I traveled with my father a great deal. He was a produce man. He was the buying member of the firm. His partner, Harry Katz, was the salesman in the city, in Newark, and my father was the buyer. Since he constantly traveled out into the countryside, he frequently took me with him and as we rode he would talk to me about his early life. The result was when he walked down the street from where the pier was located, he heard someone speaking Jewish in a used clothing store. Adjacent to the street. He walked inside and explained his predicament to the people in the store. They said to him, would you like to work. They asked him how many languages he knew? My father, because this is the influence of several countries, adjacent to where he lived, knew a little bit of several different languages. What he was to do each day, was to go down to the pier when new immigrants arrived to board ships. The pitch was to tell them that they could not go to the U.S. looking like “greenies,” that they better buy more modern clothes. He had a place where the people were selling more modern type of dress so that when they arrived in the U.S. they would be dressed more appropriately. While doing this after several months, he indicated to me that when there were no ships in port he would try to learn English and more about the country. He would frequently go to the museums. That was about the best that he could do because he was just learning English. One day while standing on the pier looking for potential customers for this used clothing man, he placed an advertisement in a NYC newspaper for him, he bumped into a young fellow from his home town and my father asked him would he. He was prepared to pay him for whatever funds he laid out. This man advertised in a Jewish newspaper, in Manhattan, and some people notified my father’s older brother, Harry in Newark, and that way they made contact and they brought my dad over a second time to the U.S. But, that is part of why I wanted to digress, to show the difficulty that people had in coming to the U.S. Everything had to be more or less handled in such a way that it was correct. The steamship companies had an agreement with the US government, that anyone who failed the physical or, as in my father's case, was a minor and not met the company, was obligated to return them to the port they sailed from.

KP: How did your father get started with the produce business?

JS: Well, my grandfather, what he did was, he would go up country into where there were farmers who harvested various crops he wanted to buy. Mostly it was nuts wheat and corn barley. He would buy those things and then when there was a market day in their village he

would display the merchandise for sale. Well, in those days since people did not have refrigeration actually, people bought more durable goods, durable types of things to eat, and so wheat and nuts and things like that that would be ground to flour, and they were used in that way. That is what he did. My father knew a little bit about that while growing up. But my father's older brother, Harry, somehow or another, got into the ice business shortly after he came to Newark, and so he helped his brother for the first year or so. As they rode around on a peddler's wagon selling ice and looking up as high as the on the fourth floor window, where there was a card and the number on the top of the card was the size of the piece of ice that the lady wanted. He said that he carried the ice all of the way up to the top floor. He only did that, he said, for a short while, and then he gravitated to renting a horse and a wagon and began buying produce down at a wholesale terminal. In those days, in Newark, it was down in the area called Mulberry Street and so he began in that way, in a very small way. He worked his way up to the point where he became partners with a couple of other men. They began to buy merchandise up in the country and bringing it into that area and re-selling it.

KP: When did your father come to the U.S.?

JS: I think my father came somewhere around 1908 or 1909, someplace in there, and, as I said, he met my mother somewhere around 1912.

MW: How did your parents meet?

JS: How did my parents meet? Well, my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, was in the U.S. before my father was here and before his daughter came over and he was a very religious man. He was a member of, as Jewish people we refer to them as, the Hasidim. So, therefore, he was absolutely unwilling to work on a Sabbath. Because he was unwilling to work on a Sabbath, and many places where he could possibly work had signs that said, "If you do not come to work on Saturday do not come back on Monday," so he had trouble keeping a job. After he had been here a year or two and he could not locate a means of making a living where he did not have to work on a Sabbath he had problems. He said to my mother, who had come to the U.S. subsequent to when he had come (she came over with an uncle and his daughter, and they were living in Newark at the time). He said that he was going back to Poland, or actually Russia. My maternal grandparents lived in a village on the Russian-Polish boarder in the (Pripyat?) marsh area near the city of Pinsk. The result was when he said this to my mother (who was the oldest of about five or six children and who was a very independent young lady, she came here at the age of fourteen, and while he was in the U.S. she had been the number one housecleaner and baby caretaker at home and she did not want to go back to that, she told me) she indicated to my grandfather that she was not going back with him and he was very upset. They were living in board a widow and her daughter, who was about the same age as my mother also, my grandfather also knew that my mother had other relatives in New York City and that this woman was a very honest person. So he left her with this woman. My mother remained in Newark after my grandfather went back to Russia. His name was Sholumbaer Tanzman. My son Stephen is named after him. Nevertheless, this woman's daughter and my mother both worked in a factory right behind the house they lived in, that faced on the next street. She said that they would both jump the fence, two fourteen year-old girls, and they went to work in the factory and they went back and forth together. One day this young lady said, you know (this is after about a year),

"There is a bunch of young people who always seem to meet at this one family's house." Their name was Mandelstein. She said, "Why don't you come with me tonight. There are a lot of young boys and girls who meet there. They have about five or six children of their own." So my mother went along with her. I do not know this young woman's name but nevertheless as I remember it, it was there that my mother met my father. And after they had been going together for a short while she brought him over to meet the lady at whose house she was living, and she gave her approval. He seemed like an honest, hardworking, young man and about a year or so later I believe they were married. That would probably have been around 1912 or 1913 because, I believe, my brother was born in 1914.

KP: Your mother, did she live in New York at one point and then move to Newark or ...

JS: I do not believe that was the situation, maybe it was. Maybe my grandfather found work in Newark and that is why they came to Newark. I believe that is what happened. I know that for a while the factory she worked in was located in Roselle, New Jersey. This was before it moved to Newark.

KP: Did your grandfather ever come back, on your mother's side of the family?

JS: No. He never came back to the U.S. My mother and subsequently a younger sister came to the U.S. and lived with us. They communicated every three weeks or a month by sending a letter and also, I believe, things were not so good over there so they would also include a little money. That was a constant thing.

KP: Do you know what happened to your family on your mother's side?

JS: Yes, I know I think fairly accurately. My mother had four sisters and one brother. Two of the sisters immigrated to Israel around 1934. The next, about the third from the youngest, sister, my Aunt Shaindle who is still alive today, by the way. She is ninety-one. She came to the U.S. to visit with her sister for a short while and it was her plan to go on to Israel from here. This was in 1923. Fortunately, she came to the U.S. the day I was born. So this Aunt and I have sort of bonded together and she is the aunt we are going to spend our evening with tonight. We have always been very, very close. Her married name is Dolinko. That is Morris's mother. My grandfather, grandmother, uncle Moshe, his wife and three children, and an aunt and her child were all killed by the German Army.

KP: How observant was your family growing up?

JS: Well, I would say my parents were moderately observant in the sense that my father observed all of the major holidays. However, he was not a Sabbath observer and the produce terminal in most of the country in the U.S. worked six days a week. Started Sunday night and finished Saturday morning. He worked those six days a week. After he retired in 1961 or 1962 he became a Sabbath observer again. He gravitated back to it. My mother's family, I would say, was much more observant. However, she adopted a much more modern attitude towards it and she accepted it the way it was. My sister and brother were each given some sort of a Jewish education and my brother and I were both Bar Mitzvahed at the age of thirteen. My brother is

nine years older than I am. He lives in Charleston, South Carolina and my sister is seven and a half years older than me and she is, unfortunately, in a nursing home in West Orange, New Jersey.

KP: Did your parents keep to the dietary restrictions?

JS: Yes. That is why I say that the only things my parents did not observe were the working rules of not working on the Sabbath. But aside from that, my parents observed all of the dietary rules as my wife and I do today. We have carried it on in as do both of our parents families.

MW: Do you remember at all what it was like growing up in the 1920s?

JS: I would say I did because I was the youngest of three children and I had a brother and a sister who were doing things. There was a lot of family around. My parents were sort of outgoing people and they drew people to them. Many people came to visit, and live with us, or stay with us, and therefore I had that good fortune. My father was in the wholesale produce business. He bought a house on Belmont Terrace in Newark, New Jersey. I was born in that house and one of the reasons my father bought this house is because his older brother, Harry, had already purchased a house across the street. It was a very short street between Belmont Avenue, (now called Irving Turner Boulevard) and Ridgewood Avenue. Only five houses on this little street, and the four corner houses that faced away. It was a good street to grow up on because there was not too much traffic and when people turned into it they knew that there were always kids playing ball. There were two telephone poles, in about thirty or forty feet from each corner and they made perfect goal lines for football games. Not goal posts but goal lines. If you passed the ball, pass beyond either one of those two telephone poles and that was the direction you were going, that was a touchdown. But I can remember a situations after I was about four years old better than before. Although my cousins lived across the street and I knew them well and although they were all older than me, I associated with them and naturally this made it that much easier for me to grow up. The people who lived on the street all sort of tended to be very protective of everyone. And if one of the women came out of the houses and saw something going on that she did not think was right, she was not above saying something right out loud to cut it out or not do this or that. Things that you normally would not do today.

KP: Who lived in your neighborhood? How diverse was it?

JS: It was a diverse neighborhood. It was more diverse than many other neighborhoods were. There were I am not going to be able to put an exact percentage for you, however, I would be willing to say that our neighborhood was probably a thirty-five percent or possibly forty percent Jewish. There was a fairly decent percentage that were Irish, people of Irish decent. Down the street was the Engler family, the father was a retired fireman. To the right, Johnny Shott's father was a policeman. To the left, there were three or four houses where . Remember that fellow we met in the gas station by accident, Lil? ????? His father was a policeman. He was one of the first policemen to ride in an automobile as mobile policeman, one of two men back in 1933 or 1934 when Newark adopted the system of having two policemen ride in a radio car. That was really a big thing. Every once in a while, they would come up the street while we were playing ball, "Junior your mother wants you to get home." And Junior would take off. But all of us

would stand around and wait until the two policemen drove away. Then there were, it was about a block away from where we lived, as I walked to the grade school that I attended (Peshine?) Avenue School, there was a street of about six or seven houses on that block. And I would say that ninety percent of the people that lived in those six houses were black people but that was just one enclave by itself. But there were quite a few Polish people, quite a few Italian people. It was a very diverse neighborhood. Quite a few German, people of German decent, all living together with some Russians and Polish. It was a very mixed area. This is part of the south side of the Clinton Hill area in Newark. I do not know if you are familiar with that. It is one block south of Hawthorne Avenue and as I said I think the Clinton Hill section really begins at Hawthorne Avenue and runs north and then a little west of that. But it was a diverse area and most of the people were working class people and there were a few small shop keepers and store keepers mixed in with men like my father. There was a man, up on the corner, who had one of the most beautiful gardens you ever laid your eyes on and he was very protective of it, too. If the football went in there you did not get it back too quick. He owned a machine shop that repaired cars but he did more than just ordinary work. He did more machine type work. He was very protective of. That garden, it was gorgeous, I am telling you. The kids would walk by and look at it and once in a while the ball would go in there. You did not go over the fence after that ball, either. I will tell you that right now.

MW: So were most of your close friends Jewish?

JS: No. Because I would not say that, because the house right next to me, when I was very small, I played with a kid named Eddie O'Connor. And when we got a little older and went to school, I went to (Peshine?) Avenue School and across the street from Peshine was a Catholic school, I believe it was St. Charles. Eddie O'Connor went to St. Charles and I am not sure if the Shott kids went to St. Charles but several of the other Catholic kids in our neighborhood did. We all played football together, we were friends. I used to walk to school every day with a young fellow named Salvatore (Palmeri?). Sal would push his little brother, Johnny, ahead of him, my cousin (lived in the same house with me, my father owned a two family house) I would be pushing my cousin Morris ahead of me. He is five years younger than me, I think Johnny was about four years younger than Sal. I would not remember these things so well but my wife and I went to several high school reunions. We went to the same high school together and in my wife's class (she was a half year behind me) was Sal's sister, Mary, and she would come regularly to all of these reunions and I would get a chance to say hello to Mary and ask how her brothers, Sal and Johnny, were. That sort of remains in my mind.

MW: Do you have any memories at all of prohibition?

JS: Well, in the house I heard talk of what prohibition was and it had some relationship to the business my father was in because he hauled produce long distance. I remember this one particular instance and I was already about nine at the time. My father had bought a new, ten-wheel, Chevrolet truck. A ten-wheeler in those days was a little bigger and did not have real big tires but Chevrolets were pretty fast and it had a long body on it. He drove over to this aunt of his, his mother's sister's house. Her husband was in business on Montgomery Street and he wanted to show his uncle, by marriage to his aunt, this new truck he and his partner had bought. It was the second truck they had and it had the names painted on the side, "Shulman and Katz

Newark Farmers Market Newark, New Jersey.” After my father visited and showed them the truck, he had gone back in the house with his uncle. He came out and there was a fellow leaning against the fender. My father recognized him an ex prouce truck driver and my father knew him from the produce terminal. He said, “Abe, that looks like a pretty fast model.” My father said, “Yes, we fixed it up this way to haul strawberries out of the peninsula.” (He was referring to the Del-Marva peninsula) “Well,” he said, “You know, we got some stuff coming in through Savannah, Georgia and you could put corn all around; it might pay a little better.” My father said, “Mickey,” or whatever his name was, I forgot. He said, “You know I am not interested in that kind of business,” and that ended it right there. That was one of the ways ... I had heard other stories from several of the truck drivers that I got to know, subsequently, after prohibition was over. They drove these bootleg trucks and hauled booze from out of the Carolinas and inlets off of Long Island and places like that. That is about the only way I got to know a little bit about it. But my father, you were allowed to make your own wine, my father made wine in a style that most people do, dry Italian wine, red and white. He also made brandy. He had learned some of these things over in Europe. It was the type of thing that people did by putting sour cherries or cherries in a bell jar and putting sugar on top. The big problem though was you needed to add alcohol to it and so, somehow or another, my dad knew some place to buy a five gallon tin of regular alcohol and he added the alcohol to it. After it fermented a while he made something as good as you could taste a cherry brandy. I am telling you I tasted it as a kid, and it seemed very good.

KP: It sounds like you played in a lot of sports growing up but did you also go to the Newark minor league team, did you ever go to any of those?

JS: You are talking about the Newark Bears. Yes. I was a knot holer if you know what that means. The Newark Bears, which was owned by the Yankees, had a system where when you were in grammar school you could buy a little card and, I believe, you could go to five or six games or buy tickets. They were very cheap and the Newark Bears ball park was off Route 1 and 9. We had to get downtown on a trolley car and then take a Ferry Street car that went all the way down to the ball park and then we would present our knot hole ticket and we would see the ball games. And everybody in Newark, the kids did anyway, followed the ball players on the Newark Bears team and in addition to that, when they went up to the Yankees. We would remember them as having played for the Bears. The Yankees owned a farm team in Kansas City and I think around 1937 or 1938, the Newark Bears won the championship of the International League, which is here in the east. Kansas City won the championship in the American Association, the Columbus Redbirds in those days was a Cardinal chain and Kansas City, I think they were called the Kansas City Blues but I am not sure. I know one thing, the shortstop on that team was Phil Rizzuto, which everybody knows that name. There was a “Little World Series” as it was called and it was played between Newark and Kansas City. To tell you the truth, at this point I think the Bears won but I am not certain.

KP: Newark also had a number of great movie theaters. How often did you go growing up?

JS: My wife is laughing like hell. As a little boy at the age of nine or ten in the house on Belmont Terrace that we lived in, the house next to us was owned by a man named Herman (Eisen?). And Mr. Eisen and his wife, Anna, lived up on the third floor and they had seven sons

and one daughter. One of the sons, Arnold, worked for the Stanley (Fabian?) Corporation, I do not know if you ever heard of it, it was tied in with Warner Brothers. She would frequently call me, especially in the summertime. She would call me from upstairs and I would go to her apartment and she would say, "Jerry, I want you to write a letter for me." It was to her one daughter, who lived out in California, in Hollywood by the way. I do not believe Mrs. Eisen was literate in English. Her daughter had married an attorney. So I would sit down and she would dictate the letter and I would sign it, "from Grandma Anne" and on the bottom I would put, "Grandma Anne's secretary, Jerry Shulman." And then when I finished writing that letter for her why she would say to me, "Well, I am going to call Arnold. Which theater do you want to go to?" Well, the nearest one was the Cameo, on Elizabeth Avenue near South Side High School. So she would say, "Do you want to go?" "Well, I am going to take someone I know." "Oh, okay." So she would call her son and then when I went down to the theater that afternoon I would say, "I have an 'okay' from Mr. Eisen," and the fellow who was taking the tickets would just waive us on in. So I went to either the Hawthorne or the Cameo quite frequently that way. We also went to one on Bergen Street. Do you remember the name of that theater, Lil? There was one on Bergen Street near Shearer or Shephard Avenue. I would go there occasionally. Nevertheless, we went downtown a lot and we would go to Loews that had MGM pictures, and also, there was the Paramount down on Market Street and the Brandford on Brandford Place, and that was Warner Brothers, too. Then up the street from the Brandford was the Adams. Now the Adams belonged to the Paramount chain and that theater featured bands, the big bands with crummy movies. When I was going to high school we managed to get down there. I saw some of the best big jazz bands in the U.S. play at the Adams. There was a circuit that most people do not even know about. The Big Bands would be at the Paramount in New York City. The band would be playing there. The next stop was the Adams in Newark and then they would go to Philly. Well, if we knew, or the newspaper said or mentioned that, "Tommy Dorsey was going to be in Newark starting this coming Tuesday," we would get prepared. On occasion a couple of us, one of the kids would come down from the another high school with a big old Pierce Arrow, which was pretty old, but they rode good. Probably you could buy them in those days for one-hundred to two a hundred and fifty dollars or even less and we would ride downtown. First in the morning, we might sign in for homeroom, then we would cut some classes and then we would be downstairs to be picked up. We would go down to the Adams, but we did not line up in front of the theater before it opened. Everybody, it was some sort of a ritual or something or a system that the truant officer might not notice you; there would be clumps of three or four kids in the doorways of the various stores on Brandford Place. Just about the time they opened it up, around ten o'clock for the first crummy picture to come on, and later the band would come on, suddenly a line would form. The line would disappear in no time flat, inside the theater. I saw, as I said some of the very best bands that people talk about now, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey. I saw Benny Goodman there and later on Gene Krupa. I believe I saw Chick Webb there. The bands that made it to the Paramount in New York and came through Newark every couple of weeks I would get to see them. I became a jazz buff as a result of that.

KP: In what ways did the Great Depression effect your family?

JS: Pardon me. Did the Depression affect us? It affected us to a certain extent. In that things became very tough. In the case of my father the city of Newark had constructed a new market. They wanted to clean the wholesale produce terminal out of the Mulberry Street and Center

Market there. That is an area just to the west of what is now the Pennsylvania Railroad Station. It is a parking garage now. I believe that is the old Center Market and then along Mulberry Street. They wanted to clean that out so they built a new terminal down on Miller Street, between Miller and Wright. Everybody drew for locations. My father and his two partners drew the very last store on Wright Street, away from the city of Newark, and you could not have had a worse location if you wanted to. In no time flat, within a year, they went out of business because of excessive debts. They just could not make it there. The trade did not come down that far. They had a good location on Mulberry Street, but this location was not good. The people who were fortunate enough to draw stores up on Miller Street, in particular, not so much Wright Street, because Wright became a back street and as we say in the produce business "a cemetery". The people who drew the stores up closer to the railroad, see you would come along the McCarter Highway and you would turn down underneath the Pennsylvania Railroad and there was the Miller Street Market. People like Joseph (Denholtz?) and Son or Bertrand and Shreiber or J.E. Stevenson and those people. They had stores there on the left hand side and that was the prime location. Eventually most everybody on Wright Street went out of business. The people on the right hand side of Miller Street, as you went in, was not even as active as the left side. Nevertheless, they went out of business and it disturbed my dad to no end. He would never been involved in anything like that. So he and my mother opened a small grocery store to help make a living, make the payments on the house. But after they were there about one year, that wholesale business was in my father's blood and, he left the store for my mom to run by herself and he went back to the produce terminal. He started up in a very small way with a man named, Harry Katz. They just pooled whatever money they had and started up as best they could. About that time a new market opened down in the Ironbound Section of Newark called the Newark Farmers Market. It was a cooperative that farmers had pooled their money to build this market. It still exists today because Miller Street is no longer there. It is a housing project as I understand. The Newark Farmers Market opened up and they were one of the first men to sign up for stalls there. My mom remained in the store taking care of the store herself. My brother at that time was old enough so when he came home from school he went directly to the store to help my mom and I lived for a year or so during the middle of the week with my cousin Morris' mother. That was before Morris was born. That is what enabled them to continue. From that my father built up another business with Harry Katz.

KP: What year did your father go out of business the first time?

JS: I believe it was about 1927.

KP: So he started the store in 1927?

JS: 1927 or 1928, in there. It was a very difficult business. My mom told us that down the street from them was one of the first chain stores, an A&P. The people would go there because their prices were somewhat lower. When they closed up promptly, at six p.m. We were open in the evening until nine or ten and people would come running in for a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk because they had forgotten to buy it there or something like that. What happened was this store was one block east of High Street as you go down the hill towards Broad Street and it was somewhat of an industrial area. My mom used to make a lot of sandwiches for men who worked in those buildings around there and I used to wander around amongst those buildings as a kid.

These fellows all knew me. I would stand there and watch these big machine tool places where they had the belts up on the ceiling coming down to power the machines, the lathes. I would stand there by the doorway watching them. One of them was named Chippy Michaels. I will never forget him because he was always coming up for a sandwich. He was a big, heavy-set guy and he would always holler to me and tell me to be careful about what I was doing but he did not mind my coming up and watching the men working. Then between the building that Chippy had his place in there was a store with a set of steps going down. There was nothing there. It was just green glass painted halfway up and there were pictures of horses on the wall. I never could figure what went on there. So I turned to my brother one day and said, "What do they do there?" He said, "That is a horse room." Then along the street that ran parallel to High, we were behind St. Michael's Hospital, there was a blacksmith. As a kid I was just fascinated and I would stand watching the blacksmith work shoeing horses by the hour.

KP: There were still a number of people who remember milk deliveries?

JS: Absolutely. I do, too. My folks got most of their milk delivered by the Alderney Dairy. The man that delivered the milk to our house must have been doing it for many years because on Saturday when he made his rounds to collect his money he would always say to me, "Want to take a ride?" and I would say, I have forgotten his name, "Oh, sure." He would say, "Okay, go tell your mom." I would tell my mom I was going for a ride on the milk wagon and I could not believe a guy could go down the hill, with cobblestones, that fast with a horse and I would be scared. He would turn the corners, you know, and all that, but I rode along with him and sometimes when it was on level street he would let me hold the reins and things like that. So I do remember horses and wagons very well. It's one of those things. That was not the only thing. They cleaned the streets with two, they were not Belgian Percherons, but they were big, heavy-set horses and they drew a garbage wagon and the men dumped the garbage into the wagon and/or put the cans back or they would come along and sweep the streets and shovel the debris from the streets into the wagons. Behind our house, on a diagonal, was the (Horbachs?) Bakery. They had a company store on the corner of Belmont and Hawthorne Avenue. The back of the bakery was the next part of the building but between the bakery and our backyard was the stable where they kept their horses. When the men came back, from a day's delivering and selling door to door, they would tie their horses up to the trees along Belmont Avenue. And when they got to the corner of Belmont Terrace they turned up Belmont Terrace and tied their horses to the trees as they went up the street. So I saw a good bit of horse drawn delivery as a child. I would say that existed until I was about seven or eight, maybe even a little older, maybe nine.

KP: You mentioned about your named being called Joseph in elementary school.

JS: As I said, my mother took me to school and she registered me at Peshine Avenue School and she brought my birth certificate along and of course I was registered as Joseph. I was sitting their in kindergarten and I think it was Ms. (Holsworth?), I think that was her name, and she kept calling, "Joseph." Finally, she came over and shook me and said, "Joseph, I have been calling you," and I looked up at her and I was sort of sheepish. I said, "My name is Jerry." So it was corrected pretty quickly and from then on I have always been known as Jerry. Even when I went into the army when I enlisted for service, I registered as Joseph, but you're in a crew or small groups, people understand if you repeat that your name is Jerry. The only other time it occurred

that it came up again is when I had to get a passport to go overseas on a vacation with my wife, I had my older brother and sister both sign a form that the government requires. It indicates that I have always been known as Jerry, and I have had no problem since. I have to say this much, my attorney will not accept that business and I had to make out my will as Joseph Shulman. But I went to a very good grammar school. I want to tell you that right now. The teachers were very, what is the right word, they were very conscientious, and they made an effort. There was discipline in the classes which I know because I was disciplined a few times. They took care of things that had to be done. I will give you a good example of that. I was not a good reader and that is because I did not read sufficiently to keep up. I would rather do other things like play ball with the kids on the street. So they put me into a special reading class where they had an elderly teacher who that is all she did was work with kids with reading problems (she must have been a lady well up in her seventies, it appeared that way to me). I went to this reading class while the class read regular work and as a result after about six months or so my reading improved. It helped me gain a good education and this is a good example of how conscientious those teachers were.

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

JS: ... They taught us how to use the library and books and art appreciation. That was very, very good. One of the things that was more important than anything else for me was that we had a terrific gym teacher, Mr. J.J. O'Sullivan, and he made us learn how to do things on parallel bars. I was not real good at it, but I learned to do the things I had to and as a result of one of those things I believe I may have saved my life or me from some very, very damaging injury, a very debilitating injury. He taught us how to dive and snap roll. You put your fingers down, and as soon as your fingers touch the mats you stiffen them and snap your body and you roll over. I must have been forty-five already or somewhere in that age. I was standing up in a produce trailer, and we loaded mostly eighteen-wheel trailers in those days and we still do. We were standing in the back of a trailer loading cabbage on a road. Some farmers had a field adjacent to a road, and did not have a shed near there. They would just haul the cabbage out on a truck, and they would load the side door when they were loading the front of the trailer. When they passed the side door they closed it, and then they would finish loading from the back. I was standing near the back of the trailer, and in those days along the back of a trailer there were ribs in the floor where the ice on top melted and then the water rolled out. When the water came to the back of the trailer, they did not want it rolling out of the back of the doors, so they had a small rib that was slightly higher and that led the water to two water holes on either side. I was standing in the back of the trailer and did not realize how close I was and my back heel caught against that little spot and I fell backwards down towards a hard, gravel blacktop road and the trailer is only about five foot something off of the floor. I fell towards that road and I instinctively threw my hands out in front of me and as my fingertips touched the ground I stiffened, and I snapped my body and I just stood up. I rolled over on my back and stood up. The fellas kept loading. They did not even know I fell out of the trailer. I was headed head first into that road. That gravel covered hard blacktop. So I climbed back up on the trailer and I said to one of them, "Hey, is my back dirty?" and the guy said, "Yeah, you have some stones stuck to it," or something like that. He brushed it off and that ended it. That was one amongst other things he taught me, how important it was to learn the things, the principles that he taught us. If

you are falling from a parallel bar, "If you have a hand on it, hold on until you can steady yourself." Another time, I was sitting up on a parallel bar and I had one hand incapacitated and you know how you can watch a basketball game and they would raise one bar and they were using it like a small grandstand. Suddenly someone lurched against the parallel bars and it slid away from the wall and I fell backwards. I just reached down with one hand and held on. I just rolled down off of that parallel bar and when my feet came below me, I just let go. These are things that stayed with me all these years. The woodworking shop teacher was very, very good. So today I fool around with a little bit of woodwork. I just built a harvest hut for my grandchildren. It was a religious holiday and I built the harvest hut, a harvest hut is called "a succah." All of the principles he taught me came into play because of that. There was one other thing that is very important in my life today. In my eighth grade, my teacher's name was Mr. (Hockstool?) and he started to talk to the boys in the class and said, "You know you fellas should get interested in fishing." He said, "If you are interested, I can teach you how to build a good casting pole for maybe two dollars." So he gave us the information and I went down on Market Street where there were some sporting good stores. It was a male black calcutta bamboo pole (I added ferrules or guides) and I wound them with silk and painted them over with a little bit of varnish. The completed pole cost about two-fifty. I still fish and I caught a fish on that rod shortly after I used it off a pier in Atlantic City, and I have been fishing ever since. In fact, I was fishing two days ago. It has remained one of my main hobbies. I have very, very good memories about my grammar school days. The people taught me well and enabled me to get through high school and eventually to college. There is not very much I can say except that my older brother and sister went to the same school, and my three older cousins my father's brother children went there. So if you are the youngest of six, you keep hearing it about, "I remember when so and so was here," or something like that. That is all I can tell you. Is there any other aspect of the education that we were learning that you want to discuss?

KP: Let Mark get a question in edge wise.

MW: Well, this was not necessarily a question about education.

KP: Well, I guess one question I have with education is in high school, did you know you were going to college? Did you hope to go to college?

JS: I had, well, the Depression was on, but my older brother had gone to college. He went to college because he was a football player and that helped him go because he got a scholarship. He went to (Upsala?) College in East Orange, New Jersey, a school that has since gone out of business. However, I believe he came back for his sixtieth college reunion. He graduated South Side High School in Newark in 1932. He played on the football team and he got a scholarship to (Upsala?) to play football and in addition to that, he helped one of his history teachers with his excess paperwork and things like that. That also helped pay for his schooling. That is when the Depression was on. That work made it easier for him to go to school. In fact, it just came up. My brother was the left tackle on that team and the fellow that played left guard, a fellow named Louis Bucky Harris, came from Central High. They were buddies and remained buddies until recently. Bucky Harris just passed away the last two or three weeks and so it sort of reminded me of that. Sorry, I digressed. This brother of mine in 1937 or 1938, after he graduated, could not get a job. It was next to impossible and the city of Newark only gave examinations in history

and English about once every three or four years. They kept the list and there were people on the list and things like that. Also, there was such a thing as political nepotism and things like that which interfered, political connections, whatever you want to call it. He could not seem to get a job. My sister had gotten out of Central High about one or two years after him and she was having difficulty getting a job. She worked on Saturdays at Orbach's and she tried to get a job as a secretary. Five attorneys had an office and things were so tough, that they offered her five dollars a week, collectively. It was going to cost them each one dollar a week to have a secretary. Well, she felt that she could make three dollars on Saturday working at Orbach's and she did not need their five dollars to work all week. Pretty soon Orbach's took her on full time and that is what she did. All of these things played on my dad's mind and business was tough and so he said to me, "I do not see any sense in your going to college. Your brother cannot seem to get a job even though he has an education. A lot of guys that have good educations are doing anything they can to make a living. You know, I have always made a living." "I have worked hard but," he said, "you come down to the terminal with me and maybe your brother will be doing something else by then. I will get my bookkeeper to teach you a little bit about his bookkeeping or you take bookkeeping in school so you can be the bookkeeper and then you can help me with the sales. We will manage." That never worried me, as long as you had your health and you can work, and so I said "okay." That did not sit well with my mother. My grandfather, my maternal grandfather, who was in the U.S., had gone home to Russia where he had five daughters and one son. A lot of people did not educate their daughters, but not my grandfather. He sent all of his children to school. Boys and girls all had a good education. So, therefore, my mother believed in that and she felt that was not the right way. In those days, the husband in the family had a little more say in things than today. So I enrolled as a business major. South Side High School had three tracks. I am using the word track. It is not really the right word. There is a more modern word that they use. There was college prep., business and general education.

KP: What was the word they used?

JS: I do not know. I would say college prep that was your track, but it was not called a track. It was not referred to as a track, but you were in a college prep program, a general program would be more like it. Then there was the business administration program and civics. Now they also had two systems in math and two systems in sciences. There was a general science course for the business majors called Science A and then there was Science I for the college prep students. Then, in math, it was the same situation. You took Math I or Math A. I began and was taking business. I took JBT, Junior Business Training. I remember preparing a folder for that and I took the science course and English. There was no language involved and I went through the first thirty days and they gave me an exam. My general science teacher was a man named Arthur (Chudd?). As I was leaving the class after he had marked the papers and passed them out he sort of stopped me and said, "Mr. Shulman, do you want to remain a minute or so longer? I would like to talk to you." I stayed. I asked, "Is there a problem?" He said, "Why are you in this class?" I explained the same thing my dad had said. He said, "I want you to go home and tell your father that you can go to the best business school in this area for five months and learn everything that you are going to learn by going for four years at South Side in the business course." He said, "But if you do not take a college prep course now, and the opportunity is there for you to go to college, you will not be able to enter college. You have time enough to make a

switch now. You have only had thirty days. You go home and talk to your parents.” Well, my dad was not home, but when I went home and told my mother first, she was overjoyed. She had the teachers on her side. When my dad came home for supper it was usually late. He worked long days. He left the house very, very early in morning, before five o’clock. The market opened at two o’clock, also he was on the road all day. He would come back from Pennsylvania or up in the Hudson Valley looking for apples and he would have his supper between seven and eight. So he heard my story then and thought sounded logical. My mom decided I was going to change my course. In any event, I went back to school and I told my homeroom teacher, Ms. Murray, what my parents had said. She said, “Well, you go down to the office and see what they can arrange for you.” Well, it was too late to start any language because they had it for thirty days already. But they sent me down to the math department and one of the math teachers said she would meet with me after class every day for a certain amount of time and help me catch up. Then I caught up with the science class. I do not know if I caught up. I guess I did. I switched to a different type of science class. I do not remember if I had to switch the English class. But, nevertheless, I was in the college prep program and before the semester ended my math was up to where it should be and the only thing I was behind in was in languages. I entered high school on the first of February because it was the half year system in Newark. In the fall of the year, I went to the first language class, Latin. The teacher’s name was Dean Parsons. He had gone to Harvard. It is very unusual to have a Harvard graduate teaching high school Latin. Dean Parsons said the reason he came to Newark was because the salary scale in Newark was the highest on the East Coast. The only thing higher in New York were the principals. But, he said, “The salary scale for regular teachers was higher in Newark than any place else.” “Then,” he said to the class, “I want you to line up ‘A’ here and alphabetically all the way around.” I sat down behind a pretty girl and her name was Sherman and my name was Shulman and I would like you to meet my wife Lillian Sherman Shulman.

KP: You were both in Latin together?

JS: That is right. She was very good in Latin. She wrote a hell of a Latin pony. Take my word for it. You know what that is?

KP: No.

JS: Well, everybody had to translate so much every day. A lot of kids wrote it down. Some did not. They went home and translated it and tried to keep it in their head. The people that wrote it down, that was considered a pony, a translation. She had a hell of a Latin pony. Once in a while, I did not have the homework and she would slide the pony back to me. So we got to be good friends. Lillian said she did not slide it back to me, I looked over her shoulder. I do not think Dean Parsons would have let me look over her shoulder. Any way we took Latin together.

KP: Did you go to the prom and the proms and dances in high school?

JS: Yes. South Side High had dances on Friday afternoon after three o’clock. They were ten cents a piece. I sometimes paid for her or sometimes I met her inside.

KP: You mention that your father wanted you to learn bookkeeping, particularly in high school because your brother was having a hard time. You mentioned earlier you used to go riding with your father. When did you start working for your father?

JS: Really working, I suppose, I was about thirteen or fourteen when Easter vacation came or he would take me down to the produce terminal and I would help out. About the time I was thirteen, I have to digress slightly, my father during the summertime, when he was a road man, we bought a lot of produce out of Gloucester County, New Jersey, Glassboro, Swedesboro, Vineland and in through Newfield. He felt it was not any sense driving back and forth every day from Newark. They auctioned in Swedesboro around nine in the morning every morning and then the afternoon auction at Vineland opened up at one o'clock. The Glassboro auction sale opened up around twelve. Well, what he decided to do around 1932 was to remain in Atlantic City, and then speak to his partner by phone or tell him what he had bought. The driver carrying receipts to show exactly what he had bought. Each morning, he would travel from Atlantic City during the summertime over to Swedesboro and then back to either Glassboro or Vineland or Newfield. By doing that, I was only twelve at the time or so, I stayed in Atlantic City with my mother during the summer. That is how I got to know Atlantic City. I stayed there for two or three summers in a row. By the time I was thirteen or so, they were buying more merchandise. Business was a little better. I used to go along with my dad from Atlantic City every morning and help load the trucks. There would be a driver on each truck and I would help load each one and keep track of what he was buying and also look at the merchandise, too. You had to inspect it. The driver inspected, but by watching what he was doing you learned how to load and inspect. I went along with him during that whole period. In the evening, I would go swimming in Atlantic City in the ocean and when I had a day off I would go to Steel Pier. It was a terrific place for a kid to be. And some of the jazz bands that I was to learn about later when I was in high school, I started to see them down there in the Marne Ballroom at the end of the Steel Pier.

KP: I guess two questions. One is about Atlantic City, which you mentioned something of course about the beach and Steel Pier. And any other memories you have of Atlantic City which was very much a resort town?

JS: It was. Most of the people in Atlantic City that I seemed to bump into came out of Philadelphia, because it was very close. They would come down the Delsea Drive or the White Horse Pike or the Black Horse Pike. By the way, the Delsea Drive is actually Delaware to the sea. Originally that was the idea. I do not know if you are familiar with the Delsea Drive. It starts up just north of Philadelphia, and comes right into Atlantic City. I started to go fishing there from the beach. I started to do that. Then there was another pier, I have forgotten, it was a little farther south. It was not as good a pier. Eventually, that man bought the Steel Pier and changed its name. You could fish from it and I fished from that pier. I used to go swimming frequently. One of the men who drove a truck for my dad and his wife were quite friendly with my parents. They also rented a room at the same rooming house and, on weekends, he would come down. Occasionally, on a Saturday night, we would go fishing off a boat from six o'clock to ten o'clock a four hour period, out of an inlet at the north end of Atlantic City, it cost a dollar. It was a very nice place for a kid to spend their vacation. I used to like to get up early in the morning and ride my bike. I did not have a bicycle, but I would rent a bike and I would ride up and down the boardwalk on a bicycle. You could up until nine in the morning then you had to

get off. But you would ride from seven o'clock until nine. There were stores on the boardwalk that just specialized in having bicycles that they would rent out for people to ride until 9 AM. I also saw one incident that taught me something. Along the boardwalk, there were different men who were selling stuff, or some men who would guess your weight in order for you to win a prize or something like that. There was a fellow selling one day, and I was watching him trying to guess weights. That always intrigued me. Sort of a short heavy stocky guy came over and he deliberately started a fight with him. He had a heavy Italian accent. What I believe is this type of men, who sold at different spots, had to pay off and if they did not, they got the retribution. I stood there in amazement. I was a kid of about eleven. I saw this part of Atlantic City life in a small way but at its worst. He gave this guy a very quick decisive beating and knocked the man down. Nose bleeds and stuff like that. He said something to him, which to the best of my memory, was, "You have got to take care of things right," or something like that. Even in those days Atlantic City had its dark side that as a tourist we were not aware of. If you are observant, you understand and you see things and get to learn. Then when you are older you tend to sense things a little quicker than the average person, who has not seen that sort of thing. Other than that, Atlantic City had very, very fond memories for me, I want to tell you that right now.

KP: It sounds like your father had ... How many people worked in his business? It sounds like he was sending several trucks.

JS: Well, there were two trucks and two drivers each, and then there was my Uncle Phil, who helped in unloading and then there was two other men. I would say that there were at least three men to do the unloading. My brother helped in those days in the sales. His partner, Harry Katz, was more the salesman and these men did the delivering and things like that. They had this place in the Newark Farmers Market. I have come to realize more than ever before what a terrific thing he had done. He was the president of the Newark Farmers Market Produce Speculators Association. They were all little dealers located there. He was their spokesman. Now, here is a kid who come over at the age of fourteen and without any formal education became the leader of a group of about twenty five or thirty of his peers. My father became very friendly with various farmers that he worked with and they trusted him because they saw that he was a man of his word. A good example of that would be, when he had gone out of business. They went bankrupt a location at the end of Wright Street. There were people they owed money. My father's partners said, "Well, that is the way things are." My dad did not believe in that sort of thing. As he earned money, he paid every one of those debts for himself and his two partners.

KP: Which is really a nice thing to do.

JS: Well, I am telling you this and I'm including the bank which is very important thing to do. First, he paid the bank off. Then he could borrow again. Then he paid the other people off, that they had lost money with. That did not bother him that he did it. So as a result, it was a very strong cord I would say through his life that he was very, very honest. He became very good friends with many farmers. He had one particular farmer who he represented, Edward M. Paxson in New Hope, Pennsylvania. I do not know if you know where that is. New Hope, Pennsylvania is opposite Stockton, New Jersey on the Delaware River. This fellow was a peach and apple grower and his fields faced to the east. It was called Fairview Orchards. I once took my wife back up there many years later. He marketed all his merchandise. Not far from where

this farm was located there was a school called the National Farm School. It was a school started by some Jewish fraternal organizations to inculcate young Jewish immigrants and boys to learn agriculture. Today I believe the school is a community college because of things my dad told Ed Paxson about marketing and packing produce. He told people at the farm school about my dad. The school invited my dad to come speak to the students. Whether he was going to speak about going into the produce business or how he handled himself or whatever, I cannot tell you. But this much I know, the fact that he was invited to come over and talk to those students. For him to come over there was a very big thing. Years later, I regretted not going with him because I could have gone with him had I asked him when. He told me what he was going to do that day.

KP: It would have been nice to hear him speak.

JS: That's right. It certainly would have. He spoke to the boys. He came home that night at the supper table, he was always teaching us at the supper table. He talked about some of the things, but I do not remember exactly. He said, "I answered their questions." We'll let it go at that.

KP: My sense of the farmer ... Your father was Jewish and most of the farmers were not.

JS: I would say all of them were not.

KP: Because there were some Jewish farmers particularly after World War II that got set up in South Jersey.

JS: There were some farmers in South Jersey. Some of them were set up. There was one in Cream Ridge. This was set up in the 1930s already. There was one in Hightstown that was set up in 1934 and partly supported the U.S. government. The town was called Roosevelt. Some of the kids who grew up in that cooperative town there, went to college with me. They went to school down there. Lillian, what is that artist's name? Is it Ben (Shawn?) Ben Shawn had a studio down there. I believe his family may have been in that area. So those were two. The bulk of my father's trade was with people of Yankee, Italian or German extraction.

KP: In the early 1920s there was a fairly active Klan movement particularly in a lot of large parts of rural New Jersey and your father being Jewish and traveling in these areas, I am curious if your father ever mentioned that.

JS: No. My father never seemed to mention that and never ran into it either. My father never talked about that and I believe he would have mentioned it to us if he had run into it. I do not remember that at all. I search my memory, and I do not believe he ever discussed the Klan. My father said that he thought there may have been some underlying anti-Semitism in some areas, but he said he learned how to handle it because it was not overt or blatant.

KP: So it sounds like he did not experience much overt ...

JS: No. That is correct. I do not know if I should mention that down in Texas what we ran into it. The point I am making is I do not remember that. But, there was constant friction. There was

more of that in those days than there is today. I believe people are progressing a lot further. I do not believe in my own mind that he ever mentioned the Klan and then causing him any problem whatsoever.

MW: Did you every run into any anti-Semitism in school?

JS: Not in grammar school. I went to a very mixed grammar school. I do not remember that. In high school, I do not think there was very much. The high school I went to South Side High School 1942 was about twenty-five or thirty percent black, sixty percent that remained I would say twenty-five to thirty percent were Jewish, then there would be quite a big proportion would be Italian or Irish. It was a very mixed group. Would that be about right, Lil? Yes, my wife confirmed that with me. We both went there. I did not think so. I knew that later on in the Army, I saw and heard of a lot more.

MW: Were you and your family every into politics at all?

JS: No. We are not very political people. We may express our opinion amongst ourselves, but there was no one in my family that I can ever remember who ran for a public office or any along those lines whatsoever, but they were aware of politics. They were fully aware. It was discussed at the table. One of the first things I ever remember being fully aware of was my father coming back from a business trip up into the Hudson Valley, where he would be buying apples in that area. That was the area that Roosevelt came from. If you have possibly read the book No Ordinary Years by Doris Kearns Goodwin. I think it's mentioned in that book that Roosevelt's neighbors considered him a traitor to his class. Some of the farmers mentioned exactly that to my father. They were all staunch Republicans up in the Hudson Valley. Those of them that discussed politics, my dad always said, "Business and politics do not usually mix." I do not bring politics up. If someone says something I sort of listen, but I do not express my opinion. You never know what side of the fence he is on. He said, "He might have something you want to buy from him." So just leave it alone.

KP: You mentioned on your pre-interview survey that your father was a republican and your mother was a democrat.

JS: Well, he was more conservative and he thought in more terms of business. My mother was more ... I would not call my mother a socialist. She was not a socialist, but she felt that poorer people needed more help and that she did not see it forthcoming from the government for the poor people. She felt that should have been done. If you are a person that has been on his own his whole life and you work for everything you got and you saw somebody getting a handout you would say, "Well, why doesn't he get out there and really bust his butt?" Carry ice to the fourth floor for a nickel. That is what you like to hear.

MW: Did they both support Roosevelt? Your parents?

JS: Yes, I believe that they both did. I do not know what you will hear from many other people, but anybody who was not in the really money class or they were particularly isolationists or a Christian frontier, pretty well recognized that Roosevelt had done a lot of good for the country,

especially in those six or eight years leading up to World War II. He was more of a manipulator than any of them any suspected. I knew a little bit about him having read other peoples' writings about him. Doris Kearns Goodwin sort of collated it and brought it all together.

MW: So did the New Deal help you at all?

JS: Yes. It helped me. One program. Mrs. Roosevelt had a program. You might laugh about it. I did not have too much spending money when I was going to school. If I worked down at the terminal my father gave me some, but some of the fellas said to me, "Hey, you want to make five dollars a month? Well, sign up for the NYA, the National Youth Administration." So I signed up and they said, "Go down to see Cavey, Mr. (Cavallerro?)." He was the head of the athletic department at South Side. Another student came in at the same time, a fellow named Danny McGee. So he said to Danny and me, "Look you guys, sweep the gym every morning and make sure you are here about seven o'clock and you clear out about eight o'clock." "When you have to be in homeroom," he said, "clean out the waste basket in our office." Well, the waste basket ... There were three offices cut up or two offices cut up out of a room slightly smaller than this so there were three waste baskets there. Danny and I swept the gym with a big wide broom and cleaned up the waste baskets and then they had showers, but no one ever used them so we never paid any attention to that. After a while Cavey said to us one day, "You know, I think you fellas should come back on Friday afternoons and mop the floor." So we got five dollars a month for doing that. Well, to me five dollars, I bought a pair of shoes. That shows you how far your money went. Nowadays, the same pair of shoes I paid five dollars for is probably close to sixty or seventy dollars, inflation. Whatever you want to call it.

KP: Were you involved in the Conservation Corps?

JS: No, the triple C, Civilian Conservations Corps, I was not involved in that in any way, shape or form. I went to high school and when I got out of high school, I worked that whole spring and summer and I made enough money that summer to go to college and I applied to Rutgers that fall. And about the time I applied to Rutgers, I also enlisted in the Air Force.

MW: Why did you think about choosing Rutgers?

JS: Well, one of the reasons is it was close enough to home where I could commute. Number two, it offered a course in agriculture that I was interested in, and I could afford it. It had a good reputation and I knew all about the school. Of course, I also took an examination for a scholarship, but I did not win one. My wife did.

KP: The state scholarship?

JS: Yes. She won the state scholarship, and I did not. Nevertheless, they accepted me and they did one thing which they did not usually do (Dr. Helyer was the head of agriculture at that time). If you were from the city and did not live on a farm, you had to spend the summer before you began college working on a farm and you had to attest to that. Well, I told them that I had been on and off farms all of my life and I explained the type of business my father was in. I told them that whole summer I was actually my father's buyer. In addition to that, I drove the truck too. I

was a buyer and my cousin Morris was my helper. And we loaded the trucks together. He would pass the merchandise to me and I would stack it up. So they waived that. Some men might have had to do it between their freshman and sophomore years. But they waived that for me.

MW: You entered the school around 1942?

JS: Yes I entered in late September, 1942.

MW: Do you remember where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

JS: Absolutely. One of the men who was with me was a younger brother of a very good friend of mine. I had met him or spoken to him at least a dozen times in the last forty or fifty years, and invariably, on one or two of these occasions, it comes up in our conversation. What had happened was my father besides handling produce sold Christmas trees wholesale. That is, he would bring rail cars down from New Brunswick, Canada or from Newfoundland, but mostly from New Brunswick. He had certain farmers up there that he had learned to trust and they would ship these bundles of Christmas trees all tied up and each rail car bore the sizes and the count he wanted. The Christmas trees came in bundles. They could be singles which are usually bigger trees or they could be doubles or threes, according to what you ask for. My father liked to get into the season early so the trade knew that he had Christmas trees and that he specialized in that. He had sold a lot of Christmas trees when he was on Mulberry Street. That is going back into the early 1920s. He said to me around December 6th which was a Saturday, "The New Jersey Central of railroad, (which is just out on the edge of the Newark Farmers Market) had a notified me that they will place the first car of trees that came in from New Brunswick on the team track, "I wonder if you would like to go down tomorrow morning," he said "and lets break the car". Break the car means to start to unload it. So I agreed. He said, "Tomorrow morning about nine o'clock, you pick up Uncle Phil or," he said, "I will tell you what, I will pick up Uncle Phil, but," he said, "it would be a good idea if you had someone else help you." Well, even though I went to South Side and a friend of mine was a basketball player, at Weiquahic High Seymour (Fleischer?) and it was through him I got to know a lot of kids up there because I would occasionally travel with him. There was a little luncheonette where they all hung out across the street from the high school called the Orange and Brown. I even know the fellow that owned it. So, I took the truck and went up near the Orange and Brown and figured I would catch up with one of the guys. Maybe if they wanted to make a few bucks, they would help me unload the car with my Uncle Phil. Seymour's younger brother, Harold, was there and I said, "Hey, Harold, how about giving me a hand this morning? You will make a day's pay. I have to break a car of Christmas trees." Now Harold's father was in the exact same business as my father. He had a stall in the same market. His mother, Harold Fleischer's mother's husband, had passed away and she married a man who also had two or three children of his own. Anyway there were eight in the family. A family of good kids. His name was Max Kivitz. Harold knew the business a little bit. We were good friends. He said, "Sure, I'll come along with you. So we road down to the Newark Farmers Market which is located at the bottom of the Ironbound District, below the old Ballantine Brewery. I lined the truck up and started to break the car ... I cannot remember if it was a closed automobile box car as my dad usually ordered or occasionally the Christmas trees came in cars that were open flat cars, open gondolas with big trees posts in

pockets on the side. Then they ran wires across it to hold the stakes together. I cannot remember what it was. Something tells me it was an automobile box car, because my dad said they come in better condition that way. My dad was parked maybe about thirty feet from the car, sitting and reading the Jewish paper as he always did on Sunday morning. He liked to read a great deal of the Times. He was reading the paper with the radio on as we broke the car. I think we had about half a load on the truck when he rolled his window down and called to us, "Say you two, Jerry and Harold, come over here I want you to listen to this." This is going to effect you more than me. Because you see my oldest brother and sister were already born before the U.S. went into World War I and so my father was exempt, however, he knew that the age that we were, we were prime candidates.

KP: Did your brother get drafted in the 1940 draft?

JS: No. I would like to finish one part. We walked over to the car and my dad turned the radio up and we heard about Pearl Harbor. If you know that there are five hours difference, it was a one o'clock in Newark at that time, we will call it noon, and it was seven o'clock in Hawaii when the Japanese had attacked them. We just stood there and listened and I will tell you the truth after we listened for a while, we went back to unloading the car of Christmas trees. That is part of what life is. It is going to come at you, you know it, but we continued unloading the car of Christmas trees. We put up a whole truckload and sealed the car up again, and put the truck away at the stall in the market and went on home. I am sorry I interrupted you.

KP: That is okay. Did your older brother ... In the 1940?

JS: No my brother was not ... May have been eligible for the draft, however, he was married and had one child.

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

KP: You were saying how your brother had a family.

JS: Well, that may be the very first draft and that is something that might have had to do with his age. I am not certain. However, he had taken the examination for history and he came in third on the list. Newark had a very peculiar system. The written test only counted for thirty percent of the total grade. The oral, which was given by the members of the board, and some were politicians, counted for seventy percent. Now, anybody who has any kind of sense about them knows that if the written only counts for thirty and the oral, which is a matter of discretion, is seventy percent of the final grade, that just does not sit well. That is not the way it should be. Nevertheless, they also had the discretion that if they have three positions open, which is what they had, they have the right to pick the three candidates that they want out of the first five. So they picked one, two and four. My brother was fit to be tied. Here he was, four out of five years out of college. He had gone back to school at Panzer College in East Orange which was also a Phys. Ed. School. He had taken playground instruction. The city of Newark had an excellent system in those days. When the school closed at three o'clock, the basement area where the gym

was usually located, in one or two rooms, and the playground outside came under the guidance of playground teachers. There was usually a woman that took care of the girls and one or two men that took care of the boys. There was a regular system of the leagues, also. I played in them myself. It was an excellent system for keeping the kids off of the street and this went on until nine o'clock at night. They had lights on the playground so that you could play basketball or softball or football and there were kid's games. There was also type of pool on a square table where you hit little round discs somewhat similar to a checker. There were all sorts of games, and in the gym itself, as I said, there were basketball leagues. I played in one of them. We were juniors, I believe, because intermediates were a little older than us. Then there were seniors, and below us were the peewees. So this was a regular system that was excellent, but it did not pay that much. So now, to finally pass the exam and not be given a position, he was furious. He went down there and I think he exploded. At that very time, he saw an advertisement some place along the line or someone told him about the USO. I do not know whether most people understand, but the USO is composed of three organizations: the Catholic Youth Organization, the Salvation Army representing the Protestant denomination and the Jewish Welfare Board representing Jewish people. A big USO club usually had one or two of these members. If it was a smaller club, one member from one of the denominations ran it. Anyway, they offered him a job which paid fairly well down in Baltimore, Maryland to start. He took the job immediately because it paid fairly decent as compared to what he could get around Newark. It also gave him the opportunity of getting ahead and so my brother moved to Baltimore, Maryland. If he were even eligible for the draft, that would have taken him out of it. He stayed in Baltimore for about a year and a half and a spot opened up in Charleston, South Carolina. He moved to Charleston in 1942 or '43 and he has been there ever since. He lives there now.

KP: So that was pretty significant for your older brother.

JS: Oh, absolutely. It changed his life around completely.

KP: What did he end up doing in Charleston?

JS: Well, the thing of it is, if you are familiar with how the USO worked, the people who were the representatives of the organization got the community to help. He asked the Jewish community as best he could to provide people to help out at dances, or young women to come and dance with the servicemen or for their parents to make sandwiches that would be needed at a dance. Also, for servicemen who needed the services of a Rabbi or something of a religious nature, it was his job to locate the person in town who could help them out. He got to working so well with the community that when the war ended, the Jewish community of Charleston asked my brother to help them reopen a Jewish community center that had been closed since before the war. They reopened it and he became the executive director. It was very successful. He worked very hard at it, and after about fifteen years or so, sometime in the 1960s, they went out and bought a twenty acre plot on what was on the outskirts of Charleston at that time. Over the years they put up a tremendous complex that today includes senior living quarters, a big gym with a sauna, and of course all of those things that would go into a Jewish community center. In addition, he was the local representative for the Southeast for the Jewish Welfare Board. He was on the National Board of O.R.T. That is an organization that has to do with the education of young Jewish men for jobs and job training. He was on the national board. He was very, very

active. In fact, he won an award from the Rotarians of the State of South Carolina for his efforts. He was a very hard worker. He still goes into work everyday. Of course, he is no longer the director. He has a somewhat semi-official position. He works about two hours every day. Something to still keep him occupied. My brother is eighty-three now. That is the best I can tell you about him. (He worked in mental health Red Cross blood banks and all other facets of Charleston's community work. In 1998 when he left to live in Atlanta, Georgia, Mayor Reilly declared a day, "Nat Shulman Appreciation Day.")

KP: You had family still in Europe when things were heating up in the 1930s. Did you maintain any contact?

JS: Absolutely. Absolutely, my parents did. All through the late 1920s and 1930s, my aunt, Morris' mother, and my mother would, every month or so, put together some money they saved out of their cooking and household money and they would send it off to Europe in hopes of getting someone else to come to the U.S. Two sisters moved to Israel in 1934. An uncle of mine and his wife and three children lived in the same small village as did my grandfather and my grandmother in addition an aunt of mine, who was a nurse, and married, they all remained at home in Poland. That is after World War I that area that was on the Russian boarder became part of Poland, Eastern Poland. Unfortunately, they were all killed in the Holocaust. I do not believe they were sent to concentration camps. I believe that they were killed right in the village where they were. The reason I say this is because after World War II ended, my aunt, Mrs. Dolinko, brought a first cousin of hers over with a little girl who was born during the war. When she came over, she told the story that she lived in the same village with them and her husband had gone to another village. She was pregnant at the time and she went looking for her husband. She could not find him in that village so she headed home, and, on her way home, the people who were fleeing the village stopped her and said, "Do not go back. There is nothing. Everything has been destroyed there." So she fled with them into Russia, behind the Russian lines, and therefore we know that is when my mother's family were all killed. My voice does not hold up very well because I have been a produce salesman on the telephone since 1948. It was my first job after graduating college. If you sit on the telephone sometimes eight, ten or twelve hours a day, talking and trying to convince people to buy your merchandise, something has to give. My vocal cords get dried very easily so that is why I constantly sip water. I used to keep a glass of water on my desk for that reason all the time.

KP: There was a big debate in the United States in the late 1930s and particularly in the 1940s on whether the United States should get involved. You mention your father did not often talk politics as a custom, but what were his thoughts at the dinner table about what the United States should do.

JS: Our family was all hoping for the defeat of Germany. They would not say we want to be in the Army or we will go ahead and we will join the Army or something like that, but they knew something had to be done. We already knew because my family read constantly and were intelligent. They were involved in the charitable work for Jewish organizations that sent things to Europe for Jewish families. So we were fully aware of what was going on. We were anxious to help, but they did not say we should go to war. But if leadership stated a position where they would have fell in, they would have followed right behind that. There was a great deal of talk in

this country of people like Father Coughlin from Detroit and other people. Christian firsters and people like Colonel Lindbergh, who had been to Germany and Berlin, and come back and said that we do not have to get involved. It was their war over there. That absolutely was an incorrect position to them.

KP: The reason I asked was there was a fairly active anti-war sentiment in New Jersey.

JS: There was yes.

KP: There was an organization, the Minute Men. I am curious if you knew anything about the Minute Men in Newark as a group of Jews who had basically broken up ...

JS: I know the names of some of the men because I have heard about it. I was just a teenager at the time, but these men were people who were active physically and so, on a couple of occasions at meetings, I think they even armed themselves with baseball bats. And they went in and they broke these meetings up. Absolutely, that is correct. I had heard about them yes.

KP: You mentioned some relatives who lived in Palestine before the war. Was your family Zionist?

JS: Yes. We were. Especially my aunt, Morris' mother. When she came to the U.S., as I indicated before, it was her idea just to visit with her sister and then she was going on to Palestine. When she lived in Poland or that area was called Russia at the time, she was a Zionist. She was somewhat at odds with my grandfather who was a more religious orthodox person and not as much of a free thinker as she was. She became a member of a young Zionist organization and her group immigrated to Israel to form a kibbutz. She had intentions of going with them, but she came over to see her sister and while she was here in the U.S. ... And I did not think I would digress to something like this but at that time Morris' father had immigrated to Palestine in 1920. He had lived in Palestine and he lived on a kibbutz and it was a very depressed economic area. Their agricultural development was very minimal and another aspect of it is the part that caused my uncle, Paul Dolinko, his problem. The first land that the Arabs were willing to sell to the Jews were the poorest lands, not poorest in fertility, but poorest in quality. So if there was nice clear hillsides, they would not sell that. They would only sell the low valley areas where there were swamps. So most of these kibbutzim in the '20s at their start spent their time clearing these swamps. While clearing these swamps my cousin Morris' father got malaria. When he recovered from the malaria, he saw that he could not stay there. He could not continue to work under those conditions and the economics in the country was just like we think of third world countries today. There was no money for development and he wrote to some uncles he had in Newark and asked them to forward him the cost of passage and that he would repay them when he came to the U.S. after he went to work. He came to Newark because his was uncle there, two uncles actually. He went to work. His father's trade in Russia was a delicatessen manufacturer. He knew how to pickle corned beef and make hot dogs, salami and bologna. He learned that as a boy, so that is what he first did when he came here, and worked at that trade. Then along the line he met my aunt and when she was telling him about her plans to go to Palestine, he told her all about how good things were there and he dissuaded her from going and eventually convinced her to marry him.

KP: Because your aunt sounds like she was very idealistic.

JS: She is to this very day. Senator Frank Lautenberg was going to speak at the synagogue that my aunt and uncle attend. My uncle unfortunately has since passed away. But, visiting them at that time was about a sixteenth cousin of mine, who was a journalist from Israel. He was born and brought up in Israel and he wrote for the newspaper Ha'aretz at the time. He was visiting with them and since Lautenberg was speaking at the synagogue, my uncle was going down to hear him and so was my fifteenth cousin Yo'av Karney and my aunt refused to go. She said, "There is no reason for a man to mix politics and religion. If he wants to speak to people about politics, he should do it at a place for politics, but do not bring it into the synagogue." Well, she considered herself an unreconstructed socialist and so my cousin Yo'av Karney wrote this and put it into his newspaper article that showed up in the newspaper in Israel Ha'aretz. All of those members who are still alive in that kibbutz in Northern Israel read it, and my aunt got phone calls and letters from her old friends about this "unreconstructed socialist." I am sorry to digress but I think for me ...

KP: Oh, no. It is a wonderful story.

JS: That is true. My aunt, may she live to 120, is just as tough today as she was when she was younger.

KP: You were in Newark during the early months of the war, but still you were seventeen. How did the war change Newark and your high school and your local community?

JS: Well, one of the first things involved the Prudential. The Prudential Insurance Company had just built a new building on Washington Street. They were going to expand their offices. They needed more space. Well, the government came in and either made a deal with Prudential or they just said, "We need this building," and they appropriated it. They put up the ODB, The Office of Dependency Benefit, and that opened up a lot of jobs for women in Newark, including my wife. During the summertime, they hired high school and college kids who could handle the work that needed to be done. Also, I am going to digress since you asked about anti-Semitism. The Prudential Insurance Company was a large company in this country at that time. They did not hire Jews in their offices. They used Jews as sales personnel out amongst the Jewish community, but as far as supervisors or people who worked in offices, they did not hire Jews. I knew a woman who never told anyone that she was Jewish and she worked there. She was the older sister of a very good friend of my sister. This ODB was a federal government agency. They did not care who they hired and were not concerned about your religious background. This opened up a lot of jobs for Jewish people, for black people, for any nationality that may have been kept out of work. As I said, Newark, in general, I would say being in an industrial area benefited from that it was a busy area. Of course, as I said, the ODB was just tremendous, people came as far as Pennsylvania to take jobs in Newark and work at the ODB, especially women. It was the start of women coming into the work force in a big way.

KP: Do you remember the blackout drills?

JS: My wife laughs about it because it's true. It did exist. They had blackout drills. In fact, once they told everybody that the when blackout existed you had to put up black shades. Most people put something to cover the edges so no light would creep in from the sides. I remember how it effected me one day. When I graduated high school, it was January. So my father had not opened his store yet because it was too cold and snowy and there was not much work. "So," he said, "look see if you can get a job for a while until Easter. When there is more local produce coming in, I will have more work for you." I went down to the unemployment office who hire an eighteen-year-old, who you know is going into the Army. Who is going to give him a decent enough job? But I got a job at the (Conmar?) Zipper Factory which used to be in the old Waterman Plant. It's on the east side of the Pennsylvania Railroad and as you go north along MacCarter Highway, you can see it on the right.

KP: You can still see the burned down building from the train. The Conmar?

JS: The Conmar building burnt down?

KP: Yes, several years ago.

JS: I did not know. I worked in that Conmar building. The job was a menial sort of job, repetitive, and then there was a little bit of a lab nearby where they mixed the paints. What they had to do, they were making a lot of zippers for women's clothing. Now there is a ribbon that the metal is attached to. What you are going to do is cover that metal, the little metal pieces, with a color that would match that ribbon. This fellow in the back that was mixing the paints was a pre-med student and he was waiting to go back to college or be called to the Army, but he was being deferred because he was going to med school and they needed doctors. I think he had some college already and he was working in that lab in the back mixing the paints. After he had been there two weeks he was called up someday or another and he had to leave. So because I was a high school graduate, they asked me did I want to mix the paints. I was moved over to that section. The young lady who was the floor person on my floor, the shop steward, said to me, "You know you have been here thirty days now and you have to join the union." I said, "Join the union?" She said, "Yes. You know we have a union here." I was making fourteen dollars a week. I think that is what the salary was. She said, "You will probably get sixteen dollars plus you have to pay the dues and everything else." I said, "Pay union dues for sixteen dollars a week? When I work down at the produce terminal I get forty dollars a week." They said, "Well, if you are not going to join the union, you are not going any further and they will let you go." I was trying factory work just to see what it was like and I had thirty days of it, and that was enough. I decided to leave the position, and I did.

KP: You would go to college before going into the military. Had you thought of going into the military? It sounds like you were waiting for your number to be called.

JS: No. I never signed up for the draft or maybe I did. It is possible. I may have had to sign up, but I decided I was going to enlist because I wanted to be in the Air Force. So for that reason, I felt that I did not want to be drafted. If you are drafted, they put you where they want you and that is all part of the reason I enlisted. I believe my discharge papers show that I enlisted in September 1942. That is when I enlisted in the Air Force.

MW: You enlisted in 1942 and you went to Rutgers in 1942.

JS: Yes. I entered Rutgers in late September. School began sometime around the twentieth in those days. I have some opinions about schools that open so early. Schools should not begin the day after Labor Day. It should begin later. There should be no month off in the middle of the semesters and school should end as it used to end. The people who take the time, business people who train college students to work in the summertime are short changed. The way school is now they have to leave at least a week or ten days before school begins to get things ready. The best time for the businessman, who has to utilize these students in places like that the sea shore areas, lose them before Labor Day weekend, and that week or two.

MW: Of course, in the South, they often start the second or third week of August, which is even worse.

JS: I cannot believe that.

KP: What was it like to go Rutgers in '42. What were your impressions?

JS: It was more advanced or a better caliber of individuals than the high school I went to, except that the caliber of the students matched up with those in the CP courses that I took at South Side High in Newark. There were quite a few, there were eight or ten of us that came down from South Side. To go into Rutgers at that time. I was not prepared well enough. I know I had to take the remedial English course that they give. You have to be able to pass a grammar examination, and then if you do not pass the grammar examination you cannot advance in English at Rutgers, which I think is very important. I believe it helped improve the way I handle my English. They asked us when we came into school not to enter into the field that we were going to, but to join the ERC course. It was an emergency course. I cannot tell you what the letters stood for, but ERC or Engineering something or other. They actually made us take a course in engineering drawing. We had to take math and all the other courses, but there were no courses actually in agriculture itself. This, they felt, because we were going off to service, whatever training we got in this ERC course would be helpful in our military work. One other thing at that time, the swimming coach and I think the diving coach was Jim Reilly. We were in the pool one day during Phys. Ed. and he said, "If you fellows tell me you cannot swim, I want to teach you two simple strokes that may save your life if you wind up in the water." He taught us a side stroke where you stroke sideways and bring your feet together like this and then, after you are tired, you go on your back and you utilize your hands and your legs and rest. "Because the Australian crawl is a fine thing if you are racing," he said, "but if you are out there in the water in the ocean, you are not in a hurry. You just want to stay alive." I want to tell you I never had that happen to me, but it stood me in good stead in my swimming. I never forgot that over the years. One of the things you can take away from school.

KP: Why did you choose the Air Force?

JS: Oh, as I said, I chose the Air Force because I thought incidental to my buying produce for my father, I also drove a truck. They forced me to join the union because I was taking a man's

place. I was only eighteen at the time. I used to do 1200 miles a week on the road. I would make five trips a week to South Jersey and there was no Jersey Turnpike in those days. I would go from Newark down 1 and 9 to the circle south of New Brunswick and take 130 all the way down south of Camden and go into a little town called Swedesboro. I would buy whatever produce I needed there and I used a broker over in Landesville, Johnny Viana of Viana Brothers and Melaranchi. He was a buying broker and he bought cucumbers and peppers for me over there. I bought tomatoes and things like that over in Swedesboro. I would drive across to Lanoisville and then I would come North on route 206 back into Bordentown and then to Newark on 130 and 1 and 9. Well, you do that and figure it cannot be that hard to fly an airplane so that is what I felt I could do. I felt it was better life, too, than slogging in the mud. If you were going to get killed, it would be over with quick.

KP: You went to Rutgers for a semester. What did you think of college?

JS: I thought I was going to go into some sort of agricultural field that would be helpful to farmers. Like the extension service. I had no idea where it would lead. Maybe some sort of research. I was not sure.

KP: You were pretty open-minded?

JS: Yes I was.

KP: You did not think you were just going to college and going back to your father's stand?

JS: No. Absolutely not. I had no intention of doing that. That is absolutely the truth. I had no intention of going back into produce. I was more concerned about learning more about agriculture because I had a curiosity about it. I saw all of these crops and I was on farms and I thought well maybe I could get into some aspect of it that could be profitable. I love going out on farms and seeing crops growing and being harvested and packed. And that is where I thought I would find a place for myself. As I said, I was just a freshman. I remember one incident which was somewhat humiliating, but I learned to live with it. I think it was one course in Ag economics. The professor's name was Dr. Henry Keller. He was world renowned. I was trying to think of his name. At that time, I was driving every day of the week, and, when I entered college, I just cut off working. That was all there was to it. About a week before, or maybe three or four weeks before, I bumped into one of the other young men in the market, Goldberg I think it was, Eddie, the youngest boy. They were mostly in the potato business and we were not heavy into potatoes. He said that the government was buying number small size potatoes and dehydrating them at a plant in South Jersey and were shipping them overseas. That way it took less weight and it would keep better. They were talking about this in class and I brought this up. Well, the professor he turned to one of the boys in the class named, Perrine. If you are in agriculture in New Jersey or have been there, the Perrine family is a very old potato family in Hightstown or Robinsville in through there. He said, "Perrine, does your father know anything about dehydrating potatoes?" Perrine did not know anything about it and he said, "No, sir." He said, "I do not know where the hell you heard that junk." You know it bothered the hell out of me that the professor would actually speak that way. Because he did not know about it and therefore it just did not amount to anything. I would like to tell you right now after I finally got a

job after college and for the first four or five years on the job, and then at my own business, eighty-five percent of the merchandise sold was potatoes. I got to know an awful lot about them.

MW: Did you consider joining any fraternities or clubs?

JS: I thought I might join the commuters club, but I have never been really fraternity minded or things like that. It helped also that I had a girlfriend. I did not have to go running around.

MW: You had a pretty steady girlfriend. You commuted?

JS: I did for freshman year. I commuted about two months and I found I was not getting the work done. In fact, I had never taken chemistry in high school and I took chemistry in my freshman year. I had a little trouble at the very beginning. There was a friend of the family who came out of Atlantic City, who was also a scholarship student and he said to me, "The chemistry exam is first thing, first quarter of the semester and we will work together in the library. I know some guys from Atlantic City with a room up in Winants. They have an extra bed hidden in that little suite that they're in. I know they will put you up and then you go to class in the morning." Well, Mel Weinstock and I, we worked on my chemistry and I went up on the third floor of Winants. And I met three or four fellows from Atlantic City. One of whom is still my friend today. His name is Irv Baker. He was a class of 1944 or 1945. He is now class of 1947. I slept there and took the class and did pretty well. Eventually, I gave up commuting and I lived in a private house right near the gym. We paid three dollars a week for rent. I bought a five dollar lunch tickets and I ate my meals at Winants.

KP: Did you go to chapel the semester you were here?

JS: That was obligatory. Everybody went to chapel once a week I think Dean Metzger presided.

KP: What did you think of Dean Metzger you were only here for a semester. He has often left quite an impression on those I have interviewed.

JS: To tell you the truth since I was Jewish I sort of half shut my ears. I do not know. I had enough to do as it is. I would like to tell you about commuting from Newark in those days and then you will understand why.

KP: Did you take the train or did you drive?

JS: No. To drive you had to have a car. I had to be out of the house by six AM and I walked two long blocks to catch the forty-eight bus that took me to town. I lived in Hillside, walked into Newark, two long blocks to catch the number forty-eight bus. I had to be at the railroad station before seven o'clock because that was when the express left. If you did not catch the express, you caught the local and that got into New Brunswick a little before eight o'clock. You were going to be late for class. You made sure you got the seven o'clock. My future wife, she made the seven o'clock and she went out to NJC and I came over here. You got up early in the morning. When I got home, where I lived there was a small vegetable store owner who would go down to the market each evening to buy produce, and on many occasions, I would catch a lift

down with him and help my father. Then, when he got ready to go home, because my father only went down in the evening, I would ride back with him. So I missed out on some of my homework.

KP: Before I forget to ask how did the war effect your father's business? He had rationing?

JS: It annoyed him very much and I will tell you why. When he went to buy merchandise farmers wanted over the ceiling price and they would say, "See that dog over there. I will sell him to you for 100 dollars. I know he will not follow you, so you do not have to worry about it."

KP: To get around regulations?

JS: To get around regulations. Or he told me, he would be buying produce at the auction and then, as you were headed north on say 206 or you were headed along on 130, if they were short of produce at Fort Dix, their buyer would come out and commandeer the load. Then you had to take it in and sell it to them at the ceiling price.

KP: They would station ...

JS: They had men out buying if they were short. All of these things entered into it. My father, after about a year or so, got annoyed at it because he said, "How would it look if I charged over the ceiling price and my name showed up in the newspaper? My son's in the Army fighting the war." He closed his place up and he went to work for General Instrument.

KP: What did he do?

JS: Pushing a broom. He only did it for the very reason I am telling you. He just did not like that business.

KP: Did he go back?

JS: Yes. He did. He went back afterwards, but I think he lost some of his trade. From there until 1950, his business tended to get less and less. He worked at it say six months of the year and six months of the year he did something else just to keep occupied, but there was only mom and him at home. He managed and that is what counted. They owned their own home and all that. He just said, "That is it." The kids were on their own. That is what it amounts to.

KP: It's interesting that you talk about the commandeering because I interviewed someone who was responsible for commandeering chickens in Delaware.

JS: That's right.

KP: They simply did what they did in previous wars which was commandeered and give you a receipt.

JS: That is right, and that bothered my father to no end. He said, "Where do I stand? I have no rights. If I want to buy something I have to pay over the price and then I have got to charge someone over the price. That is illegal it's against the law. With you being in the Army flying overseas my gosh I do not want that." In fact, we had a little discussion about it after the war when I came home.

KP: Did your mother work at all.

JS: No. My mother may have helped out in service during the first year. I have a photo of her at that interval. I do not know if she knitted. She might have gone and worked for charities by selling at rummage sales and helping raise money to send overseas. For instance, Hebrew Immigration Aids Society or something like that. That is the kind of work that she would do.

KP: When you started college did you have any hope that you would finish and then go to the war?

JS: No. I absolutely did not. We realized the size of the war and the war effort. Do not forget, we were fighting on two fronts and I knew that we would have to go one place or the other. I remember one night in the barracks, one fellow saying, "I want to go to the South Pacific, I want to fight the Japs. What about you, Shulman? What do you think?" I said, "I want to go in the other direction. I have very good reason for it."

KP: You enlisted in September. When did you get called up?

JS: I got called up in April 1943 and I was sent to a classification center in Nashville, Tennessee.

KP: Were you in school when you were called?

JS: Yes. I was.

KP: So you did not finish that semester?

JS: No. I did not.

KP: Before talking to you about your Air Force experience, it must have been strange to be in college in '42 or '43. People would disappear. Someone just would not be there. It became difficult to maintain a social calendar and other things.

JS: That is right. Then they are gone. Well, I have to say this much, the university tried to maintain an even keel. They had a Christmas dance at which people were dressed very formally you know. I remember going to that one in particular.

KP: You really had a good time dating your prospective bride, your girlfriend.

JS: Well, it was my girlfriend at the time. Those days, you did not talk about marriage the way people do today I believe. Not at age eighteen. I will give you an example. I have always worked to pay my way. Somebody said to me, "They are looking for people to work out here at Camp Kilmer right across the river." There was no such thing as the campus over the river in those days. So someone said they pay pretty good, one dollar an hour, just working on the weekends. You can make sixteen dollars in a weekend. Well, if you can just about manage six or seven dollars a week for food and board of three dollars, I said, "That will not be a bad idea. Maybe I can work just one day a week and go home on the weekend." I went out there with my friend who helped me with my chemistry. He was dressed with a long coat and pants or something. I figured I am probably going to do some sort of rough work. I had a pair of corduroy pants. When I was driving the truck, I always wore a heavy sweatshirt and a jacket that I cut off the sleeves. The sleeves got caught on crates and boxes. We went out there and there was a girl interviewing us. We were working for the base engineers. They are the guys that take care of all the garbage collection, the heating arrangements and things like that on the base and the repairs. She said, "The first thing, can any of you men type with ten fingers?" So one kid said, "I can type." So she asked him again, "Ten fingers?" He said, "No hunt and peck." I said, "I can type with ten fingers." There I was, all prepared to go to work and I said, "Yes, with ten fingers" and she sat me down and I typed. "Now was the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country." I do not know if you know that phrase at all. In learning to type that the phrase they teach you, "A-SPACE-SEMI-SPACE-ONE" and so on. She said, "Okay, you have the job. You work here in the office." My friend was out there in a garbage truck in a long coat so I lent him my sweater and jacket and all that. And I used to make sixteen dollars for working Saturday and Sunday and all I did was type work orders. Somebody would call in from a barracks with a broken window. So then you would type a work order for a carpenter. Then somebody would call, "The door has come off its hinge" or "The toilet is stuffed up" or something and you would take the messages down and you would type up a formal work order. I found that one of the men on the base was a Colonel who went up towards Hillside and he would go home every Saturday night. I quit working on Sundays and I would catch a lift to Hillside with him. I would have my bag with me and would quit at five o'clock. He always gave me a ride up to Hillside.

KP: Although you were a civilian, you were working on a military base.

JS: That is true. On occasion, you would hear a window open and someone would call out, "Draft dodger."

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

JS: Nevertheless, it did not make any difference, but I worked one day a week mostly, and that gave me five dollars for a meal ticket and three dollars for my room. So I always worked one way or the other.

KP: How did you pay for the tuition?

JS: Well, I worked all that summer and I made forty dollars a week. The union scale, Local 863, International Brotherhood of Teamsters and Chauffeurs ... I was a teamster. I had to, because the union delegate came down and told my father that I had to have a book. He said, "I will give him a book." He said, "Hey, kid. You better make the meeting once a month or it will be a one dollar fine." He said, "We will know if you did not make a trip that Sunday." You see meetings were once a month on Sunday and if you did not show up they fined you a buck.

KP: Did you ever go to the meetings?

JS: I went to one or two, but I never went to another one, because there was nothing very much said. It was really a strong armed union. I will not kid you about that. But what it did was it improved the wages and the working conditions of those men in the union. The union wage was a basic scale of forty dollars a week plus overtime. But I never expected my father to give me overtime, so I made forty dollars a week. But that was a lot of money at that time. Forty dollars a week for driving a truck, and I did all of the buying. The hours I cannot tell you. I started at five o'clock in the morning when I left home, and I did not get home until ten o'clock at night. That was a steady diet of five days a week. That cousin of mine who took that course with you, he was right with me all the way. Every once in a while, when my head would start to nod, he would poke me in the arm and keep me awake. That was one of the reasons he rode with me.

MW: When did you actually start basic training?

JS: Well, the classification center, I was called up and went to Tennessee and I was classified a pilot trainee. They sent us to Maxwell Field, Alabama. Maxwell Field is called a pre-flight training school and you may have heard that name before from someone else.

KP: We have heard pre-flight.

JS: Well, that is at Maxwell Field. That was like basic training for two months. You went to classes and you had an hour of exercise and an hour of drill. The exercise, one day a week, was running at double time. After we were there a month, they said, "Okay. You are going to get a pass for tonight. You have to come back in by eleven o'clock, but we have to finish our exercise for the week. Today's drill is for one hour we are going to run at double time. Anybody who drops out and does not finish does not get a pass." I got a pass, but I know several guys who had wives come in town and they did not get a pass because they did not finish that run. I mean you had to hang with the group. You may have fallen behind, but as long as you kept up and finished within a reasonable amount of time. But I know several fellows who were college kids, freshmen or sophomores or something and some had their wives down with them and they did not get a pass that weekend. That is the way it is. But that was basic training.

MW: Were you sorry to leave Rutgers?

JS: Hell, to go in the Army is not exactly my idea of ... I have always been sort of a free sort of a person. When you go in the Army, your life changes in many ways with discipline and things like that. So leaving Rutgers, yes, I would have to be able to stay here but not under the circumstances that existed at that time; we were at war.

MW: So you were starting as a pilot and how much pilot training did you get?

JS: There were three stages of training: primary, basic and advanced. I went through primary, and they wanted you to solo inside of ten or twelve actual hours of flying and I soloed at eleven. I did pretty good in primary, but when I got to basic it was something about that basic trainer that I just could not get the feel of. I have to tell you that. I did not get the feel. I just could not seem to ... Primary training was almost like driving a car or something like that. It was a little hard and a certain aspect was very technical. The landing was very hard. You would ground loop. I do not know if you know what a ground loop is. It is when you are going to land and you touch a wing down and spin around. They ground loop very easy, but I learned how to handle that. But I could not handle that basic trainer and I washed out. That was a traumatic experience, and I thought for sure that I was going to make it. Maybe I did not work hard enough at it, but it's one thing you have to remember about being in the Army. If you do the best you can and you come home alive, then you served with honor. That is a successful career whether you are a General, Colonel or Private. You could be the biggest General in the world, but if you did not make it back with honor in one piece, that was not a happy career.

KP: Had you wanted to be a pilot before the war? Did aviation interest you?

JS: You see, we lived in Newark and Newark has the first major airport in the metropolitan area. I knew about airplanes and the street we lived on was right underneath a flight pattern of the airlines. We would be playing ball and all of sudden one of the planes would take off. There are many airlines that have disappeared like TWWA, TransWorld Western Airlines. Then there was of course AA, American Airlines, would come right over the street. We would look up and see the big letters on the bottom of the plane. Another thing in those days, Newark Airport had a wire fence around it. Most of the hangers were those big old fashioned round roof types and people on Sunday (but not particularly my parents) would go down and stand there by the wire fence and watch the planes land and take off. Just as people do in small towns when the trains come down. Let's go take a look and see what it is like.

KP: There were also some good restaurants I have been told, in the Newark Airport.

JS: There was a sky something or other, but I never got involved. I never ate there.

KP: You never went to the airport to ...

JS: Never. I cannot remember. Even afterwards, I can never remember a good airport restaurant. When you are home, and that is your hometown, you go away and come back, you do not go looking around. I guess one of the premier restaurants in the city of Newark though was on the edge of (Weequahic?) Park on the corner of Elizabeth Avenue and Meeker Avenue. It was called the Tavern. I do not know if you ever heard of it. It was considered one of the premier restaurants in the city of Newark. Since I lived about four blocks from the park, you would always have to go past the Tavern and you always noticed the people going in and out of the Tavern, well-dressed, cars were big and shiny. It was quite expensive, too.

MW: After you washed out of pilot training, you enlisted in gunnery training?

JS: Well, what it amounted to, since you already passed the flight physical, they wanted those people to stay in flight training. I had no choice about it at this training. I was sent to an armorer training school at Lowry Field. I took my preliminary training at Clarksdale, Mississippi and I was there the months of July and August. In September, I was shipped up to the tri-city area of Alabama. I cannot remember the towns, but anyway it's called the tri-cities, right near one of those big electric dams that were built. It is in the northern part, I believe. That was where I washed out, and I was sent by train from there to Denver, Colorado. I was traveling by myself. I remember traveling by train to Memphis, and getting on a train, a very small type of steam train, that went through the mountains and came around to a little town called Moberly, Missouri. The train pulled into Moberly and there was a great, big, shiny train on the tracks, just waiting for this train to come in and meet it. This was the one coming up from Memphis, and as I got off with my duffel bag, there were not too many of us that got off. As I swung my bag up onto the train, or as I walked towards it just across the platform (it was called the Colorado Eagle) I do not think the bag hit the floor before the conductor yelled, "All Aboard," and the Colorado Eagle took off across the level country. It ran like hell all night. When I woke up the next morning, I was deep into Colorado and sometime before noon the next day I was in Denver. They had a truck there to pick up anybody coming in. I went to Lowry and I took a course to become an armorer. We worked on guns and turrets. I was there for about four months. There were a lot of young college kids coming into service without having gone any other place. I got to know about four or five of them and became good friends of theirs. Once a week we had a day off, and we would go up into town. We would pool our money and rent a car. The tires on those cars were balder than my head, but we road up into the mountains towards Berthead Pass. There is a lake and I have forgotten the name of the lake. We went up there too. But we traveled all over that area on our day off. We did not hang out in gin mills or something like that. Once in a while, we would go into the Brown Palace Hotel at night and they had a big sitting room with a bar at the end of it with big leather chairs, and you would sit there drinking beers and pretty soon some of the guys would start to sing. I have never been to one, but it's called karaoke today. These guys would sing every song under the sun that you could think about. Just sit, drinking beer, and then we would head back to the base. We did our work according to they way they wanted us to do it. I met quite a few fellows from Lowry that I bumped into later on during my service career. But being out in Denver gave me a whole different perspective on a part of the country that I had never been in.

KP: You saw a good part of the country.

JS: Yes. I did. Well, I was never, at that time, west of Denver, but I did have a very good time. Maybe some other men may have mentioned it to you, the Denver Service Men's Club. That was probably one of the best in this country. The people there were terrific. I want to tell you about that.

KP: A lot of people have said that they would often get invites to Sunday dinners or holiday services.

JS: That is right. Absolutely correct. They made arrangements for me to go to Jewish services on the high holy days in the early fall. Thanksgiving I was invited to someone's home for Thanksgiving dinner. Buffalo Bill is buried up on the first level of the first mountains west of Denver. We used to ride a trolley out of Denver up towards a place that is very famous now. Coors beer has made Golden, Colorado famous. But whoever heard of Golden, Colorado? But there was a trolley that ran up through that neck of the woods. We used to get off at the last stop before Golden, and we would rent a horse for five dollars a day. Before we did it, we had to have lunch with us. So we would cage red stamps from some of the ladies in the Denver Service Men's Club. Across the street was one of these center market types of things. Little stalls inside, and we would buy things to make sandwiches with and we would pack some sort of saddle bag, or musket bag or I forgot what we used to call them, and we would use that bag. We would take it with us and we would tie it on the back of the horse. We would ride up through the hills up to where Buffalo Bill was buried and then we would come back down the hill in another direction through Golden. When we would get about a half mile or so from where we would turn the horse, we would race. To see who could get there first. There were four or five young fellows and we had a good time out there. When snow got on the ground, we rented a car and went to a place called Berthoud Pass. And went skiing up there. I had never been on skis in my life. I tried it but there was no ski lift. We had to herring bone up the hill and turn around and come back down. One of the fellows who was in flying training with us, a kid call (Stravinski?), tore his knee up and when we came back he went on sick call. Inside of four days he was out of there. Because once he went off flying training, they did not care. They shipped him out maybe to some work outfit or some other outfit maybe driving a truck or something, because his knee was torn up he needed ... Maybe they sent him someplace to be mended. I do not know. Then they sent him someplace else. That is what happened. Once physically, you were not off flying quality, they just did not want you there.

KP: You mentioned the summers you spent in Atlantic City. How much had you traveled before the military?

JS: I had been to Detroit, Michigan. My mother had family out there and my father, every winter, would take a couple of weeks off and my mom and dad would get a chance to go out and see her aunt, who had eight children. Her aunt was her father's sister. They would go out in the wintertime after business slowed down and when the Christmas trees were all sold. Shortly thereafter, my father would take two weeks off. One year they took me along and my cousin Morris and Morris' mother. I had never been out in Ohio and I remember the Christmas decorations were still on the houses and we were riding through the countryside and it was all level. All of the houses were decorated. Not that we did not have decorations in Newark, but since we lived in an area that was partially Jewish, there were decorations on some houses and not on others. These were all one family type houses and all decorated. It was a broadening situation.

KP: You talked a bit about the west but what about the South? What did you think about being in the South because you spent a good part of your training in the South?

JS: Well, you have to have an appreciation for it. I worked a lot with black people in my life. Down in the terminal, one of my father's better drivers was a black man, Mr. Fred Logan and he

was as nice a man as you have ever met and I rode with him. I remember many times loading the truck in an area called Spring Valley, New York where a lot of Jewish people live today. But in those days, it was prime Macintosh apple country. My father would send me up with Fred Logan to load a load of apples. The farmer's name was Kelly. I will never forget this, he had someone who shot a moose and give him the head. He had this stuffed moose head and that moose head hung out of the wall up to here. He had a great big dining room table in the room and the moose head almost touched the table. I saw for the first time in my life when we were going south in the mid '30s. Going south there was a little town called Woodbury, New Jersey which is south of Philadelphia. You were not in the north in that area. You were in the South already. So the result is in a diner in Woodbury there was a sign: NO COLORED. To me, that was very strange. The high school I went to, thirty percent of the kids were colored or black is the right way to put it today. I knew them and they were fine people. They worked hard and some did and some did not. It was according to the individual. So going into the South and hearing things said and things like that, you kept your guard. The fact that I was Jewish, Jewish people were not well received in the South. Yes if you were a local businessman and they knew you that is one thing, but in general if you were from New York ...

KP: So you found that there was a certain stereotype?

JS: That is right. Well, Newark and New York, it did not make any difference to them.

KP: They did not get the defined distinction between them?

JS: In fact, a fellow named Charlie Carr down in Texas in 1983 or 1984 ... I was starting to buy from him. He needed someone to sell for him, but he did not know who I was and I told him I was from Port Jefferson, Long Island, New York. It was all on the telephone. I had not met him. So he called a dealer in New York, a Jewish fellow, Irving Fierman. Irving knew me because he had done some business with me and he said to Charlie Carr, "If Jerry Shulman wants to buy stuff from you sell him the farm." Charlie did not know me. He had no way of knowing me. He just had the stereotype that people have fixed in their mind about people from New York. You could be Jewish or Italian. People felt the same way I believe about that. People who are from New York and especially if you were Jewish or if you were Italian ... That did not sit exactly right.

KP: You mentioned for the most part that you did not experience what you considered overt anti-Semitism in Newark but you said you had more problems in the Army.

JS: Yes. This is because in the Army, you had many more people who were from way western or southern diverse areas. Some of the men were regular Army and there was more anti-Semitism I think in the regular Army. I remember one fellow who was a tech sergeant or something. One of the crews we were training down in Virginia at a radar station ... He wanted to get some sort of a piece of equipment from a supply sergeant and the supply sergeant obviously was Jewish because he came back to the barracks fuming and storming and said, "That gefilte fish son of a bitch." Right away, if you were Jewish, everyone knew what he was talking about. You understand. That is the kind of anti-Semitism that you hear or heard or stuff like that. It never really, maybe in one or two occasions effected me physically, but nevertheless, I

knew it was there and most people had respect for me. But nevertheless you ran into it all of the time. As I indicated before, going into the South, I knew it was there and I talked to my brother who lived in South Carolina about it. He knew it was there. It has changed very slowly but some classes in the South and there are still classes in the South, it has not changed.

KP: When you were in pre-flight, in many ways you were training to be a pilot, but you were also training to be an officer because if you are a pilot you are an officer.

JS: That is true.

KP: Were there some disappointments in not making pilot in part?

JS: It is not the fact of making officer. I was more disappointed in not becoming a pilot.

KP: You would have liked to have flown.

JS: That is right. I like to fly. I learned how to fly in Mississippi. One incident I'll tell you about. You are supposed to go up and practice on your own, once you solo. One of the things that is absolutely prohibited in dog fighting. Absolutely, you knew it. You were warned. There were men up in air while your were flying, there were guys up there to see what you did. I was up there one day practicing and all of a sudden somebody turned toward me and sort of came at me a little bit and I did not know who the hell it was. It was one of the guys so I just kind of peeled off a little bit and turned around and came behind him. Then he turned and I turned and all of a sudden we broke off and went our way. When I landed there was somebody waiting for me. They had seen it. The guy that came at me was a Greek kid out of Long Island City, Jimmy Plakis. I knew Jimmy pretty well. He recognized me, I suppose, because we were flying those open cockpit planes. You could see. Well, both of us had check rides right away. They made us go through a full check to see if we were up on our work and what we should have been doing. They let me continue to fly, but there was no fooling around. They wanted you to learn. They wanted you to learn quickly and they wanted you to be good and there is nothing wrong with that. They had an army to build in a hurry.

KP: Before pre-flight, you were an aviation cadet.

JS: That was the only time I was in there.

KP: You did not have pre-flight?

JS: I went to Nashville, Tennessee. I was considered an aviation cadet when I got there and I was there maybe five weeks taking tests.

KP: Okay, so you were in Nashville that long.

JS: Three weeks or four weeks I do not remember. A short period of time and then I went to Maxwell Field, Alabama. I would say maybe April. I was not there very long. Maybe two weeks. The months of May and June I was at Maxwell at pre-flight training and July and August

I was in primary training in Mississippi and then in September for three weeks I was in basic training. I have forgotten the name of the town. Then I was sent out at the end of the month to Denver, Colorado, Lowry Field.

KP: In terms of pre-flight, you mentioned you were something of a free spirit. I have gotten the sense that in pre-flight there is a real effort to teach you military discipline and you do your marching.

JS: Yes, that is correct. At primary school you marched every day, you did an hour of PT, and an hour of marching, and then you had two sessions, one hour each of class. Then, you flew. Now if you ... There were two groups there. There were the fellows from a month before and you. The newer group flew say in the afternoon and took their classes in the morning. The other ones did just the reverse. After all, you only one hour in the air every day and you flew as much as you could and you learned as quickly as possible.

KP: I get the sense a lot of people have told me, but I get your sense that the Air Force, not that it was not disciplined but it was much more lax than the Army or Navy.

JS: Yes. I would say, for instance, that the training base, Clarksdale Army Air Force Base, there were officers in charge but our meals were served by civilians. We did nothing like that. There were black people serving. We had the best food you ever ate in your life. I want to tell you that right now. It was terrific food. We went through ... We had enough of everything and on Saturday afternoon we were off late Saturday and all day Sunday. And we had to come back to base by a certain hour. The discipline was there but it was like, I do not know what a Boy Scout camp is like but ...

KP: You were never a Boy Scout?

JS: I was never a Boy Scout. My father was always against the military because of his upbringing so he says when the time comes that we need men in the Army fine. But not now.

KP: So he would have thought that the Boy Scouts were too military.

JS: That is right. Uniforms and stuff like that.

KP: I have gotten a sense that discipline was definitely part of the training. Of course, you did tell the story about them running and if you did not keep up you did not get your pass.

JS: Well, I think in the beginning, at Maxwell Field, those two months were more like officer training than anything else. That is, what they tried to do at Maxwell Field. They made you go through your paces and your exercises, and they watched how you handled yourself. You had classes on some military subjects. I would think that Maxwell Field was actually the officer training part.

KP: How long?

JS: It lasted two months. Sixty days and then you went off to learn how to fly. At Clarksdale, Mississippi, we had classes on the rules of flying and aerodynamics, plus Phys. Ed. and drill. Basic was a little more Army like. The food was not as good. It was more like an Army camp than Clarksdale, Mississippi. Our instructors at Clarksdale were all civilians. We had all civilian instructors. A fellow named Robert A. Parsons, they used to call him Rap, he was my instructor. He was a nice guy out of Wichita, Kansas. In basic, you already had officers teaching you. It was a different situation. It changed completely.

KP: It does, having civilians it sounds like civilians are far more informal with you than an officer would be.

JS: That is right. That is absolutely correct.

MW: At what point were you shipped overseas?

JS: Well, it took a while. As far as I was concerned, I stayed at this Turret and Gun School at Lowry until the middle of January and I was shipped to Tindall Field, Panama City, Florida for gunnery training. We were taught how to handle and take guns apart and also how to put them together blindfolded. In addition to that, we learned about ball-turrets which was important to me because I wound up a ball-turret gunner. We learned how to fire the .30 and .50 caliber machine guns and then they took us up in the air. We were in a Flying Fortress B-17 flying along with loaded guns. There would be a plane flying past us towing a target on a wire and we fired your gun at that target. Now, four guys in the plane were firing, the tail gunner, the waist gunner, the main turret on the top or the ball turret on the bottom. At each gun position the tips of the bullets were dipped into a different color paint. Then, when the tow plane landed they took that target and they counted the number of holes for each color. That way they could keep track of how good you were hitting the target. In addition to show us how, for instance, if you were a bomber flying along and a plane came down at you, at its approach, you would have to learn how to track it. To track, they took us out on a big circular course in the woods. It was a road in the woods and there was a big pick up truck and on the back of the pick up truck there was a little platform with a circular ring. You stood inside the ring to support yourself so you would not fall out and you fired a T-clay targets with a shotgun, as they road around the ring ... Have you ever seen what they call a clay pigeon fly through the air? Well, there would be clay pigeons flying through the air from different positions and you were supposed to swing your gun and hit that clay pigeon before it hit the ground. There were twenty-five different stations around that circle. The man in the group from whom I was learning how to fire a shotgun, was originally a hunting guide from Oregon. That was the type of man they would bring in to teach young fellows how to shoot the shotgun. That is how I learned how to shoot. At first, I was not very good. I maybe hit seven, eight or ten. When I got up to seventeen or eighteen I thought I was doing damn good. Some guys could hit twenty-two or twenty-three. Those fellows were from a rural area. They had shotguns. I was a city kid. I never fired a gun in my life. So you can understand that but, it was excellent training.

KP: I would be curious when you were studying as an armorer, would that have ended your training or was that just part of the larger training to be a gunner?

JS: No that was actually part of it. On every bomber you had a compliment of officers and a compliment of enlisted men. There was the pilot and the co-pilot, they were officers, the bombardier and a navigator were also officers. In addition, to the navigator you had there were other types of navigators. There were radar navigators, and then there was one other type. Then there were the enlisted men. There was a radio man and an engineer. The top man was the engineer gunner and he took care of transferring fuel and making sure the motors were running smoothly, opening the bomb bay doors and stuff like that. The radio man handled the radio. Then the third man in line was the armorer and that is what I was. If something were to go wrong with a turret, I was supposed to be able to fix it in the air. Pretty hard to fix it in the air at forty degrees below zero.

KP: It was very cold, that I have been told, and you had a great risk of literally sticking to your equipment.

JS: Well, not quite.

KP: But you could get frostbite. You mentioned the armorer and what could you fix. Did you ever fix anything. You were trained to fix things. Did you actually ever fix anything as you were trained?

JS: I do not believe, and this is the truth, that I every fixed anything on the plane as an armorer in all of the time that I flew during my flying in Europe. I have to admit that. I would like to say, but no, I cannot remember any time that I actually did. We did not have too many malfunctions, as far as I can remember. Then there were certain things that our pilot wanted the engineer to do. For instance, if the bombs got hung up and he wanted the engineer in position, so that he could go out there and try to kick the bombs out of the bomb bay. That is what it amounted to.

KP: What had you been taught as an armorer?

JS: Well, you understood for instance the arming wire had to be attached in the proper position. I was talking recently to Matt Gewain, who was with one of the crews that I flew with. I flew with three different crews during my combat career in Europe. Matt said that one of things he used to do after each flight, he would bring back all of the armoring wires. It's a technical thing. Each bomb whether it was five hundred, one thousand, or two thousand pounds was hung in a position on the framework in the bomb bay. When we reach a certain distance from the target, the bomb bay doors were opened. When the bombardier determined the proper moment to drop the bombs, he hit a switch that electronically released the bombs and they dropped out of the bomb bay. In order to explode the TNT within bomb itself, you had two detonators, one attached in the front (the nose area) and on in the back between the tail finds. They were screwed into place by the ground crew armorers or ordinance personel. In order for the detonators to work properly they had to arm themselves by, positioning the firing pin within the detonator so that on impact with the target, the detonators would explode and set off the main charge within the bomb. This arming process took place when a small propeller located on each detonator spun itself and was thrust through the air and properly position the firing pin for its small charge. To prevent premature arming, while in flight, the small mobile propeller was prevented from

moving by its individual arming wire. The arming wire was threaded through a small hole in the propeller and another hole in a stationary part of the detonator. When the bombs were dropped, each detonator was freed to spin. The arming wire remained attached to the bomb bay frame. All the loading of the bombs and arming was handled by the ground personnel. In a recent discussion with Dusty Rhodes concerning detonators, I was reminded that as the firing mechanism was separated from the charge, five or six small ball bearings fell out of the detonators. The charge within the detonators was composed of five different chemical explosives. Each one of the chemicals served a different purpose in order to insure the successful detonation of the main charge.

KP: So really your main job, while you were trained to do a lot of different things in the end, when you were in combat you really were a gunner.

JS: That is absolutely correct.

KP: When did you, you got a lot of practice in Florida as a gunner. When did you meet your crew?

JS: Well, actually this is not very complicated. Crews are formed when they pick certain men out of pools and at the pool there might be different types of gunners. What it amounted to was, they would pick one armorer, one engineer, one radio operator, and three ordinary gunners to fill out the enlisted men's part of the crew. When I finished at Tindal Field, Florida, instead of giving me a furlough, they gave me a delay en route to a small airfield in Massachusetts. It begins with a "P." I cannot think of the name of the darn little airfield up there. It's not so little, but anyway. A delay en route never counted as a furlough. While you were going from one place to another point, you could stop off at home or do anything you wanted to. So all the way from Tindal Field, Florida, we traveled by train during the war, I came home at that time. I knew I was going to be home at a particular time so I wrote to my cousin Morris and I said, "What is the chance of getting a couple of basketball tickets to the Garden?" This brings up an incident that I will allude to later on. It's one of those things of fate that happen to people. He got tickets to the NIT. I do not know if you know anything about it, but the NCAA is the big thing now, the Final Four. But in those days, the big basketball tournament in the United States was the NIT, The National Invitation Tournament. It was held at Madison Square Garden. It was much, much bigger than the NCAA. In those days, the NCAA was just a second class tournament. He got us tickets to a game at Madison Square Garden and the preliminary game had Mitchell Field which was an Air Force base vs. Aberdeen Proving Ground. Now what the Army did was they brought athletes in the service and they made teams and they represented different bases. It is a way of entertaining the troops and keeping them out of trouble. Well, on the Mitchell Field team was a fellow named Sy Labello, he was a center out of NYU and the Rader twins, they were from LIU. They were good basketball players. I think the Rader twins were the two back court men. But nevertheless those three members, I remember distinctly. The only guy whose name I cannot remember, he was a semi-pro that I had seen play because I had a cousin of mine who was a semi-pro basketball player and he used to take me with him to see a lot of games. This guy's name was (Poznak?). He played for one of the teams in the New York area and he was with Aberdeen Proving Ground. That was the prelim game and I turned to my cousin, and I remember saying, "These guys they have cushy jobs." They are in the U.S. They're going to be

here playing ball and I knew where I was headed. I may have said it to him I may not have, but I remember this thinking very distinctly. Unfortunately, Labello was shipped overseas when we were short of troops after the German counter-attack in eastern France. I'm sorry to say he was killed fighting there.

KP: Just the thought. You were definitely thinking it.

JS: Oh, absolutely. Well, too bad, that is the way life is. Not everybody had that opportunity. I went to Chicapee Falls and while I was there one day I was called to the office. They told me there is a problem with an armorer gunner on a crew down in Savannah, Georgia. They needed a replacement for somebody on a crew that was already formed. And I was sent out. I want to allude to one thing and tell you something about the Air Force and you will not believe it. They gave us physicals before we went any further just so you were not put on a crew and you were not in fit shape. They X-rayed your teeth too. If you had any problems with your teeth they wanted to fix them.

KP: You are not the first to mention about the teeth. People were kept out of things because of their teeth.

JS: That is right. They said you have three impacted wisdom teeth and we are going to take them out. I said, "What?" I said, "You want to take them out? Give me three days. I will go home and have my own dentist take them out back home." Because while I was going to Rutgers that fall or in that winter, I got sick one day and my throat was killing me. I went to sick call there and the infirmary sent me to a dentist here in town on the corner of George and Commercial. Not George, what is the street that goes out toward the other campus? Is that George Street? Okay. And what is the street that goes off on an angle a big wide street about three blocks after Albany.

KP: Livingston?

JS: Livingston. This fellow had his office right half a block up Livingston. I found out subsequently that he was on the State Dental Board. He examined me and said, "You have an impacted wisdom tooth. It's quite expensive. It takes an operation and at least half a dozen visits afterwards." He said, "That is going to be about eighty-five dollars." Eighty-five dollars in those days was a lot of money. I called my dentist back home and he said, "Who is the dentist?" So I told him and he said, "Look, Jerry. There is no sense in you coming home because I will have to give you the same treatment. You will have to keep coming back." He said, "He is on the State Dental Board. He is an excellent dentist he knows what he is doing. You stay right down there and have him do it." So I went back to this doctor, I have forgotten his name. I said, "Can I pay it to you piecemeal if that is alright with you." I said, "When you do it, I will give you twenty-five or thirty dollars and every time I come in, I will bring you five or ten dollars until I pay out." He agreed. He operated on me. I knew what the pain was and all that went with it. Low and behold, after I had about three visits in a row, I must have paid about forty or fifty dollars, I was called up. When I went in to be examined again, I told him I was going in the service, but I would send him the rest of the money. "I am sorry. I cannot come back." "Well," he said, "you would not have to come back for any more visits," he said "and

forget the rest.” I knew what that problem and pain was. They pulled those three teeth. There was no letting me go home and let my own dentist at home do it. I was reluctant. I raised some hell. This is what I want to tell you about the Army, just listen to this and you will understand my predicament. The head of the department had just taken over and he said, “Well, this man has impacted wisdom teeth. He called three other dentists in.” He said, “You know, you use a long needle so you can go right back and then you will strike the bone in the back or the vein or the nerve,” and he said, “it’s alright young fellow.” He said, “You have to have them out. Sorry that is it.” Everybody cleared the room and the dentist who is operating turns to the male nurse, “Give me a short needle.” I said, “Hey. What the heck is going on here?” He said, “Look. He just came in here from a college,” he said, “I do not give a damn what he wants to do. This is the way I have always done it and that is what I am going to do.” And what they do is they stick the needle in and they bend the son of a bitch around until they get to that nerve and they did not give a damn. They pulled the three teeth on me and a short while after that I was on my way to Savannah, Georgia to Chatham Field. I joined up with Walter Cullen's crew there. They had been in training for several months. I was only down there in Savannah for two weeks (which was the end of May). Then we were transferred up to Langley Field, Virginia to become a radar crew. They had chosen this crew as a radar crew. They gave me another delay en route and I got home. I think it was the second of June 1944 and I had seven days at home. About the third morning, my mother, who was an early riser, woke me up D-Day morning. Hell of a day to be home in bed. I will tell you that much. She knew where I was going. I told her we are going to get this extra training and then we are going over. I reported to Langley Field, Virginia. It was so hot and humid, it could melt stones. It is a terrible place in the summertime. We trained at Langley, flew mostly at night and I saw my first radar screen.

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

JS: We started overseas and flew to Sen??? Field Manchester, N.H. We lost our bombardier the first night there. He was caught in a WAC's Berrick. We left there and flew to Goose Bay, Labrador. From Goose Bay, we went up to, oh, I think they called it B.A.D. Number One. It was a one runway airfield a (fjord?) in Greenland. When I say one runway you landed in one direction and you took off in the opposite. You were flying in this (fjord?) below the height of peaks around you or the mountains and you were above water. You dropped down and you landed on this long runway. When you went to leave the place, no matter which way the wind was coming from you came down this runway and went right out the same (fjord?). Once you got altitude, you turned and went towards the East. We left there and went to Iceland. But we were there around the last week in June or close to the first of July and it was one of those bases where men had been sent and told they were going to be there a year. But by the time we got there, some had been there a year and they were ugly. When I tell you, we were told when we got to the base the pilot had been forewarned. That we had to leave a man to guard our own ship at all times, while we were at that base because otherwise it might be broken into and anything we had in the plane that was loose might be stolen. It is a hard thing to say, but this is the actual truth because this next incident I am going to tell you about. They took the gunners the four of

us, there were three plain gunners and myself and divided up the day, and each of us had watch. And my watch was to go on at midnight and I was supposed to be on until about four or six o'clock in the morning at the plane. Well, when six o'clock came and no one came to relieve me I thought, "My goodness. What the heck is going on here?" Then it got to be seven o'clock and then eight. I knew something had to be wrong. Eventually, it was squared away. When I got to the barracks, I was told, the engineer had jumped from the second tier of bunks down to the floor. In those days peanut cans and even coffee cans, were all made the same way. You hooked into a piece of metal that had been already weakened and you twisted a little key and you took that strip of metal out and the cap then came off. And it had about a quarter of an inch of raw metal all the way around the cap, and the peanuts were in this type of can. Well, the fellows would use those caps as cigarette ash trays. They were horsing around. Cliff Rhodes, Dusty, was his nickname, Dusty jumped from the top for some reason or another and he landed on it with his bare foot. This was his right leg that he cut. He cut a semi-circle right in his foot. They took him to the hospital immediately. They sewed him up and kept him in the hospital for several days, for quite a while. There we were pulling guard duty and nothing else to do waiting for Cliff to recover. Meanwhile, our first pilot, Walt Cullen, was answering to North Atlantic Headquarters of the Air Force as to why he was not moving on. When it got to about the eighteenth day, he was told that if he did not move or order another engineer in, there was going to be a court-martial. Well, he told them that he was going to get his engineer out. There has to be something said about the engineer and radio man on my ship. Most of us were raw recruits. The engineer and radio men were older. They had served as radio and engineer instructors in schools out in I thought they were at (Alamogordo?). But I found out they were in Utah on an Air Force base out there. They had a lot of experience and they knew their work. Walt Cullen did not want to go without Cliff Rhodes. So he went up there and convinced the medic, the head medic there, to discharge Dusty to him. He put on a very soft boot and he would have a seat for him in the plane so that he would not have to stand on that leg. That is how we took off from Greenland for Iceland.

KP: How big was the base? You said that it was ...

JS: It was a pretty good size and in the summertime when the ice broke, they used to bring a supply ship in. This comes from talking to the GIs that were up there that were mad as hell. They knew the ship's plan. Of course, there was a certain amount of whiskey in there for the officers, the Officers' Club. They knew how, from the ships plan, to unload it so that they could get at some of the stuff that supposed to be for the officers. We swapped, I forget what we swapped, but we swapped a quart of whiskey with some guys in a barrack we were with, and they gave us a whole case of two pound tins of tuna fish. I mean every kid who grew up in the U.S. liked tuna fish, and you could not get it very often in the Army. It was a delicacy, so that quart of whisky bought a whole case of two pound tuna fish that had come out of the hold of one of those ships. Since you had a little time off, and in our escape kit we had fishing equipment to aid us to escape, if we were ever shot down. I went wandering up in the hills behind the base to see if I could locate any fishing holes. I saw the first salmon I ever saw at a certain spot. He rolled and I said I am going to go back and catch that son of a bitch. So I raced back to the barracks and I got this little drop line type of fishing thing. I tied a fly on it and I went out to that spot. I threw the fly out as far as I could in a little narrow stream. I do not think it was more

than twice as wide as this room, but I did not get it. That was the first time I ever saw a salmon. I have been salmon fishing since that time in Maine, New Brunswick, and Quebec.

KP: It's just striking because people pay a lot of money to do what you did but under more favorable circumstances.

JS: Well, the point is, this was a poor way to fish knowing what I know about salmon fishing now. I have been fishing several times now and paid quite a bit of money. In some cases they gave it to me as a perk. I have only caught one salmon. You do not catch them too easily.

KP: So you eventually made it off Greenland and where did you land next?

JS: We landed in Iceland on an airbase that looked like a landscape for the moon. We were there one day. Slept in a great big air drome where they had nothing but old fashioned Army cots and a blanket over it. We slept there over night and we flew on to Wales. From there we were transferred by train to a little town called Stoke on Trent. We stayed there for a couple of days and they broke the crew up and we went to Ireland from there. We went to Liverpool and on to Northern Ireland and in Northern Ireland the pilot, co-pilot, radio man and engineer, I am not sure if the bombardier or navigator went with them, but they were flying and trying out the radio procedures in Europe that they had to learn for the 8th Air Force. We stayed and we practiced firing from hand held guns at ships towing targets along the coast. We were very close to Ireland proper. We were on the (Carlingford?) Loch. And they warned us as soon as we get there, "Any of you fellas of Irish extraction who have family on the other side of the line, if you get any ideas about crossing the line, it is enemy territory. It is considered enemy territory and you will be court-martialed even if you get down and come back. If we catch you at it."

KP: Why such a strict attitude?

JS: Because Ireland was not at war.

KP: So they wanted to keep you ... They did not want any jaunts?

JS: That is right. They did not want anybody going over to Ireland. Then, we traveled by truck up along the coast. We took a coastal road to a little town called Larne, north of Belfast. Then we traveled by deck steamer. I am going to digress. I will never forget this. On the dock in Larne, there were a bunch of airmen, crews that had come back together. There were also six sergeants out of some different Scottish divisions, I could not tell by the tartans, which was Black Watch and which was which. But these guys were all older men, I would say in their late thirties, forties, even fifties. They had chests as big as a barrel. They were wearing kilts and high socks. Nobody said a word. I do not believe any twenty of the Air Force men could take on those five Scottish men. They looked like that could tear the world apart. We went from Larne, to (Stranrier?). We landed in (Stranrier?), and from there, we transferred to a train taking us to a larger city. I cannot tell you which one, but while standing on the platform there, several trains came through with great big red crosses painted on them. We knew that these were trains headed for hospitals with wounded men. That is what we were told. They were coming back from Europe, after all the invasion of Europe had happened just two months earlier. And we

traveled down to Old Buck, the airbase, at which I I was to be stationed. The 453rd Bomb Group, the 732nd Squadron.

KP: Was your crew back together again?

JS: Yes. We traveled together.

KP: You broke off just initially?

JS: That is correct. We came back together at Larne, Northern Ireland. We traveled together, but once we got to the base we were broken up again. The officers went to the officers quarters. The six enlisted men went to an (Alcan?) hut if you know what that is. These huts had fourteen beds in them, six were devoted to each of two crews and there were two spare beds. The spare beds were usually occupied by a spare gunner who hung around in case someone was sick and had to have a fill in. The crew that was there was the (Shearer?) crew. They were pretty nice guys and we were new at it. They sort of indoctrinated us a little bit.

KP: One of the things that struck me in terms of crews is that crews in the Air Corps, the Air Force, were really the basic unit of organization if you were in a crew.

JS: That is true.

KP: You bonded with that crew officer and enlisted men often. It did not matter.

JS: That is true. I would say this much, that if you were a crew chief or a ground crew chief and you had say four men working with you, that would be another basic unit.

KP: Unfortunately, we have not interviewed too many crew chiefs here.

JS: I will say this much at least, each crew chief I believe, at most, took care of two planes.

KP: It was a really close ...

JS: That's right. It was between them and the planes. Yes.

KP: Because a lot of people had said, and I think this is different from the Navy. Depending on your captain, aircrews can be ... The captain was really in charge. There was a real casualness often about it.

JS: Yes. There was a lot of casualness. We tended to call our first pilot, Skip. Now, I never did, but Dusty Rhodes, the engineer, and Johnny Somers, the radio man ... The two older men, by the way, Johnny Somers was the old man on the crew. He was thirty.

KP: He was very old.

JS: I suppose I do not remember if I ever ... addressed Walt as Walt. We just walked up to him. I suppose I never really gave it much thought.

KP: Just for example, one person told me, and I think this was earlier in the war, he said that they ate as a crew. He said, "We ate all of our meal together. We were supposed to sleep in separate barracks, but at night the officers came back and we all stayed in the barracks together." I believe that the separation was according to whether you were on flying status or ground crew. There were two different mess halls. One for flying personnel and another for ground personnel officers and enlisted men.

JS: I did not find that going on. There was a casualness about the Air Force.

KP: Address ... I guess.

JS: Well, you could talk to them. Well, not the flying officers. For instance, you would have to have operations or stuff like that. Some of them were stinkers. I will give you an example of what I am referring to. I do not know if he is still alive. He would come out of New Jersey. Anyway, he was the operations officer for the 735th. I wound up in the 735th later on, but at the time this was near the end of the war already, and I am digressing. I learned, while I was there, that one of the men had taken prints and stills. So the padre had told (Lloyd Shankenfeld?), (he was a radar gunner a radar man), that they had a dark room up there that was going to waste. And if we could come up and use it. So one night, Lloyd went by and said, "Can we come up there?" We got the "okay." We took some negatives we had, and we were working very quietly. All of a sudden, we hear a door close to the next room and we hear two men talking. It turns out, we could tell by the conversation, it was a higher officer and another officer and they are talking about going home. There were rumors all over the base at that time, about the base breaking up, but here now they are talking very definitely about it. I said, "Lloyd, you better drop a pan in a hurry so they know we are here." So a minute later, Lloyd dropped an empty pan on the floor and "bingo," we heard the other door open and then ours and then we popped to attention. "Sir, we dropped a pan. We are sorry to disturb you," or something like that. Lloyd said, "Padre said we could use your dark room because it was not being used." The officer asked, "Did you hear any conversation from our room?" He went at us for quite a while. "No sir. We did not hear anything." That is what I am trying to say. The operations officers, the non-flying personnel, they tended to be, or tried to be, as stinky as they could. But I will give you an example of casualness. We would never have room check or they never came around and checked the huts during the daytime. We made our beds rough-like and that was it. But once a week, we had inspection. We had a Colonel Connell, who was in charge of the 732nd. The way they protected against a black-out, there was one door at one end and you kept that locked all of the time. The other end had a little passage way and it was two doors. You came in one door, closed it, and opened the next one. Well, on inspection day, you unlocked the single door because that is the door the Colonel came through. Inspection was Saturday afternoon, and, in our outfit, the barracks that was the best won a quart of whisky. Now I am not giving you bull. That is a good example of casualness. You would win a quart of whiskey if your barrack was the best. We would stand by our beds waiting for the Colonel to show up. When the first sergeant opened the door, he yelled "Attention." Everybody would pop to, you know. The Colonel would come through and if the Colonel stopped by you, you saluted him and you spoke to him. Well, once

we did not hear the sergeant open the door. All of a sudden, he opens it. We were shooting craps against that door. And they opened the door and the dice went right out between the Colonel's legs. He reached down and caught them and said, "Whose are these?" He did not get excited that anything was going on. And then we all came to attention and, when he left, everybody was laughing like hell. I do not know if we won the quart of whiskey that week or not. I am just telling you about it to show you casualness.

KP: What about your dress days?

JS: We had to dress, but it was informal you know. We did not wear ties or jackets. I will give you another example of it. When we were told, before we went overseas, we could not take any summer equipment. Summer dress is the light chino pants, you know, but I hated those damn winter uniforms. And I know that when you are flying, you have to wear some clothes underneath flying clothes. So I hid two pairs of pants and two shirts in the bottom of my bag and did not turn anything in. And I went overseas that way, and every time I went to fly underneath anything, I was wearing those thin pants and a thin shirt. I will probably be telling you about it later, about a mission where we were shot up and as a result we had to land in Antwerp. They would not let us come across the Channel. And we had one guy that was hurt. He had physically been hit above the eye and was bleeding. The plane had to drop out of formation. We went to the Black Tom Hotel where we spent the night. Meanwhile you took off your flying clothes, which was heavy and warm.. I had on my summer uniform. The next day we had all to ourselves. We were wandering around Antwerp and all of a sudden an MP jeep pulled up alongside and said, "Sergeant, you are out of uniform. You know you are not supposed to have summer uniforms on." I said, "I am sorry, Sir, or Private." I said, "But I was on this mission," I said, "and I used to wear that underneath. As soon as I get back I will change." But he had to tell me and remind me that I was not supposed to be wearing them. So that was the dress code. You reminded me of it. But that is what it amounts to.

KP: You mentioned high holy services in the States. How about services on the base? Were there any? Not only Jewish services, but also other denominations.

JS: Always. There were always other services. There was always a Catholic and a Protestant service on Sunday. At our base, surprisingly enough, on my very first mission, we were sent up on a milk run as it was called. It was an easy mission. We did not take off until afternoon and we knew it was a milk run because the Colonel was along. The Colonel that ran the base did not come out on if you were going up close to Berlin or someplace like that. This was a plant that they wanted destroyed. It was a steel plant in eastern Belgium. We came back from the mission and landed. It was after everybody had eaten and we were in the mess hall eating. There were only about seven planes on the mission, and there were men from each squadron, so I think there were only two plain enlisted men together eating here. There was also one fellow sitting off on the side by himself. We were eating some sort of soup and there was some meat. The meat was pretty good and this fellow was sitting not far from me and I turned toward him and said, "Hi." You're only eating a bowl of soup and some plain bread? Hell, meat is not bad." "Not hungry?" He said, "I do not eat meat in the service, and I realized he was Jewish." He was a very observant person. It turned out when I got to know him that he was the Colonel's personnel radio man. He had finished a tour in duty as a radio man with a regular crew and was supposed

to go back to the States to retrain and maybe come back again. The Colonel said, "Look, if you stay on," now he did not tell me this directly, "you fly my missions and run the radio when I am flying." See, flying as command pilot, he flew with a lead crew, but this man took over the radio while he was on the plane. This fellow ran Jewish services. He had them every Friday night, and he was in charge of services. There were very few, maybe there were eight, ten, or twelve men who would show up for services. Once every month or so, the Rabbi Chaplain would show up. I made services occasionally, and I would say, "Hello," to this fellow in particular because I thought he was a pretty nice guy. I think his name was a Singer. He was a mailman and I think that he and his wife did not have kids. That is why he was in the service.

KP: Yes. Being very observant to that level, the armed services does not make it easy.

JS: He did not say anything about it. He just ate those things that he felt he could eat and ate enough and maybe went off base and bought other stuff you know. That was it. That was the first mission. I am going to say something to you at this point. It is after five. I do not know how much longer you want to continue this.

KP: Well, I go often as long as ...

JS: I will go as long as you tell me to. If I digress you tell me.

KP: That is fine. Digressions are often very good. When was your first mission?

JS: That was my first mission.

KP: When did that take place?

JS: I can tell you exactly. I have all of that down here. I brought all of this material with me that would make it easier for me to be very exact, so I wrote it up. I wanted to do it in such a way that I would be doing it exactly correct. That is one of the reasons I postponed coming the first time. My first mission, I would like to digress one second, because this is something I do not think many men talk about. Before you make your first mission, they have a short meeting. I think the man must be a psychiatrist because of the way he talks to you. They want your crew to go up and form with the rest of the crews. You are in the last position. You take off last and you get your position in the formation last. You fly to the British Coast, but at the British Coast you turn back. And before we even went up on this mission, he explained to us that, "When you turn back, you will have certain feelings that you did not anticipate, a feeling that you might be deserting your comrades." Because they are going into combat and you are turning back. Therefore, he wanted to explain these feeling, to us. "You may have them but," he said, "you will get your turn. Understand, you will get your turn to do exactly the same. We want you to understand that feeling that you are going to get and so they explained that to us." So, I did not know where the mission was going to, but I know we were at the briefing early in the morning. We went up and we came back to the base and landed. I have a list here that covers each one of the flights that I was on. This officer, I do not know too much about him, but I know he was a medical officer and he took the time to explain to us this feeling of distress of deserting the men who were going into combat. I do not know if anyone every mentioned that to you.

KP: Actually, no one has.

JS: Well, (La Louvier?) was the name of the place. It was, they have it marked France, but I am almost positive I was told it was eastern Belgium or in that area. We were destroying a steel plant in the afternoon, a first mission on August 25th. We flew our next mission on August 26th, it was number 137 for the base, to (Eindhoven?), Germany. On the 27th, the third day in a row, we flew mission number 138 to (Basdorf?). The crew that I was on flew a lot of missions in a hurry for the first ten missions. Because these missions took place without any screw-ups or anything like that, they tapped this crew to become lead crew. To tell you the truth, I came back in one piece, but I think that was. You do not know what is good for you or what is not good for you. Because if you survive the war, it's fine. Nevertheless, we did not fly another mission ... Let me ... I will list them all. On September 10th we went to (Ulm?), Germany. We must have had a few days off. Then we went to (Mursberg?) on the 11th, (Weisenhorn?) on the 13th, and then we must have had a couple of days off. Seems like there were three or four missions in a row and then they gave you some time off. Then on the 29th of September, we went to Cassel, Germany. Now, on the 27th of September, the worst day the Second Air Division of the 8th Air Force ever had happened. Every group is tied to two other groups and that unit is called a wing. The 453rd and 445th, which was Tibanim and the 389th (Hethel?) were three towns near each other and we were one wing. And the day before we flew this mission, the 445th, on a mission to Kassel turned away from the bomber stream. When the bombers go out on a raid everyone flies in a stream. Everybody goes in the same way and everybody comes out the same way. You can have anywhere from 1,000, 2,000 or maximum effort of 3,000 planes. The 445th came off their target instead of turning, as everybody else did, for some reason turned away. They were attacked and in three and a half minutes, thirty-one planes were shot down. From a group mission that started off with thirty-five planes, only four returned. I checked this out. I have some information here. Dusty Rhodes had a friend named Joe Jones and Joe Jones was on that mission. Dusty wrote to Joe Jones and Joe Jones sent him a letter in which he told about being on this mission. His was one of the four planes that came back.

KP: You were not on this mission.

JS: No. I was on a mission the next day to the same target. We thought the reason they sent us back to Cassel one day after, was to show the Germans that we were prepared for them and to see if anything else would happen, but the only thing that happened was we survived that mission with no problem whatsoever. I cannot tell you, Cliff has not got it marked, but I know we went to Cassel as a group on the 28th. That's right. It's marked here. And our outfit went to Cassel on the 27th, so the result is that Cassel was attacked three days in a row. The 445th turned the wrong way coming off of the target and they lost thirty one planes. That was the worst day in the history for the Second Air Division. The First Air Division of the 8th Air Force is all fortresses, B17's. The Second Air Division is all liberators B-24s and the Third Division was half of each. In talking to (Wib?) Clingan, who was a Colonel in our outfit and a command pilot on one mission with us (I talked to him the other night). And (Wib?) told me that there were more B-24s used in combat in World War II than any other combat airplane. B-24s, B-29s, B-25s, yet there is no B-24 at the Smithsonian Institute. It is hardly mentioned. It shows how things can get screwed up. A lot of B-24 men feel very bad about it. I have all our missions

listed here. Then, on the third of October we went to (Ludwigshaven?), Germany. On the sixth of October, we went to Hamburg and, on the seventh of October, we went to Cassel again and we did not fly another mission again until the 29th of December.

KP: That is a considerable gap.

JS: That is right. In all probability, had we not been made a lead crew, we would have completed our missions if we did not get shot up or run into trouble. We had eleven missions in about six weeks of flying and then we had ten weeks where we did not do a thing.

KP: What did you do?

JS: Well, I made a point of writing things down because you cannot remember every single thing you did. It says here, "Note from August 26, 1944 to October 7th, we made eleven missions approximately a third of the required tour of duty, thirty-five missions. Then, we began practice and we trained from October 8th until December 28th, eleven weeks. During that period, gunners only, we flew in pairs with the officers to be on the lookout for any other aircraft. A lot of times, I became very friendly with the radio operator because I was in the back of the plane and we played gin rummy, Johnny Somers and I. We were good friends. This training period kind of got us down. I even worked in the base library for a while, just to keep occupied. We sometimes went out and fired .45's out at a firing range. We all were going to shoot .45's before we went overseas, and you were theoretically supposed to carry it. You got the .45 with a shoulder holster and the gun fitted under your arm. Nobody on the plane carried a gun except me.

KP: Why did you decide to carry a gun?

JS: Because I was Jewish and I knew that if some German farmers got a hold of me, we knew already about stories of airmen being caught up in trees by their parachutes, and pitch-forked to death or killed by farmers. In addition, I felt I wanted to defend myself. So in my outer jacket, I had two fifty round boxes of ammunition. This did not come up at all until one day, when my first pilot's, Walt Cullen's older brother, who was in service in England, came down to see us off on a mission. And he looked around and saw that our jackets were open and here I was carrying this .45. "What are you doing with a gun," he said. I do not see anybody else with one. I told him why. I said, "I expect to try to escape, and we all did." Our parachutes were all detached from us. I do not know if you realize that. We all had chest packs and to the chest pack we all had a pair of regular army shoes wired to them. Wired. String would not hold them if you jumped out of a plane and because the shoes we wore were all soft boots and you could not walk in them for any distance.

KP: One of the things is that some of the Jews that were in the military, they were very concerned about being captured and, even in some instances, would have their dog tags changed if they could, to indicate ...

JS: That they were not Jewish.

KP: Yes. What did your tags say?

JS: I do not know. I got a set of dog tags with just "O" on it, which was my blood type or if it still carried an H for Hebrew. A friend of mine, who was my roomy at college here, Harvey (Jefferbaum?), he graduated the same year I did, and went to high school with my wife and myself. He was an infant man spearheading for General Patton's tanks. He was an infantryman in the Yankee division and he was cut off and captured. He was put in a prisoner of war camp. After, he was there for several months, while he was taking a shower he took off his dog tags. The German soldier who was in charge of the barrack happened to walk in and he saw his dog tags. He took and read them and it had an H on them. Within a day or two, Harvey was shipped to another prisoner of war camp where there were only Jews. Men from Russia, Australia, England, Canada, other men from the U.S., from all over the world who were Jewish. They were segregated and put into this POW camp. A friend of mine to this day, who was in the Navy said that his dog tags were changed. I do not believe mine were.

KP: But you were very conscious of the fact that it would be tougher for you.

JS: That is right. I knew it.

KP: But I also got the impression, you knew it was going to be pretty tough for anyone. Initially, it sounds like you were more scared of the farmers than the police.

JS: Because if you were coming down, you would probably come down in the country, usually away from the city. Sure a plane might be hitting a city, but you're off, or on your way back and you're coming down any place and that is part of your difficulty.

KP: One of the things that struck me and I meant to ask this earlier, is that I guess one of the things that I learned that is the most striking about the Air Force is how dangerous flying was. Even before you left the States. People have been constantly telling me about crashes, much less, and when you get to combat and combat is ...

JS: Probably true. I have heard this over and over. The casualties in training. That has to do, I think, I say this but I never gave it a lot of thought, but I always thought that everybody was being pushed to learn faster and be faster and get it done. I think that if I learned a little slower, maybe I could have been a decent pilot, but it just was not there. You have to understand the way the country's mentality was. We wanted to get a good army, the best possible, overseas fighting as soon as possible, because the people in England were holding on by a thread.

MW: To what extent did you both as a serviceman and serving the Jewish faith, feel about the Holocaust?

JS: When we were overseas, we knew the Jews were being segregated. We knew they were being killed. But those of us, overseas did not know too much. But back in the states, people who were connected with Jewish organizations were already talking about it. And then there were articles appearing in newspapers and they would have heard about it. I am somewhat disappointed that they used the excuse that we could not bomb some of the concentration camps

because it would take away from the war effort. Quite frankly, there are lots of things that can be done. When you send up 3,000 bombers, you've got room for a group of two or a group of six (but you have to remember if you send six off by themselves) you have got to have fighters with them to protect them. All of these things enter into it. You have to weight the pros and cons. For instance, we used one type of fighter two thirds of the way to the target, then the last third to the target and the first third back was another type of fighter that was a P-51 that could go the furthest with their fuel. Then, we used maybe P-51s or P-47s in the last two thirds. And they had to rendezvous and exchange positions as our protectors over and above us. So fighters were a very important component. I could see if they were going right towards the camp. If Roosevelt said, "Well, if we are going right close to a camp, we can use it as a secondary target, if the first target is socked in and we cannot see it." You can slide some of the guys over from about 50 to 100 miles, but they never even thought of it or said it in that way. So we know that there was no attempt made at that.

KP: Did you think you could do anything for the plight of the Jews in Europe?

JS: We thought that defeating the Germans was just the very best thing we could do and that was just the total picture. Let's get rid of them and that would be it.

KP: It's striking that your missions pick up at the Battle of the Bulge on December 25th. How aware were you of the Battle of the Bulge?

JS: Well, we knew about it because, the weather entered into this, and the German weather people had calculated this and they knew that there was a front coming down at a certain time. They know the weather patterns up there. I am not familiar with it. But they knew them. If they saw a storm forming over Greenland and the general patterns that existed, and when it would be over Britain and over north central and eastern France, that would prevent the bombers and fighter bombers from coming up and helping out.

KP: But at the time there was a lot of talk of the war ending by late fall.

JS: It is true. I think that the missions were becoming a little easier for the Air Force. That is just a general feeling. Because the Germans were not getting the planes up, but we were worried about the Germans having jet planes and our fear was those jets out-flew our fighters. We were constantly being asked when you were being debriefed, "Did you see any jets, did you see any planes that carried a trail or a plume after it?"

KP: What else do debriefing officers ask you? I am just curious.

JS: Well, debriefing officers always would ask what you saw first. If you fired your guns at something, or if you saw anybody go down or what you saw on the ground, anything along the line that was out of the ordinary.

KP: What was your most frightening mission? Where were you? Does any mission stick out as particularly terrifying? It sounds like you were not very frightened on your first mission.

JS: I think there were about four or five missions that sort of fit into a category that were above. I believe I made a note about it and I think it would be better if I picked it out if you do not mind. On December 29th the first mission we were supposed to lead, we were going to (Remagen?) and we took off and the fog closed in on the base and socked it in and we were going into our position as the lead ship of one of the formations we lost a motor ...

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

JS: Cliff Rhodes, who was the engineer, described it very, very well and his description is good and if people are going to listen or look at these tapes ... "December 29th was the mission where we lost an engine on take off and, while the rest of the planes were getting up the base closed in, and we could not gain enough altitude to jettison us in our bombs so we had to land at the crash field." There was a special airfield right at the very coast of the (East Anglia?). (East Anglia?) is that round section that sticks out of the North Sea from England. If you made it across the Channel, they say a bomber that was hit, if you just crossed over and hit that runway it began right from the edge of the sea (except for a little bit of a wall). The runway was long and wide and you could go straight down it. So we landed at the crashfield at Woodbridge with our bombs on board. The runway was iced over and so the brakes did not work. Another engine coughed and deflected us off the runway into a plowed field. When we deflected off of the runway, we were headed for a work area where there were some men working on Lancasters and these mechanics were diving off of the high work platforms because the planes were up in the air getting out of the way. The plowed field stopped us before we hit them. And when they came over to our plane and saw that we still had the bombs on board, I thought the whole bunch of them were going to pass out. Because if something had happened. But you see those bombs would not go off I do not think, because what happened is in dropping that short distance they were only away from the armoring wire a very short distance. This is my guess, and they would not have had a chance to unwind and open up the detonators and they were somewhat inert in that way. I want to tell you another thing that happened at that base. There were planes constantly coming in. The runway was probably ten times wider than the average runway is, and it was probably one or two miles long. So if your fuel or your hydraulic lines have been shot out, and you had no way of stopping, you would roll to a stop by friction of your wheels. While we were there, we kept hearing the radios. In every room, the radio tower was connected. If they needed men in a hurry, they just had to say one word and all of the firemen and guys in smoke clothing and stuff would appear. A British plane had been hit and a gunner was flying it. He came right over the base and all he had to do was drop his wheels down. He had his wheel down I think. He had to just drop down and roll to a stop but I guess he was not sure and he decided to take it up and go around again and as he pulled it out, I do not think he had enough power or did not understand enough about flying to add power as you force the plane to climb and they fell off on a wing and the plane exploded and everybody was killed. I am telling you right now we wanted to get out of there. And pretty soon a truck came and picked us up. But these planes that landed there, they were all in trouble. That was one of them.

KP: It must have been a very difficult base to work in.

JS: Oh, I would think so. It was run by the British.

KP: It was a British-run base?

JS: Yes it was for everybody. You understand that.

KP: The pilot flying the plane, a number of people have told me that on their crews that a lot of pilots on the crews were unconscious. What if something happens?

JS: They have a co-pilot.

KP: Let's say both the pilot and the co-pilot were killed. Did your crew every think about that?

JS: I do not think they thought about it very much. They just figured, that when the time comes, we would see what we could do.

KP: So you did have any enlisted men ...

JS: No. Wrong. No one even suggested that. Never suggested it. It was never suggested and no one ever tried it.

KP: What were the losses like on your base?

JS: I cannot tell you how many men we lost. I will say this much, my wife and I attended one reunion of the Second Air Division of the 8th Air Force, and it was held up at Great Gorge in North Jersey not far from West Point. We went up to West Point and had a memorial service held there. They told us that approximately sixty-five hundred men were lost in the Second Airforce Division of the 8th Air Force.

KP: You did not have any contingency plans when something happened.

JS: No. It's possible some of the other fellows may have had some flying, but I never heard it. But we had a certain amount of fluctuation in the bombardiers and navigators on my ships. Those changed. The pilot and co-pilot never changed. Walt Cullen and Jack Dean, Chubby. There used to be a baseball player named Chubby Dean. Anyway, Jack was a little chubby. The rest of the components of the crew stayed stable until the very next mission when we came back to the base that day, after we had been over at that special base where we dropped in there with a full bomb load. That was considered an abortion. Then we flew the next mission, I believe it was on January 3rd to Hamburg, Germany. That was a good mission. It was a terrific mission in seeing the bombs actually hit and really wreak havoc. We saw the explosion. I do not remember if Johnny Somers was holding the bomb bay doors open or some damn thing, but somebody said something over the radio about closing the bomb bay doors.

KP: What was your target in Hamburg?

JS: I believe it may have been a munitions factory because you could see the stuff exploding all over the place. A later mission, was one of the five that I consider the most difficult. This particular mission, I think, I have some notes on it. There are two distinct stories on it that showed up in the 453rd Bomb Group papers where it actually was printed. The target was at or near Nuremberg. For some reason, the target was socked in and we were called back. In coming back, we consumed a lot of fuel because it was very cold. We opened up the bomb bay doors and we could not get them back closed. They were frozen. Eventually, we were told to go out over the North Atlantic and drop our bombs and Cliff Rhodes was the engineer on that flight. He wrote a story about it too because it effected him as much as anybody else. He was almost court-marshaled because they felt that he had screwed up and caused the crash. Actually what happened was, in leaving after they jettisoned the bombs to go back up into approach, to go above the clouds and they consumed more fuel. Then, finally, when they got close to where the airbase, was they ran into a problem. They ran out of fuel. I would prefer to read this because I think this is a little detailed and I think it would make more sense if I did read it. This story was written by Delmar Wangsvick, he was the lead navigator on the ship. He says, "A recall was ordered and we turned back and dropped to lower altitude, where we were able close the bomb bay doors and showed an "X" on the map where we were to drop our bombs. Unfortunately, a frontal system blocked our path so we had to climb over the clouds and constantly use up fuel. After releasing our bombs, Walt Cullen was advised by Dusty Rhodes, the engineer, that our short fuel supply was now critical. At this point, the group lead was turned over to the deputy lead. Dusty was working carefully to transfer the fuel all out of the main tanks and while he thought something happened in a technical nature, he was trying to even up the inner tanks from one large inner tank to another, but they decided to land at a fighter base and Dusty always used to come back to the back of the plane to check the landing gear. He was very conscientious and saw that the landing gear was locked properly. He went off the radio because he had to disconnect his helmet and, while he was over in there, one of the fuel pumps worked faster and it pumped one out completely, and they lost another motor and they started to go in." It says here, "Dusty was working carefully to transfer the fuel to balance the main tanks." He was not able to. It says here that it was "frozen fuel tanks," but it was not. They found out later on, after the crash, that a small fuse that powers the motor had failed and so they could not pump out of the Tokyo tanks. Those are the tanks in the wing tips. They are referred to as Tokyo tanks. Well, that has to go back to Billy Mitchell who flew off of an aircraft carrier and made one of these, what is the right word to use, when you do something for effect more than a result. So, the tanks you always filled to make the mission result longer was called the Tokyo tank. At this point, we were still under 400 feet. Too low to bail out and within minutes of Old Buck, our base, the waist-section of the aircraft was now occupied by Jerry Shulman, who was waist gunner, Gil (Galesspie?), a tail gunner, Dusty Rhodes, the engineer. He had come back, and Jim Gunnell, the turret navigator and nose operator, and Johnny Somers the radio man. What happened at this point was, as I understand it, Cullen said we are going to go in. Well, Jack Dean then thought that by hollering we are going to go in, we might be landing properly so he hollered, "Take ditching positions." He knew we were going to crash because we lost another motor. Our right wing tip was low and Cullen and Dean were striving mightily to bring it up, otherwise we would cartwheel. If you hit on one wing you would cartwheel over, that would be a hell of a way to crash. Cullen released his safety belt to give him more freedom of action. He knew we were too short to safely land at 100 feet of altitude. Luckily the pilots managed to straighten up the plane. Our air speed was 200 miles per hour as we took off the top of trees, and we were now skidding

to the right with engines one and two dead. Dean opened his right window to wipe the fog that got on his windshield and Cullen called out, "We are going in," and Dean called, "Prepare for ditching." Gunnell hollered, "Should we throw anything out?" Dean said, "No time. Just get into ditching positions." Well, because there were so many people in the back, and there were two waist guns. They were only the pivot on a ball held by. They're also held by a web belt that was tied down. I normally flew the right one. I think I tied mine, the other guy maybe did not tie his as well. I was on that side of the plane for a minute, and we hit the ground and here is this machine gun swinging all over the place. It swung past my head one so I reached up and grabbed it because I felt if I held on to that gun it cannot hit me. That is actually how I went into the ground. When we hit the ground they all flew out of the plane. One guy was caught in there, Junior Furnier. Cliff Rhodes ran around from the back and climbed up on the fuselage and kicked it and this is what they said. Junior Furnier, the top turret was trapped in the floor and he was being crushed against his bottom foot. Dusty Rhodes, after checking to see that Summers, the radio man, was out and the waist was clear, reacted and climbed to the top. Next reacted was ... He got to the top, ran down the fuselage to the top turret. He kicked the Plexiglas cover like a football. It popped off and then he pulled him out from between the two guns. One member spilled his parachute in the exit and was trying to get it loose. Cullen yelled get the hell away from here. The plane is going to blow up. A quick count of the men revealed one crew member was missing. Shulman. But he was not in the plane. In the pine forest, we cleared a swatch which resembled the wake of a lawnmower, on a big scale. We dashed to the end of the clearing and waited for the plane to blow up. No explosion. We had come down on the best spot in the immediate area. The trees cushioned our fall. A GI with an arm full of wood appeared and said, "What happened?" What should have happened. About this time, Shulman appeared having run in the opposite direction of the other guys. Nevertheless, the salvage personnel showed up. Let's see. It says here, "We had a wild a trip to the hospital in the truck, as our driver after having seen the plane, was sure we were all dying." Salvage personnel declared later that it was impossible for a large crew to survive that mess with no bad casualties. We did. And we all felt we were experiencing a miracle. Only Cullen and Clark had significant injuries.

KP: That plane should have, in fact, exploded.

JS: Well, it was all high octane fuel, yes. I cannot tell you why it did not explode.

KP: What is striking is the two memorable missions you have talked about neither one them deal directly with the enemy. Both were equipment malfunctions. Did you have any close calls with the enemy?

JS: Well, that is one the five missions. The one other mission that scared the hell out of me was after I transferred crews. This first broke up at this point because Walt Cullen was never back on flying and I flew three missions with a pick-up crew. How this pick-up crew was made up, they took a co-pilot who was a good man and made him number one, then they got a young green co-pilot from the U.S. He was the number two man. They got an engineer and radio man from a crew that broke up. I was the armorer, and they got three gunners from other crews. I flew three missions. But because we were such a new crew they gave us probably the oldest plane on the base. All of the newer planes had Plexiglas windows over the waist gun. In this plane, you opened a metal door the size of the newer plexiglass windows with a little bit of window near

the top that was Plexiglas. You tied it up and you had nothing but fresh air coming in at you. Right in front of it, there was a deflector and you pushed that deflector out that deflected the wind from coming in on you. We were flying at 28,000 feet, the temperature was somewhere about forty below zero. My hands were so cold I kept them between my legs. Tears came into my eyes. To tell you the truth, this was near the end of January, you have to remember if you leave the ground at let's say fifteen, twenty or thirty above zero and you drop from a one or one and a half degrees for every thousand feet you go up, at 28,000 feet you are dropping forty more degrees or more. So, as I said to you a minute ago, I flew three like that and then I was transferred to Larry Love's crew. I flew six or seven more missions. I know I had twenty-one missions in because my service record shows on discharge I had an air medal with oak leaf clusters and you got an oak leaf cluster medal for seven missions, and for every seven missions you got another oak. So that is how I got that.

KP: What is the mission where you said there was a point you were supposed to make?

JS: Thirty-five is what we were aiming for, however, as I indicated to you before, this situation was such that you could not fly if you were not on a crew, you did not get those regular missions. They would wake you up in the middle of the night and say, "Hey, so and so is sick. You're flying with so and so in the 735th." In any event, I was lucky enough to get on another lead crew and one of our missions was to a town that is not listed that way, but I know the town was Dusseldorf. Dusseldorf was a big industrial town in the rural valley just south of Cologne. In that mission, just before the bomb run, normally we used to have flack fired at us by 88 batteries of four 88's. But I think it is a 155, or it is a 120. But we were flying through the thickest flack I ever saw, and when it hit, that flack broke up, and hit it sounded like someone was hitting the outside of the plane with a bullwhip. We were in it constantly while we were over the target. We came out of that unscathed. But that really scared the hell out of me. The last mission I flew was one where men were hurt. This was a mission that ...

KP: You sent me an account. The mission where you actually encountered jets ...

JS: That mission was flown to (Emeric?), Germany, a jet experimental base. It was on the north side of Berlin. We were leading the wing. This airman Voight wrote a story about it. And this is the thing that always bothered me about this mission. We were leading the group and you fly in a series of diamonds. You have the first plane, then you have a plane above his wing, to the right and slightly behind us, and one below it, to the left, and one behind, slightly lower. That's the diamond. Then you have another diamond on him and another diamond on the other. Each going up and down, you do that to get the firepower concentrated. We dropped our bombs on the primary target, the lead and low left. The high right did not drop their bombs and they were carrying anti-personnel bombs, which were good if you hit a fighter base with experimental planes because that tears them up. The secondary target was a bridge and since the high right did not drop their bombs, and you are already forty miles from Berlin, we turned towards the secondary target. I called Major and command pilot Wib Clingan about it because Voight said we were supposed to go to a marshalling yard. And Wib Clingan said, "We did go towards the secondary target. It was a bridge, but someone already hit the bridge and it was burning." So we went to the third target and the third target was the marshaling yard. And while we were dropping our bombs, we were hit with flack. My plane was hit and the guys flying immediately

behind and below us, that is the one right behind us, just below us, with about five missions in England. It's my contention and I asked Wib about it and he thought I might be right. When that battery shot those four shots up, we were ahead of then it slightly and so only our tail gunner was hit, and one of our engines was hit. But the full brunt of this was caught by the Powell crew and they blew up in the air. It broke the plane in half. They only saw two parachutes come out. We could not maintain altitude. We dropped down to 10,000 feet and on our way down, I did not want to remind (Wibb?), he gave the order to throw everything out to stabilize the plane. So Ray Brunet, the fellow that is up in the nursing home, the fellow that had the stroke up in Connecticut, Ray Brunette, the radio man, brought his radio back and threw the damn thing out. To tell you the truth, quite frankly, how much could a radio weigh. It's made out of aluminum. So when we stabilized, the command pilot said, "Will you radio the base that we have stabilized and we are going to try to come home?" And Ray said, "We threw it out." Above us were two P-51 mustangs and they flew high above us like two bees. They kept circling us to protect us against any fighters that might come to attack us. When we got far enough out of the battle zone, each one took a turn coming down flying off of the edge of the wing. They took off their oxygen masks because you were at 10,000 feet and they lit a cigarette and they were puffing away. Then, when they finished the cigarette, we were leading the group and you fly in a series of diamonds. We are the first plane, then you have a plane above our wing to our right and slightly behind us, one on the left, below and slightly our wing, and one directly behind us but lower. They slid the canopy back or closed it up, waived and shot up and the other guy come down to see us. We landed at an airbase in Antwerp. We were not allowed to cross the Channel. They were afraid another motor would quit and Charlie was hit, the tail gunner. They sent us to the Black Town Hotel to stay and we felt we were going to leave there the next day and go back to base. We were there a second day and I started to get worried. The reason for that is this, if you do not make the morning report three days in a row they send out an MIA report. When an MIA report goes out, it goes to headquarters, then it's very difficult to catch up with it and stop it if you show up at home base after the third day. The second day, late in the afternoon, we flew to a base in France, and they flew us back to England and a truck took us back to our base and we reported in. We stopped it at two and a half days and I was really worried because I did not want my parents getting an MIA. They were older people and I thought that the shock sometimes is too much. And when we went up in town that night, it's this picture here. This is Johnny Summers. He was the radio man on our ship. This is the Cullen crew and this is our radio man, Johnny Summers who is on this picture and that's the girl. Her name is Tommy Thompson. She was his girlfriend. She ran the NAAFI that Navy Army Air Force Institute. It's like a USO club. He nearly fainted because they could not tell which plane went down or did both planes go down. When that burst hit us. He thought I was one of the guys who was killed. You are back. We had a big celebration that night. After the war ended, I learned a fellow I knew who was shot down and walked out through Spain. His mother had a heart attack on seeing an M.I.A. telegram his sister had hidden.

KP: That was your last mission?

JS: That was our last mission. The group broke up the next day or two days later. Those fellows with less than twenty-one missions were going back to be retrained to fly against Japan. Those of us who still had some to go were sent to the 389th to fly more missions. We did not fly any missions at the 389th B Group.

KP: You never did any mercy missions?

JS: No. I do not think so, but one time we did a special mercy type mission. Or it was not a mercy mission. I was not on it though. My crew, the Cullen crew, was called upon when the U.S. infantry crossed the Rhine. We needed to get a lot of supplies forward to the men who were crossing on some of the bridges. What they did was, they loaded supplies with parachutes attached. All the night waist gunners were left at home to have more room. I was not on that mission. I have a picture of some of the supplies they dropped. Shortly thereafter, I was up in Leeds, which is where I had friends and I came back that night to the 389th. The fellows said, "Where were you? We have been looking all over for you." I said, "I was up in Leeds." "We were ordered to leave this morning, but we could not get everything together. We are leaving tomorrow morning. We are flying back to the states." I had a bicycle. I bought a bicycle over there and I used to use it to go to town. I did not have time to send the bicycle off to my friends. Six o'clock the next morning, we flew up to Liverpool and the next day was VE day. We flew from there to Iceland and from Iceland instead of letting us go to Greenland, they made us fly to Labrador. On that leg, we hit head winds and I want to tell you we just about made it. Matt Gewain, the engineer on the second lead crew I was on, Larry Lowe's crew, said he did not think there was enough gas in those tanks to fill a cigarette lighter, when we landed at Goose Bay, Labrador. From Labrador, we flew to a little town called, oh, I wrote it down last night because I knew I would not remember it today. In Connecticut, I thought I wrote it down. It's right near Enfield. It was just one runway with an old Army barrack. We landed there. They had a railroad track alongside. It took us to Fort Miles Standish. The first thing they did was run us in to an auditorium. Made every guy call home. They were afraid that if you walked in on your family, it might be of a shock and cause heart attacks, etc. So we called home. Then we were moved by train. I went to Fort Dix and got a pass immediately to go home for thirty days. I was home for thirty days and went back. They then sent me to Greensboro, North Carolina, an R and R place (rest and recuperation). They then sent me to (Chanute Field?), Illinois. I was there through July and August, and that is about the time we dropped the bombs on Japan. After that, I got a chance to come home and I flew home with a pilot one time. Since you live in this area you can appreciate this. We are flying in an AT-6, a two-seater. An AT-6 is an advanced trainer. We flew from (Chanute Field?) to Columbus, Ohio and then to someplace outside of Harrisburg and we were flying into Newark. We were going to land and my aunt and uncle, Morris' mother and father, were going to meet me at the airport. As we are coming down, I said, "That is Bloomfield Avenue down below us." He says, "Yeah, that is okay." This fellow has never been down in the east before. He says, "I will tell you what, let's go take a look at Old Glory," and he took that AT-6 right down past Newark Airport down over the Statue of Liberty. He laid that plane up on the side and we circled the Statue of Liberty a couple of times, then he turned around and we landed at Newark. I was discharged the first or second of October. I came down to college to find out about going in. School had already started but they set up a special program for men who came back quickly and on the first of November through the end of December they had a two month program where you took just two courses, five days a week and that was the equivalent of those two courses for a semester to help add in what we did before. I think that covers everything you would want to know.

KP: So you were back in the classroom in November 1945?

JS: That is correct.

KP: Whereas just a few months earlier you were flying missions?

JS: Yes. I will tell you what it had to do with. I had a lot of points. You understand, the basis for discharge is the amount of time you spent overseas counted for points, the amount of missions. Everything you did added up and the length of time you were in service. I was discharged amongst some of the first men. I had a cousin though, who went to the South Pacific with the first men drafted called the Ohio Gang. Did you ever hear that expression used? Over the hill in October, those were guys drafted in October, 1940 for one year, and told they would be out next October. They never were. My cousin was one of them. He spent almost five years in Australia and some islands in the Pacific. When he came home that summer, he was out practically the day he got back.

KP: A lot of people were very close to their crews. It sounded like you did not seem upset about going with different crews. How did you feel about that?

JS: To tell you the truth I was a little more disciplined than other kids when they first went in. You have to remember that, when I was working for my father that whole summer and the summer before that, I was eighteen years old. I was doing man's work. I was buying the merchandise that another man might be making say, where we were getting paid forty dollars, if I was a buyer in a firm or I was one of the partners I might be making 150 dollars a week or something like that. I was doing the exact same work they did. I remember one day coming in late and unloading the truck and everything else and picked up my jacket and I walked over to one of the stores on the side. Hymie of H. Worman and Sons was there and said, "How you doing kid?" I said, "Fine," and he said, "Is your old man paying you enough? You're doing enough." I said, "My pop's paying me properly." He said, "Well, you are doing two men's work." "It does not bother me," I said. "My pop's doing fine for me and I am doing the best I can." But, as I said, the result is that I would say I had a little more, I think there is a word that fits. Sometimes you forget the proper word. But I was little more mature than the average kid going into service.

KP: So this did not bother you as much?

JS: No. The fact that I was switching crews. No.

KP: What about, did you ever encounter any enemy fighters?

JS: Once or twice I was on missions where fighters flew through the formation and you tried to, if you were up ... None of them ever attacked us from the very front. Then you had to wait until they past and sometimes you had other planes in that line. If you are in a lead plane, you cannot fire because you want to make sure that they are clear of you. I fired once or twice, but if your in the thick of the formation you have to make sure before you pull that trigger and I was trained as a ball turret gunner. I want you to understand that. I do not know if you understand that part.

KP: The term ball gunner. Yes.

JS: I was on the bottom of the plane. That ball turret was in the plane and attached on a cradle and the guns hung straight down. Now those guns were inside the plane because the bottom of the Liberator was only about twelve to eighteen feet off the ground. What happened is you opened the door of the turret and climbed in between those two guns and sat in the ball turret. Then, somebody closed you in, then they lowered the ball down on a screw mechanism, and when the ball got half way down below the surface of the bottom of the plane, then you rotated the guns up. When you rotated the guns up, you saw that on the Liberator, if there is a picture of a Liberator around here on my desk, you would find here, here is a Liberator – those two tails are/were just below you so the possibility existed that if your electric controls did not cut out, you could shoot your tail off. That was one of the reasons why the people who flew in lib's many of them, took the Liberators ball turret out. I was glad they took it out because I did not like the idea of hanging below the plane but there was nothing I could say about it. I was the ball turret gunner.

KP: So you flew all of your missions as the ball turret gunner.

JS: No I did not. They took it out of our own plane because we carried a radar dome in its place. I was glad were made a radar crew.

KP: Did you fly any missions?

JS: No. I only flew some missions in training and firing guns over Tindel Field. I flew in the waist gun all of the time in combat.

KP: The whole time. And it sounds like you were very thankful.

JS: Well, yes. But I want to tell you another thing. You seen the skin of an airplane, it's smooth. When they took the ball turret out, there was a hole in the bottom of the plane. You know how they closed it up. They took 2 x 6's. They were not even ship lap or tongue and groove or something. They just took them and bolted them in that hole. And in between there might be spaces of that much. And here you are flying. And that fresh air came right up through that hole because the ball turret was in front of the area where the waist guns were. And that fresh air came in right past you. So you always knew it was there. Is there anything else you would like to know?

KP: Well, it's, I guess, one other question about flying is superstition.

JS: Do you want me to tell you a story about superstition? I will tell you a good one. When we went overseas, we had some of the first new type of uniforms made. When they first went overseas, they had those leather jackets with a sort of fur on the inside. They were not as warm. The new clothes were sort of a greenish color. They were made of a material we use when you go skiing in. What do you call that down inside? Well, we were issued these new uniforms so when we came overseas. Many ground men had not even see them yet. This story is worth laughing about now. We got to the 389th and pay day came a few days later, and we could not

get paid because we were not on the payroll. This base was a little different than our base. At the 453rd, the 732nd was a little off the base, maybe 200 feet from the gate through and so we had to walk around the gate to get to the mess hall. When it was pay day there were big crap games all over. We were never involved because we stayed in our own area. When we got to the 389th, we were in a barrack with a lot of other people and they had big crap games. "If you get paid, you can go shoot crap and make some money or lose it." That is the come on. Well, we did not have any money. So I went over to one of the officers on our crew and I borrowed five pounds. Five pounds is about twenty-three dollars in American money. I went up to where the crap game was with a couple of other guys and there are these big fat sergeants who were on the base ground. They hogged the table. If you were a "don't better," if you understand shooting craps, you could not even place a "don't bet" because that is what they did. They faded everybody. You could not even get close. So I am standing on the outside there and some guys standing near me and he said, "Damn. I would like to get a bet in but you cannot even get close." I said, "You think he will make it?" He said, "Yeah, he will make that six." I said, "I will give you six to five he will not." Well, I stood there and I bet against this guy. Then another guy came along, and he bet with mee. The sergeants did not offer odds, but if you go to Las Vegas or some gambling house they give you six to five on a point of six. They will give you three to two on a five or a nine and two to one on a ten or a four. Well, I won 185 dollars. I had it figured out. I won almost forty pounds. My five became forty. So I took my money and put it into my jacket. This new jacket was so new there was a little bit of a snap pocket I slid my money in there and closed it and went back to my bunk. I hung it up and forgot I had the money there. I knew I won the money. The next morning I went up to the wash room where you wash your clothes and shower and I took my jacket with me. I took it off and hung it up, washed my clothes, wrung them out, and hung them up. After a few minutes went back and my jacket was gone. It then struck me that the money was in it. Well, I went around and I knew it was not flying personnel that would take that jacket. It would be probably a ground crew person. I went around amongst all the barracks I could get to and said that I was a gunner from another crew that just came over from the 453 Bomb Group. I said that I had been flying in that jacket ever since my first mission and I got twenty-one in and I am awfully superstitious. I said I would reward anybody who returns that jacket, but I sure would like to get it back. Everybody understood superstitious. I went someplace and came back later and found the jacket on my bed. I picked the jacket up, opened the pocket ... you see the thing is it was made so tight and so even unless you knew the pocket was there and even if you saw the little button that was painted the same color as the material you would not know the pocket was there. Snapped it open, and there were the forty pounds. So that is what you call a story about superstition.

KP: And you had not flown any missions yet.

JS: Oh, this was at that new base the 389th. I had twenty-one missions at the 453rd Bomb Group in that jacket. I was not that superstitious about that jacket I just wanted to get the forty pounds back.

KP: You knew that this would pull people's strings.

JS: That is right. Absolutely correct. Along the line, I thought I would slide that story in, but I thought we have been here so long, you have about had enough from me. But when you asked that question I could not avoid telling the story.

KP: We would like to, not today, but we would like to do a follow up interview with you about your GI bill years and we would like to interview your wife particularly since she was at the office of dependency benefit.

JS: If you wait a while we will be back down. I have a sister in a nursing home in Jersey. And therefore I believe we will be down. Often, you have been nice enough to listen to me. You know, by making this tape for myself, I do not have to go through a long explanation with my children. This carries an awful lot of my life and it's for them too. You know, Morris' mother and father, his father has passed away and I have them on tape and they told me the story of their life when they were younger. I tell you this is one, of my projects to tape members of my family and you have helped me tape my own.

KP: It's been a pleasure.

JS: I am pleased to know you and if this does you any good and if you want me to send you a copy of it on tape I will.

KP: Actually we would ...

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

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