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AN INTERVIEW WITH SEYMOUR WINSTEN

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Molly Graham: This is an interview with Seymour Winsten. The interview is being conducted on Wednesday, July 23, 2014 in Flourtown, Pennsylvania. All right. Well, let's start at the beginning. Can you tell me where and when you were born?

Seymour Winsten: I was born in Jersey City, New Jersey on June 14, 1926.

MG: How old does that make you?

SW: Eighty-eight.

MG: Can you tell me a little bit about how your family got to Jersey City?

SW: That's interesting. Let me think. My father was from Minsk, Belarus and my mother was from Pinsk, Belarus. My father came here somewhere around 1910, '11, I'm not exactly sure. My mother came with her father approximately at the same time. My father came to Philadelphia. He had some relatives here in Philadelphia. My mother apparently came with her father to help bring the other children to this country. My father, I think, was working, went to New York and was working somewhere in New York and he went to a synagogue around 99th Street in Manhattan, and he met my grandfather there. Apparently, he was looking for a place to stay. I guess in those days, you go and look and my grandfather said, come stay with us. He stayed with [them] and he met my mother, and that's how they met. Then they got married and I think it was around 1916 when they got married. They apparently had a child who died either in childbirth or during the flu epidemic. I'm not exactly sure anymore. Then they had my sister who, I think--let me see. She was born in 1920 or 1919. I can't really remember. They had a lot of problems with her. She apparently had a thyroid problem and they had a lot of difficulty with that. They had another child which was me and that was it, 1926. I have very little recollection about what's going on. I know that we went--I was born on Orient Avenue in Jersey City. We lived in several places in Jersey City, on [Van] Nostrand Avenue. Then, my mother, apparently opened a ladies' garment store on what is Jackson Avenue, which I think is now Martin Luther King Drive. [Editor's Note: Jackson Avenue was renamed Martin Luther King Drive after the assassination of the civil rights leader.] They lived in Jersey City. Actually, they had a fire in the store and they eventually moved out to Linden, New Jersey. My father was--I don't remember this obviously, my father apparently had started a grocery company and that apparently was broken up and he went to work for the (Gerber?) Brothers as a salesman in Brooklyn. I went to PS 15 [Whitney M. Young Jr. School] in Jersey City. Then, we moved somewhere. I went toPS 34. Then, I went to Henry Snyder High School in Jersey City and I graduated in 1944 I think. [Editor's Note: Henry Snyder High School is a performing arts high school and is part of the Jersey City Public School District.] [I] was sixteen and a half years old or something like that. I thought I would become an engineer, so I went to college in Newark at what was then called the Newark College of Engineering. It has a different name now [New Jersey Institute of Technology]. I enlisted in the army and I'm trying to remember. When I was seventeen, they were taking people, at that time, who they would send to college and when you got to be eighteen, they took you out of the college and you went into the Army. So, I was in a pre-college … I went to Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. When I got to be eighteen, I got in the army and for some reason they sent me to the Field Artillery School down in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I have no idea why. I was there from June--I guess it was from June 1944 until March or January of 1945 where I was shipped overseas. I remember we landed. We were on a boat called the *Mariposa,* which apparently was one of these cruise ships that were in the Pacific

going from San Francisco to Hawaii. [Editor's Note: The SS *Mariposa* was launched as a luxury cruise ship in 1931. It made voyages between California and Hawaii. In 1941 it was seized by the US government and converted to a troop ship. After the war it was returned to its owners but quickly sold and renamed the SS *Homeric*. It was scrapped in 1974.] The thing I have a most vivid memory was that because this ship was crowded we were sleeping outside and I was down on the bottom of five people on top of me but I was fine because they put all the blankets on top of me. The guy on top was right underneath the pipe on this thing. They put all the blankets on top of me. We landed in Liverpool. Wait just one second. Let me think here. Let's see. Yes, we landed in Liverpool and got on a train and went to Southampton. We stayed there for a period. I can't remember the exact time, but I remember somebody was on the train--these ladies of course, when the train stops somewhere in the middle of England, they would give me doughnuts and coffee and one lady said to me, "Are you going overseas?" I looked at her and I said, "I think I'm overseas now." [laughter] We got on a boat in Southampton. It was a ferry boat because there was a sentry where the boat had been cleared out of all the things … We landed in--let me think here. We landed somewhere on the shore of France. I can't remember exactly when. We got on a train and I went to Thionville on the train in France. Thionville is right near the Netherlands and that. [Editor's Note: Thionville, France borders with Luxembourg.] We were staying there in the replacement depot in Thionville, which was a school. It was a girls' school. I saw some things I had never seen before as a kid, like that. Eventually, somebody came up, picked me up, and took me to my outfit. The one thing I do remember is we were in a car, and we were seeing these gentleman, soldiers in foxholes and they were cleaning their rifle. So, I asked the guy, "What's going on? Isn't that the infantry?" He said, "Yes, we're in front of them." [laughter] I didn't think it was pretty nice. Incidentally, he says, "You won't get a hot meal tonight. They killed the cook." I'm eighteen. I had just turned eighteen, but I went and the outfit was pretty good. Eventually, I wound up here because and I don't know why I knew it, but because of my ability to talk in sort of like a pigeon Yiddish, I became the translator for the outfit. When the outfit moved up we would go to wherever we wanted to go and they'd tell their people the guns are going to be coming here, you have to get away. The guns were 105mm howitzer. That I remember. We stayed there until we crossed the Rhine. When the Rhine was crossed and we moved up. Actually, I think we met some Russian soldiers, if you want to know the truth. I have a recollection of some Russians coming out of a car and asking us if we had any food because they apparently had gotten the same way. Why I was driving a jeep, I have no idea; I didn't have a license and I did not really know how to drive, but somehow I wound up in a ditch and I smashed my jaw, hit my forehead, busted my leg. It wasn't busted, it was sprained, and I left my outfit and they sent me to the hospital in Munich, Germany. That I remember. Then, while I was in Munich, Germany, my outfit was the 211th Field Artillery Battalion. I was lucky I was wounded. [The 211th Field Artillery Battalion] went to fight China-Burma, which I didn't have to do. Then, the rest of my military career, I kept moving back in replacement depots until I was sitting in a tent in a replacement depot. By then, for some reason and I have no idea why, I was a sergeant. No, I was a corporal at that point. … came in and said, "Lieutenant (Rich?) wants to talk to you." I said, "Who's Lieutenant (Rich?)?" He said, "Oh, he's in the officer's club in Reims." Incidentally, my name at that time was Seymour (Weinstein?). So, I got over to him. They drove me over. I went to the--they had a nice officer's club, and he was sitting behind a desk. The first thing he said to me, "You're Jewish, aren't you?" Now, this is a kid who grew up in Jersey City. Nobody ever asked me that. All my friends and everybody, we were an international community. Actually my best friend

was Italian at that time. So, I got angry. I said, "Why do you ask me if I'm Jewish?" He said, "I need somebody with--" and this is in Yiddish. "A [yiddisher] kop." [Editor's Note: A yiddisher kop translates to "Jewish head."] Smart head. "I need somebody to do my books' they're robbing the hell out of me." I said, "I was an engineer." He says, "You'll learn." So, I learned and that was all--he left very quickly. Then, I had signed up, after the war was over, to go to a college wherever the army was going to send me and they sent me--at that point, they sent me to Swindon, England to go to Shrivenham. [Editor's Note: In 1945, three GI American Universities were opened in Europe after World War II to educate soldiers that were stationed there. Soldiers were allowed to attend one term with the idea that they would continue their education in the United States. The three campuses were Shrivenham, England; Florence, Italy; and Biarritz, France.] I can't even pronounce it anymore. What was I saying? Shrivenham.

MG: Shrivenham?

SW: Yes, American University. That's what they called it. It was in Swindon and we had, I think, a couple of teachers, professors coming in from Oxford. Swindon was obviously, not that far from Oxford. So, it took me a long time to … time. One of them was, I think, Julian Huxley, who was the brother of Aldous Huxley. [Editor's Note: Julian Huxley was an English biologist who contributed to the study of etymology. His brother Aldous Huxley was a famous novelist and author of *Brave New World.*] He gave out a course in biology. I had never taken any biology and I found it fascinating. So, I decided I was going to come back and become a biochemist instead of an engineer. So, I'm trying to remember now. I got myself in Swindon, we came back, and that was the time I ran--then, I ran the officer's club until I got out of the army in June 1946. Actually, since I apparently for some reason, and I [don't know how], I became a sergeant. I have my discharge papers and they wanted me to join the Reserves. I was still a little foolish. I said I'll join the Reserves at that point. After that, I went to Newark. Oh, I was accepted in what was then Newark College. By the time I got there it was Rutgers-Newark. I was with the first class at Rutgers Newark. Let me think of what the hell else I'm trying to say. Well, I got to tell you the story about how I met my wife. My father had had a heart attack and he belonged to an organization that had a camp for both foreign adults and for children and he wanted to go up there. So, I said I'd drive him up. I drove him up to the camp and I had had met some girls in Jersey City at that point. One of them was up in the Catskills and I thought I would go up and visit her. But, I was sitting in what was essentially a library up there in the camp and this gorgeous blonde with a red coat walks in and I hear her saying, "We're going to go to (Newburgh?)." It was a day off. "We're going to go see a movie." I figured maybe I can find some way to meet her. So, I went out and got my car and I saw them walking down this place and they were hitchhiking. So, I pick them up. That's what happened. I got stuck with her for seventy years. After that, I went back and went to Rutgers--I'm sorry. I went to--What did I do? Let me think for a minute.

MG: Take your time.

SW: Rutgers Newark and I went to NYU … and I got my Master's degree in physiology. After I got my Master's degree, I went to work at Merck Institute of Therapy, Therapeutic … Institute and after a while, I started going back to Rutgers part-time and I got my doctorate degree at Rutgers. I can't remember what date was it. Well, the diploma is upstairs so I can--let's see. I got my doctorate degree and I was looking for a job. I left Merck and I was looking for a job and I'm trying to figure out what was I doing next in terms of that. We had gotten married and we

were living in Brooklyn with her parents. Then we got this house. No, it wasn't this house. We were living in--I got a job around here and we were living up on the hill up here and then we bought this house. I then got a job at the Albert Einstein Medical Center, where I was given a job as the Director of the Chemistry Division at the Albert Einstein Medical Center and I stayed there for thirty years. I also became, I guess, an associate professor at Temple University, but before that--oh, now I know. Before that, I was teaching at the University of Pennsylvania veterinary school [University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine]. I didn't want to do that, teach anymore, but during the course of that, we suddenly gave a course on virology; the first course on virology that was ever given in the United States. There was a guy whose name I've forgotten, who's really an expert in this. Then they gave me--I got a job in Einstein's, stayed there for thirty years, but I also did a lot of consulting. I consulted for the Surgeon General in biochemistry. After the Vietnam War, there was a lot of soldiers coming back with drugs. They didn't know how to test for it at that point. So, I was able to setup a program for testing for that when they came to Fort Dix. [That] went on for a while. I also consulted at Atlantic City Hospital for many years and I have many consultations. In fact, that sort of helped send my kids to college, in addition to other things. So, I was at the--and we did travelling; I gave some talks and we were just talking about that. I gave one talk in--there was an international meeting. I was invited because I had worked on this strange instrument and sort of perfected it. So, I was giving a major talk there. Then, after I retired from Einstein, there was a rehabilitation hospital, the Moss Rehabilitation Hospital [MossRehab], which was on the same grounds as Einstein and I setup their laboratory and I was the director of their laboratory until I retired all together on that thing. As I said, I was a consultant with SmithKline. It was all things that I had to do. So, that's probably the story of most of my life.

MG: How did your last name change from Weinstein?

SW: Oh, when I got married, we--I don't know. A friend of mine at that time--actually, this is interesting. When I went to Rutgers Newark, I sat down and this guy sat down next to me and he said, "My name's Seymour Margulies." I said, "My name is Seymour Weinstein." He says, yes, your father, who was a grocery salesman, was selling things to his father who owned a store and that was the way we met. Actually, we've been--were friends for all this time. Unfortunately, Seymour died last year. He took care of all my legal components. He became a lawyer and eventually he became a judge in Jersey City. So yes, that's how we changed the name. That's about all I can remember at this particular point.

MG: Did your parents ever talk about what it was like in Russia?

SW: No. If they did, I didn't listen. I was one of those kids who shut off everything except what I was doing. My wife knows a great deal about her parents and her lives, but they never talked about that. I think my father was very reticent about what was going on, what went on in Russia. [Editor's Note: From 1721 to 1917, Russia was known as the Russian Empire and it possessed the land which is now known as modern day Belarus. Tsar Nicholas II stepped down from power after the Russian Revolution began in 1917. After several years, Russia would become the Soviet Union.] As I said, my mother came over with her father and she spent her time in this [country]. No, I really can't remember anything they said. You know what? I never had any other relatives other than from my wife's side who--except some people who lived in Philadelphia. In fact, those are the ones we visited on my father's side. Unfortunately, actually, my other friend, Harry Baker, who was my other relative, he just died. I'm sorry.

MG: Oh, I'm sorry.

SW: Yes. No, they never talked about it. If they did, they would talk in Russian, which I never knew and my father, I think, helped during the war, translating Russian to English and things with people but I'm not sure of that, but I have a recollection.

MG: What war was that?

SW: World War II. Yes. I think he helped them translate some stuff when they got some stuff from Russia. Why and how, I don't know. He was a very reticent individual and that sort of thing.

MG: Do you know what was going on in Russia in the early 1900s?

SW: No. I'm sure I know what was going on historically but they never talked about it. They just came. My father said he landed in Philadelphia, walked up Broad Street and went to visit his aunt on Gerard Avenue who had a fruit store on Gerard Avenue and that's the way he stayed in there. That's about all I remember of that.

MG: What was your grandfather doing at that synagogue in New York?

SW: He was a member of the synagogue. He was an iron worker now that I think about it. He apparently worked with iron, like you put on the gate and stuff like that. Apparently, that was where they were living on 99th Street, the family, and that's what they were doing there. They eventually moved. In fact, they moved to Coney Island. They stayed there and they lived in Coney Island for many years. So, that's about what I can remember on that sort of thing.

MG: Do you know why they moved from Philadelphia to New York?

SW: Oh, they weren't in Philadelphia, my grandparents. My father's relatives were in Philadelphia. The Bakers were in Philadelphia. Why they went to New York, I think they stayed in New York all the time. They came and they stayed in New York. They got the rest of the family back, yes.

MG: Do you remember what Jersey City was like during the 1930s?

SW: Let me think. My major recollection of Jersey City in 1930, we were living on Jackson Avenue, upstairs above a candy store because they had been--my mother's store had been across the street from that and I remember--the one thing I can remember about Jersey City was when they had a snowstorm, nobody could get--their cars were backed up and they were stuck there for all the time, until somebody got around to cleaning … but I don't really have too much memory about how that was.

MG: How about living through the Great Depression?

SW: I really sort of never thought about. The one time I thought about this for some reason we lived on [Van] Nostrand Avenue in a house. My grandparents were living with us at the time and I remember my father had taken me somewhere and as we walked up from Jackson area on [Van] Nostrand, I remember this guy selling apples and that was about all I can--they always shielded us in terms of what went on. He always managed to make enough money so I never

thought about the times of the Depression. [Editor's Note: After the stock market crashed on October 29, 1929 the United States was in a state of economic depression until it entered World War II on December 7, 1941.]

MG: What did you father do for a living?

SW: He was essentially a grocery salesman.

MG: Right.

SW: He had owned a company, what the heck was the name? The Margulies--I don't know why it was called that--Grocery Company, with his partner, with the guy, his partner. His partner was named Margulies. For some reason they had some financial problems. I think they said that this guy apparently had misfiled a thing and he messed up and the company went bankrupt and then he got a job with the Marigold Company--not the Margulies, now that I remember.

MG: Margulies, was the last name of your friend.

SW: Yes. He got a job with selling, being a grocery salesman and he would stay that way all the time. Apparently, he had made quite an adequate living in terms of that stuff. Okay.

MG: You talked about how your mother had a women's clothing store.

SW: It was one of these shops, women's clothes and she became a corsetiere and she was able to make corsets for people. So, when the store burnt down, and of course I remember that, she was able to setup a thing upstairs in our apartment and was able to have people come up there and she'd fit them and do corsetiere work.

MG: Did she make clothing for you and your sister?

SW: No, she didn't make any clothing for me. My sister became a secretary; went to some secretarial school. She was actually six and a half, seven years older than me and got jobs, eventually was a secretary to a school board in, I think, Linden [New Jersey] and she stayed there. She married the son of the guy who had a shoe store across the street. His name was Albert. He had been to the University of Pittsburgh and he apparently, eventually became in charge of most of the electrical connections around Jersey City area, everything else, and he sort of stayed that way until he died. He was a very quiet guy. You could sit in a room for hours; he wouldn't say anything. So, that's what I can remember in terms of that.

MG: What was it like to be a kid living above a candy store?

SW: That was great because they get the guys--they go downstairs, sit in the fountain and they'd give me--and I got candy and stuff like that. Of course, in those days, everybody sort of smoked so I'd buy one or two cigarettes from them and I'd smoke. Eventually, I quit smoking. I was smoking a pipe most of my life, up until I quit twenty years ago. In fact, my wife collected all my pipes. I used to collect pipes. We got rid of them because we weren't smoking.

MG: How would you say Jersey City has changed since the time you lived there?

SW: Well, I haven't been to Jersey City. Oh, I think, most of the change has been down by the waterfront; the part of Jersey City that we really never went to. We were in Greenville. It was another part of Jersey City. Actually, the only reason I went there, the main library in Jersey City was in that part of town and I would go on the trolley car; it would take me all the way down there and I'd go to the library, the main library. There was another library in Greenville and it was a good library, but the other one had so many more books and my ambition was to read all the books in the library. I don't think I ever finished that.

MG: How come you love libraries so much?

SW: I love to read. My most pleasure is reading …

MG: What are some of your favorite books?

SW: My favorite books, that's interesting. I know when I was a kid there was a series of books about the Civil War. I don't remember the author, but I read every one of his. I like mystery novels and I read whatever mystery novels were out at that point. Actually, I liked the novels in the old days where they didn't--Ellery Queen. Ellery Queen was my favorite author. Yes, that I remember. [Editor's Note: Ellery Queen was the character of detective novels written by cousins Daniel Nathan and Manfred B. Lepofsky.]

MG: What kind of books did he write?

SW: It was a penname of two guys and I don't remember what they were, but he was a penname for them. It was the Ellery Queen books. That I do remember.

MG: You talked about how your parents or your family sort of sheltered you from the effects of the depression.

SW: Yes.

MG: Did you have a sense of what the rest of the country was going through?

SW: No, I never did. I had no--actually, until I got on the--joined the Army and got sent up to Hamilton College, I really never did much. I loved Jersey City at that point. That's about all I can remember of all the other things involved. Yes.

MG: You talked earlier about how your neighborhood was sort of multi-ethnic.

SW: Yes.

MG: Can you talk a little bit about that?

SW: Well, there was, in most of Jersey City [that] I can [remember], we lived on Jackson Avenue in the store. Across the street, of course, there were stores. A couple of them were Italian. There were a couple of bars too, because Jersey City at that time--I don't know if it is now--there was a bar on every corner and there was a bar at that point. My friends were all different kinds. In fact I had, in high school, my best friend Elias (Hodge?) who was black. I never really ever thought in terms of discrimination. It never occurred to me. He was my friend and I don't ever know what happened to him at that point. Then, when I was at Fort Bragg, of

course, there were no black soldiers, but after the war, when Truman was in there he changed the discrimination. He said black soldiers could join; black people could join whatever branch they want to. During the war, most of them were truck drivers. They brought the supplies up and you never really saw them, but I met a couple when I had been going back from Munich, where I had been in the hospital. I met a couple of them. We just talked. To me, they were people. Oh, I'm trying to remember now. In the officer's club that was in Reims that I was involved with, I'm trying to remember what that--oh, on New Year's--well, this is New Year's Day, I guess 1946 it was, it must have been, I actually drank too much. I can remember--the thing that I can remember is I had an apartment upstairs and I remember by the time I had gotten up to my apartment I had taken all my clothes off and all my clothes was on the floor going up. That's my only recollection of this sort of thing. Yes, it was interesting. Oh, yes. There were two gentlemen who were with me in the officer's club helping me, helping running the officer's club and one of them met a girl in Reims and wanted to get married. They got the permission. They wanted to get married and they got married. I was the best man for him and it was in the Reims Cathedral. [Editor's Note: Built from 1211 to 1516, the Reims Cathedral remains in Reims, France as an example of Gothic architecture.] The interesting thing is that the cathedral had been blasted by the war and you could see through the roof on this thing. So, as we were standing in front of the priest who would give me the benedictions, whatever it was, snow was coming down on there. Then, they had a party for the bride and groom, which I think lasted for about twenty four hours. [laughter] I have never seen these people again in terms of this. I went home and that was the end of my career.

MG: In your home, what language did you speak?

SW: I spoke English. They would speak, occasionally Russian. Most of the time when they didn't want me to know something obviously they spoke Russian and they spoke Yiddish. Why I was able to speak enough Yiddish to be a translator for German, I don't know. The first course in German that I took was in Rutgers. In Rutgers-Newark I took some courses in German, which apparently wasn't too difficult for me at that point.

MG: What sort of cultural traditions did you maintain in the house? How was growing up in your family's home different than other families?

SW: Well, my father was not really religious. We would go to the synagogue on the holidays; on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We really never went to the synagogue often on Saturday unless there was something [going on]. They did send me to some school to be prepared for my bar mitzvah but I really don't remember much went on at that point. That was about it as far as I was concerned.

MG: I'm just curious about other memories from growing up, maybe in the neighborhood or in your home?

SW: I'm trying to think. This was long time ago. Not really. I'm pretty well ... on that sort of thing.

MG: What about school? What kind of student were you?

SW: Well, apparently I was in public school, at PS 15. I was good enough to skip one year. So, that was why I eventually wound up going to high school, graduating from high school when I

was sixteen. In high school, I met a teacher. I remember her name, Mrs. Gowdy and the first month, she said to me--I didn't do well. She said to me, "You can be a chemist if you want to be a chemist, but you got to work at it." I did, and eventually, I became a chemist, a biochemist, and I think I owe it to Mrs. Gowdy and this sort of thing. She was a great teacher. That was in Henry Snyder High School.

MG: What year did you graduate from high school?

SW: Let's see. What year did I graduate from high school? I was sixteen and a half when I was … 1943. Yes. It was February. In those days they had half years. We graduated in February. I graduated in February, but the actual graduation date was in June. I didn't do anything at that point.

MG: You had said earlier that you were interested in becoming an engineer.

SW: Yes. I don't know. I guess that was something I was interested in and I thought I'd be a chemical engineer. There was always chemistry in the back of my mind. But I realized I didn't want to do that. First of all, I'm not very good at drawing things, so I couldn't make up programs and things for them so I left that out quickly.

MG: Do you remember what was going on in the world before the attack on Pearl Harbor? [Editor's Note: The Japanese attacked the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.]

SW: Not very much. I don't think we, we were sort of out of the--the only thing I read in the paper were the sports pages. In those days, there was a baseball team in Jersey City, a team called the Jersey City Giants. They built a stadium there for them called Roosevelt Stadium and they were the minor league affiliate of the New York Giants, which at that point, was my favorite team. [Editor's Note: The Jersey City Giants were a minor league affiliate of the New York Giants from 1937 to 1950. The team was then moved to Ottawa. The New York Giants moved to San Francisco in 1958.] I used to go to the ball games and also what we used to do--after the seventh inning, if you stood outside the ball park, they let you in free. So, we used to get down there and stand outside and get in free. In those days, or maybe later, I did see Jackie Robinson play with the Montreal Expos I guess it was and I saw all the players that eventually came and went back to the Giants, yes. It was a very interesting thing. [Editor's Note: On April 18, 1946 Jackie Robinson debuted as a player for the Montreal Royals, a minor league affiliate of the Brooklyn Dodgers, at Roosevelt Stadium's opening day. A year later, he was called up from the minors to play for the Dodgers.]

MG: I would love to hear more about that. I actually do not get the opportunity to talk much about sports during that time period.

SW: Well, it was very--I'm trying to remember. I don't think there was any football. Football was not that big a thing in those days actually, but baseball was really important to me and I used to go there and try to get into all the games I could. I don't ever think I wanted to be a baseball player but I just liked the game as it is. I didn't have any talent anyway to play baseball.

MG: Who do you root for today?

SW: I root for the Phillies, damn. [laughter] Oh boy, we're suffering this year.

MG: Yes. What do you remember about the attack on Pearl Harbor? Where were you when you found out?

SW: Oh yes. I remember, we were living in Jersey City and it was Sunday, obviously. I was at a--I guess I was at a sort of a club in the YMHA [Young Men's Hebrew Association] in Jersey City. We were sitting down, doing something in there and some kid came in and said, "We're at war." Just like that. I said, "Yes, with who?" [laughter] He said, "The Japanese just attacked Pearl Harbor." That I remember, yes.

MG: What were the next few weeks like after that, the mood?

SW: I really don't remember that sort of thing … The war started when? Nineteen--when the heck did it start? '41 was it? [Editor's Note: Japanese forces attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, thrusting the United States into the Second World War.]

MG: Yes.

SW: So, I was fifteen at the point and I don't really think too much about what went on in that time.

MG: Did you have a feeling then that you might end up serving?

SW: No.

MG: Or was it too far off?

SW: It was too far off and I never thought about it. In fact, I guess, when I first went to enlist I apparently had some high blood pressure or something; they wouldn't take me. So, I waited around a while and about two weeks later I went back and they took me. That was all. That was it.

MG: What does YMHA stand for?

SW: Oh, the Young Man's Hebrew Association. Like a YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] it's a YMHA in this point. It was down on Bergen Avenue in Jersey City. I don't know if it's still there. I have no idea. [Editor's Note: The YMCA was founded in 1844 and the YMHA was founded in 1854. A YMHA in Jersey City no longer exists but there are locations in New York City.]

MG: Was that a place you would hang out at?

SW: I was there that time. Yes, we would hang out sort of there. I'd get on a bus and go uptown on Bergen Avenue.

MG: What were your reasons for enlisting?

SW: Well, it was a war and I was a kid and it was patriotic. I was going to help fight for my country at that point.

MG: Why did you choose to enlist in the Army?

SW: I couldn't get in the Navy because I was wearing glasses. The Navy didn't take anybody wearing glasses. In fact, my wife's brother-in-law had graduated from City College and he wanted to go into the Navy and they wouldn't accept him because he was wearing glasses. Now, why the hell they were doing that at that point, who knows. I knew I was wearing glasses and I joined the Army. Obviously, I never thought I'd join the Marines. … Also, they were going to send me to college for another three months. I dropped out of the engineering school and they were going to send me to college up, wherever it was, I don't know and that was the reason I joined the army. It was the [ASTP]. Army Specialized Training Program is what they called it. [Editor's Note: The Army Specialized Training Program was established in 1942. It sent soldiers to various colleges and universities throughout the country and overseas. The program ended in 1946.] That's about it.

MG: How did your family feel about you enlisting?

SW: You know what; I have no recollection of that. They never said no. If they ever were strenuously saying no, I wouldn't have known about it but nobody ever said no at that point. My number was 1201855. The one represented enlisted personnel in the army. If you saw somebody whose number was three something it meant they were drafted and if it was "O" it was an officer, but if you see somebody with a one in front of it, then he was enlisting. It was called the United States Army instead of the Army of the United States. I don't know why they did that.

MG: Did you know anybody who fought in World War I?

SW: No. If they did--well, I'm trying [to remember]. No, I don't think I ever did, no. Some of my father's relatives did, but I never met them as I would say.

MG: Could you talk me through your training? You first went to Fort Dix. [Editor's Note: Fort Dix is located in central New Jersey and was very active during World War II and the Vietnam War. In 2009, it was joined with the bordering, McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Station to form Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.]

SW: Yes. I went to Fort Dix and they apparently decided, for some reason, that I was going to be--could be a field artillery man. So, they put me on a plane--a train, not a plane; they didn't have that and went down to North Carolina. I got off the train, there was a bus waiting for a couple of us and we went, and they took us half way. They stopped at the top of North Carolina and they took us all the way down to Fort Meade. [Editor's Note: Fort Meade is an army installation in Maryland.] We sat on that bus, I think, for four hours. I have no other recollection and I went to Fort Meade. Now, I had my basic training in Fort Bragg. When I finished my basic training--oh, at that time. This is when there was a Battle of the Bulge and anybody who was available was shipped overseas and I was one of the people who was available. [Editor's Note: The Battle of the Bulge took place from December 16, 1944 to January 25, 1945. In the battle, Hitler ordered his remaining forces to attack the allies in the west to try and push them back. Initially, German forces initially created a bulge in the front lines but they were soon turned around.] That's how I got overseas quickly. I spent twenty-two months in the Army and I think I spent eighteen months overseas, just for that. So, that's what I can remember.

MG: What was your basic training like?

SW: All I remember is marching. [laughter] That's all. I don't think we did any specific things that I would, that I could specifically remember. When I got back to Fort Meade, if you didn't--you usually stayed there a week. During that week period, they had a sort of a training program where you went out as if you were in combat and they would be shooting at you and you had to crawl under the wires so you didn't get killed. A couple people got hurt and that sort of thing. That lasted a week and if you were still at Fort Meade at the time, the training, you start all over again with the same thing. I stayed there a couple months as far as I know. Why I was there, I don't know.

MG: What things were a challenge to you in basic training, if any?

SW: I'm trying to remember. [laughter] The one thing I remember and I can't quite understand why--I was young--is we would get off for the weekend and we'd get on the bus and go into wherever Fort Bragg is. I can't remember the name of the town. [Editor's Note: Fort Bragg is in North Carolina] Don't forget we were eighteen and the guys were going to say to me, "Go inside Seymour, and get us some beer or wine." [I] said, "Why?" [They said], "Because you look older than the rest of us and they won't ask for the thing and you talk with a deep voice, so go ahead." That's what I would do. It was crazy. It was a crazy time, but it was fun.

MG: That's something I am curious about. I like to have people I am talking to sort of describe themselves.

SW: Yes.

MG: If you looked in the mirror then, what did you look like?

SW: I guess I was a little pudgy at that point. I think my weight was about 165. I was taller than that and obviously I didn't have a beard because beards were not in style in those days. I guess that was about it, in terms of--I wore a uniform. We were actually involved in just going, learning how to shoot the guns. In field artillery, we used a carbine. I'm beginning to remember things. We didn't have a rifle. We had a carbine and it was a lighter gun and we were told how to shoot it. [Editor's Note: The M1 Carbine was the standard issued carbine during World War II. It was shorter and lighter than the M1 Rifle.] Also, apparently, down in Fort Bragg, we were taught how to work with an artillery piece, the 105, the 155. That meant the width of the shell. I wound up, during the war with a 105 howitzer. A howitzer was a gun that had sort of a short barrel. That's what a howitzer was. … what's called a gun, which was a long barrel thing, a 155, which was a wide shell with a long barrel. My outfit was a howitzer. So, I remember we--for some reason I'd go up, in a jeep with some soldiers and people I can't remember. I had two pairs of glasses, one in each pocket because I wouldn't see and we'd try to find a place where the battalion could stay until the next movement. We were in the town and I have no idea what the name of the town was, where all of a sudden the Germans started shooting at the town. We ran down into a--I guess it was a hotel into the basement of the hotel and we stayed there until the shooting was over. None of us got hurt. Then, we got up and went back to the outfit and that sort of thing.

MG: Was that in March of 1945?

SW: Yes.

MG: So, that was the combat you experienced?

SW: Yes, that and I guess that's and most of what the combat was. I was lucky. As I said, I don't remember what happened, why the jeep was turned over, but that was after that. Why they allowed me to drive a jeep, which--I got my license when I got home because I never even rode in a jeep. My father used to travel in a car and I remember the recollection. We're on a highway and he said to me--he said, "You know, you've been sitting next to me a lot of time. I want you to sit behind the wheel and drive the car." I said, "I don't know what you're doing." He said, "You'll learn." I got behind the wheel and almost killed us because I didn't know how to shift. I didn't know what to do. The cars were different in those days. He said, "Alright, I'll quit. Forget about it." He was one of the first people--oh, I remember. When my parents got married, for some reason they had a store, a general goods store in Staten Island in Tottenville. They used to go into New York, into Manhattan obviously, to get their supplies and he used to have a horse and buggy. He went one day and he saw this automobile company and he decided he was going to--now, cars were real cheaper in those days. So, apparently he went to one and bought a car. He had never driven it. He knew it. As far as I know, he had never [driven a car]. He came home with the car, so he could make deliveries on this sort of thing. Yes. Some of the cars he had were interesting. One was called a Star and the other one was a Hupmobile. They had lots of cars around in those days with different companies making the cars. It was interesting.

MG: Are you able to say what they looked like and how they operated?

SW: The Hupmobile sort of had a funny [look]. One of the cars had a sort of--it was a Chrysler now that I remember, had a flat front, and there was one, I don't remember what year it was and the Hupmobile had something, but I can't remember now what it was. So, I'm not too sure I'm remembering anything.

MG: Getting back to your experience in combat. What was it like when the first bullet was flying in the other direction?

SW: You know, I don't remember being scared. That I don't. Of course I was a kid, who the hell knew what was going on. We just ducked and got under whatever was possible to get under. I never--well, I did once. I was not in the infantry, so we weren't in direct [contact]. We were in the field artillery and I remember after the war was over or right at the end of the war, they were trying to pick up Germans who were Nazis. There was some German who--they found some place that one Nazi was staying and we went out to get him. I do remember, we had a machine gun on our jeep. It was an open jeep and he started to run away and for some reason I shot at him and I must have hit him. That's my only recollection. Now, my other recollection is that sometimes when we moved out in front we were moved past foxholes that had some bodies in it, some people who were killed in the thing. I remember this. I remember some guy was laying there and he had this jacket, beautiful, what I thought was a beautiful jacket at that time and I took it because he was dead. Then, when I was in the hospital somebody stole it from me, so I never got a hold of it … I guess I deserved that.

MG: Can you describe the role of the field artillery, where you were, and what your job was?

SW: Well, our job, my job, in a sense, was to guess where the enemy was and we would tell them certain degrees. "Go ten degrees this way. Fire ten degrees that way." Most of the time,

we didn't see what we were firing on. We were just sort of doing it in turn. My job was to relay the information back to where the unit was. When I began there I think I was a cannoneer for a couple days but, then they decided, since I had some knowledge in Yiddish that I should go up with the guys to setup the information at that point. Then, I would do.

MG: How are you using Yiddish in the field?

SW: It was German. I would tell them something. I can't remember Yiddish [anymore]. I would tell them, if we went to a house that we wanted to take over, we would tell the people to get out and I would tell them something in Yiddish, which they would understand, and they would get out and that sort of thing.

MG: Sorry. I am skipping around a little bit. I want to ask more about your trip overseas when you first were shipped out.

SW: Well, I remember we were at. There was a camp up here, Camp Upton. Geez. I just got back the memory. I went from Fort Dix, yes. No, Fort Meade and we went [to] Camp Upton or something, which was up near the Hudson, on the Hudson River. Then we went. Then, they got us. We went [to] downtown Manhattan and got on a boat, the [SS] *Mariposa.* For some reason I remember that too, and we crossed the ocean. The Germans still had submarines at that point and we were always told to be careful, you know, and we were wearing life jackets on the boat, so if something happened where we would be able to get into the water. I don't remember the length of the trip at all on this thing but I do remember landing in Liverpool and getting off the boat and getting on a train and going directly to Southampton. Yes, I think that was the way it was.

MG: Were you in a convoy, travelling with any other ships?

SW: No, we're travelling--all of us were … Different people were involved. In fact, they had services on the boat and I attended all of them, because I figured if I got to the right one it'll be all right.

MG: What kinds of services?

SW: Religious services. They had a rabbi and they had a priest, and they had a chaplain, and they held services on the boat. That's what you do. You would stand in line. You would sit with your mess kit. When you got up in the morning, you stand in line and don't forget the boat was filled with soldiers. You walk around, you eventually get to where the kitchen was, which took about a half a day. They gave you whatever food they had. You go back, finished your food, got on line again for dinner, because that was all that was there. That was all you did.

MG: Had you travelled much before basic training?

SW: I'm trying to--no, I don't think we travelled much. We would come from Jersey City, we would go to Atlantic City and Asbury Park. That was where we'd go most of the time … Oh, and then when I was a kid we got some places in Bradley Beach and we would stay there for the summer. My father would meet us on the weekends when he finished. We had places in Bradley Beach.

MG: How did you feel in your uniform?

SW: I don't remember. It was a uniform. I never really thought about it.

MG: Were you aware of what was taking place in the European and Pacific Theatres during World War II before you arrived?

SW: I don't think so. I really don't think so. I was only interested in what was going on in our outfit and where we were.

MG: But you were told about the Battle of the Bulge and how they needed replacements?

SW: Oh yes, yes. We were, there war, they had the Bulge, they thought that was going to be, you know, they never really thought that was going to happen but the Germans, they fight back. I know they kept talking about it in whatever paper I read at that point, but I can't remember anything else. That was about it, as far--I went where they told me to go.

MG: Travelling from Liverpool to Southampton, what did you see? What did England look like at the time?

SW: I was on a train and I have no idea. Except for the ladies who wanted to give us something for coming overseas, I don't remember.

MG: You told me earlier that, I forget where you were, but you arrived and they told you the cook had just been killed.

SW: Yes, they picked me up in France. We, I had, we had been moved across the channel. We went, let me tell you, this is something I remember. We walked up a hill to get where we were, which was near the coast of France and we stayed there for a couple [days] and wound up somewhere at that point. I think we were in a hotel, in a house, or something like that. The next day, they told us to come out and we walked up the hill again. How the hell we did it--and we went on a train. The train was a boxcar. It was a regular boxcar. We were sitting in the boxcar and they didn't have bathrooms in there, so obviously, they would stop every once in a while and everybody would get out. I remember, we got out in Thionville and marched in the girls' school, which was pretty nice accommodations at that point. We stayed there for a while. How long we stayed there, I have no recollection at this point, but I do remember one of the things we did since we got … is a bunch of us got together. We walked out as if we were a platoon and we walked out as a platoon and went to a bar. We went to someplace where we could get some wine or something like that. Now, why they gave it to us because I don't know how much money we had or if we had any money, but we had it and that was my first interesting occupation. I opened the door to go to the bathroom, there was a young lady in there. In America, we had different bathrooms. They didn't have it at that point. I didn't know what to do. So, I backed out, but apparently, that was the way it was in that part of France at that time. I doubt it was different anywhere else. So, that was pretty all that I remember.

MG: Then where did you go from there?

SW: From Thionville, they picked me up. Now I remember something. They picked me up from my outfit and we were driving out of France, across the part of the Netherlands, until we

got to Germany. Now, the grass in France and the grass in the Netherlands were green. We got to Germany and everything was brown. I remember that. Distinctly remember this thing. They dropped me off in my outfit and that was the guy that said they killed the cook at that point. I went there and I had a couple of friends. I met a couple of people there, unfortunately, from what I can remember both of them were killed during the last part of the war. I was with them. We would go out every day and we would go out every day and set up for the--to set the battery of guns up. As I said, first I was a cannoneer and then I became the translator, so I was in front of them. For some reason, it was set up so you were twenty four hours on and twenty four hours off. I do remember coming back after being twenty four hours off and I don't know where it was, that I see the guys looking very upset, the guys from the outfit. I said, "What happened, what happened? Did somebody get killed?" "Yes," they said Roosevelt died. [Editor's Note: President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945 from a cerebral hemorrhage.] He was our God at that particular time. Then all of us sort of fell apart at that point. So, that I remember.

MG: Why was President Roosevelt so special to you guys?

SW: Well, don't forget, it was a different kind of media because people in the media didn't tell everybody or send everybody all the foibles of these guys. All we knew that he was the President, he had been the President almost all my life and he was the guy that everybody looked up to at that point. [Editor's Note: Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected four times as President of the United States and served from 1933 until his death in 1945.] Nobody really thought about anything else, and that was a different time. We didn't see … Roosevelt was living in Warm Springs, Georgia with his mistress … We did not see it. They would have done it. They wouldn't have done anything like that. So, he was the guy. He was sort of like the king in … When he died we were very upset because we didn't know anything about [Harry S.] Truman. Who the hell was Truman? I was too young to vote. … didn't vote at that period unless you were twenty-one, so I never did that.

MG: So, you were skeptical about Truman?

SW: No, we just didn't know him. The vice president, who the hell thought about the vice president?

MG: Is this where you were in your jeep accident?

SW: My jeep accident, let me think. No, this was before my jeep accident.

MG: Okay.

SW: Yes. This was before. My jeep accident was across the Rhine. No, I'm not too sure whether we were on this side of the Rhine or no, it must have been--yes, it was before my jeep accident and then we saw the line, saw all the batteries and battalions and we crossed the Rhine. I can remember the bridge, but I don't remember where the hell it was.

MG: Can you walk me through the time period between Roosevelt's passing and then your jeep accident, the things you were doing day to day?

SW: Well, the things we were doing day to day was going out and setting up something for the artillery and then we take the day off and somebody else would do it for us. Then whatever the night was or the day was that we crossed the Rhine, we all got--we were crossing the Rhine, getting onto the other side. The outfit had sort of like a bus. No, it wasn't a [bus]--a truck. It was more like a truck. We would sit in the truck and we'd be moving up with the guns, with the truck and then we stayed at--I don't remember where it was. We apparently stayed some place where--almost the end of the war and that's when somebody told me to drive the jeep around. I was a soldier; I didn't know what the heck to do. So, I drove and that's about when it happened. I can't really actually remember very much in that.

MG: Was there anybody else in the jeep with you?

SW: No. We were supposedly out looking to see if there were Germans or not.

MG: You said that an officer explained it was lucky you were injured because your outfit was heading to Burma.

SW: Well, I was in the hospital. I left my outfit. They took me to a hospital in Munich because of the so-called wounds I had. By the time I was ready to leave the hospital, my outfit had left Europe and had gone to China-Burma as far as I know.

MG: Do you know what happened to them or how they fared there?

SW: No, I tried to find out and I've been rather [unsuccessful]. They were really from Massachusetts. It was an outfit that was set up in some army in Massachusetts. Actually, strangely enough, we went to a wedding in Milwaukee and the father of the bride was a sergeant in the army and he had just retired. I asked him if he could find out what happened to the outfit and he says he'll try, but I have no idea what happened to them, whether they actually got to China-Burma-India or whether it was just something I heard and I thought that was what it was, but I never saw the people again. The only people I met after that, were the people I met in the nightclub that was above the officer's club and on the way back and forth. Yes, in the officer's club. The guy who I was the best man at his wedding; I don't remember him anymore. That was about what I know.

MG: So, you were in a hospital in Munich for a time?

SW: Munich, Germany. Well, I had a dentist, a pretty good dentist who sewed this up. You can't see it, but I have the beard. Apparently, my knees were just not actually broken, sort of strained and they got it all better and this sort of thing. I was there, I guess, about two weeks in this and then I started going back, by truck, in replacement depots that the army had setup for the outfits that were no longer needed and we were going back in the replacement depots and finally wound up in Reims, from Munich to Reims.

MG: What was sort of the state of the rest of the hospital? Were there other injured soldiers?

SW: Oh yes, yes. It was a big garage. It wasn't a [hospital]. Apparently, I can remember the ceiling was sort of like a garage ceiling. It was a big garage and they had physicians, and dentists, and people around, and they'd take care of you. That was the way you went to it. It was in Munich, so we were close to that in terms of that when I had the accident.

MG: Were you being taken care of by Army nurses?

SW: I don't remember any female nurses at that point, no.

MG: Now, talk to me more about the officer's club you ended up running.

SW: Well it was, actually the officer's club was in Paris, a nice place to be, on the Plaza de Opera, and it was on the second or third floor of a building and apparently it had been a private club that the Army took over and used as an officer's club. We had [entertainment]. We had people who came. Maurice Chevalier came to entertain us. He was in a bad situation because he had never really indicated that he was truly against the Germans. [Editor's Note: Maurice Chevalier was a French cabaret singer and performer. During the war, Allied forces accused Chevalier of collaborating with Nazis.] Some people felt he had done something, contributed something, so he wasn't too--he wanted to show how wonderful--so, he would come and he would entertain the people at the officer's club. He was great … in terms of it. There were a couple authors I met. I don't remember their names; they wrote books. It was a club that had two entrances. One, they would have a dance floor upstairs and then there was a bar. All I did was take care of the books. I really didn't do much. Maybe I drank more than I should, but I really didn't do much.

MG: So, was doing the books something you eventually learned because it was not something you had done previously?

SW: No, it wasn't difficult, yes. You know, five cases of scotch and that's what it cost. After a while you realize how simple it was and this.

MG: What did you like to drink when you drank?

SW: I used to like scotch, but when I came home--when I was on my way home, I came home in a boat called the [*SS Western Reserve Victory],* which was the worst boat I can remember. All I can remember, we kept going back and forth. They had these victory boats, all metal and I got seasick. [Editor's Note: Over 500 Victory ships were built during World War II. They were used for cargo and troops transport.] I think I got so seasick that I still can remember standing at the end and I just--as I said, for some reason, I was a major non-com [non-commissioned officer] on that boat and I was supposed to be in charge of the non-coms. I couldn't stand up. So, I had taken these bottles of scotch home with me. What the hell? I just threw them away and I can't stand scotch anymore. [laughter] I mean, I'll drink other stuff but I can't stand scotch anymore. It's a long time since …

MG: So you would work the books and do all the paperwork, things like that?

SW: Yes. I would do that and make sure we had enough whiskey for the officers and stuff like that, yes.

MG: How long did you stay there?

SW: I guess I was there--oh, yes. The last week before I went home--I got notice that we were going home--we went on the trip. I took a trip to Switzerland. The Army took us around and we went to Switzerland. It was nice. We went on train. We drove all around Switzerland and we

got off and stayed at hotels. I don't know why they did it, but I did it. I remember that. That was very nice. Then I went, got on a boat and I guess it was Le Havre. The *Western Victory*--though, whose victory it was--I don't know who built that boat. I can still remember it. It was one of these that were called victory ships that were built for bringing things [back] and went back home. Then, I landed in--I guess we landed in Fort Dix. You know, not in Fort Dix, but around there or whatever and I stayed there for about a week and they finally discharged me.

MG: We skipped over your time in Swindon. Was that before the officer's club?

SW: Yes. You're right. What happened is, for some reason they sent out information to people who had gone to college before. If they wanted to continue their college they would send them to various places. I said, "Yes, I want to continue my college." So, I signed up and we wound up going to Swindon at the Shrivenham American University and they had classes. They had professors there. I told you, they had--I guess it was Julian Huxley, Aldous Huxley's brother, who as teaching. There were other people teaching. Incidentally, I got credit for it when I went to Rutgers and it helped me graduate. I had two basic courses and they accepted the thing. So, that was really good. Good thing they accepted that and they accepted some of the stuff from Newark College of Engineering. So I got--let's see. When did I leave Rutgers in the first time? Meanwhile, I got home--god, my mind is gone. I got home in '46, I guess it was, and in September of '46, I started Rutgers. In '48 I went to NYU. So, I had gotten two years of accepted credits at that point.

MG: Can you describe Swindon? I had said before we started recording, that's where my fiancé and his family is from. [Editor's Note: The GI American University was located in Shrivenham, England.]

SW: I'm going to tell you, I have no recollection, absolutely none. Though, I think I remember one thing, [laughter] is that somehow we were at a dance. They had people coming in. I met this girl and she lived in Oxford, which was not far from Swindon. I was off one day and I was going to meet her in Oxford. I got on a bus in Swindon. Let me tell you, if it's the same as the one I got on, don't get on a bus in Swindon because they drove to every single town between Swindon and Oxford. I think I got on eight o'clock in the morning and I didn't get to Oxford until about five o'clock in the afternoon. Every time. You know, the sort of things you can remember on this thing. Every place we stopped and that bus didn't have a bathroom so we had to get off. That is what happened. I have no other recollections of Swindon.

MG: Where were you when the war ended in the European Theatre? [Editor's Note: The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945. The day is known as VE-Day, or Victory in Europe Day.]

SW: In the European Theatre I was in, at the officer's club at that point, yes. I have no recollection what happened in terms of that stuff, but I was home, I think. I'm pretty well sure I was home when the war ended in Japan. [Editor's Note: Japan announced its unconditional surrender on August 16, 1945. It officially surrendered on board the USS *Missouri* on September 2, 1945. Both days are referred to as VJ-Day, or Victory over Japan-Day.] No, I was. … It was a year later. It had to be a year later …

MG: Do you remember people celebrating in the streets?

SW: No.

MG: Communicating with home, were you in touch with your family?

SW: Well, during the time I was in the hospital I wasn't and eventually, about three or four months before I got in touch with them, I do remember going to a booth, a phone booth in England somewhere while I was in Swindon and calling my home. I was able to do that and telling them--I don't know if they knew anything about it, but I was alive and I was going to college. Yes, that's about all I can remember in that.

MG: I remember what I was just about to ask. From the time of your accident were you sure that this would be the last time you fought or participated in combat?

SW: Yes.

MG: Did you think you were out of the woods?

SW: Yes.

MG: How did that make you feel?

SW: Well, pretty good, in terms of … I didn't think they would ever--I think the combat was pretty well over when I was--and as I said, the only other thing I remember was we met this bunch of Russian soldiers who must have stolen a car and they wanted some food. They hadn't gotten any food. That's the only time that Russian--but apparently, they were very close to where we were. They had gotten to the other side.

MG: When did you find out about sort of the horrors of World War II, like what was taking place in the concentration camps?

SW: Well, now you're reminding me of something. I'll tell you where we were. We were somewhere in Germany and we were told that there was a labor camp up ahead. So, we went up to the labor camp--oh, we were told also that they happened to have--they happen to have some vodka. [laughter] They were told that you can get the vodka if you went there. So, we went up and this was a labor camp. This was not one of the concentration camps. We met these people. I think they were Polish. They were working for the Germans with no, obviously it wasn't their fault. We drank, and we stayed there for about half a day and then we went back, but hey were living in barracks. Now, they were not the kind of barracks that we would be living in but it was not--I did not know about the concentration camps until I got home. Most of us didn't at that point. Actually, most of the people in the world didn't know at that point. You never thought of it. You never thought it would happen to people. The Germans who were supposedly the elite people of Europe, the people who had Beethoven, how could the Germans do these sort of things. My wife still doesn't forgive them, yes.

MG: How do you feel about the Germans, the Nazis, Hitler?

SW: Well obviously, I feel bad. I think that was an awful since situation. They're not very popular with me but I have no real--I can't blame a kid that was born a year from now ago of the things that happened a long time ago. My wife won't …

MG: So, how did you spend that year after the war ended before you were sent home?

SW: Most of it at the officers' club, most of it.

MG: So, what are some stories of memories you have from that time period.

SW: What do I have from that time period? Oh, I used to go to the opera because the opera was down here and I used to go to the opera, you know, maybe once or twice a month. Of course, they kept the opera going for a while and they had ballet things and stuff. We didn't pay. You just went in at this point. Then, I spent most of my time in the club. I didn't travel very far or do anything at that point, except for the last trip to Switzerland I went on.

MG: Where were you living?

SW: On the second floor above the officers' club we had an apartment and a balcony that let us look out over the street.

MG: Did the world seem different after the war ended?

SW: Not to me it didn't. I was anxious to get home that was about all. I didn't realize what a good place I was in.

MG: When were you finally discharged?

SW: Well, I have the papers upstairs. In Fort Dix and it says 1949, because I reenlisted in the reserves but I was discharged in '46.

MG: You said you took the *Western Victory* home?

SW: Yes.

MG: It was not a pleasant trip?

SW: No, it was not a pleasant thing. I was seasick almost all the way home. It was not a very good boat. I was supposed to be in charge of the group and I was never in charge. I don't think I got out of the--most of the time in my bunk and I had never been seasick before. Going all the way through from the other side going in the English Channel twice, but this was really an experience I didn't want to go to again.

MG: What were you expecting about your arrival home?

SW: Well, all I know is I got on the bus somewhere around Fort Dix. Got off a bus in Journal Square, took the trolley … went there from down--what the hell street was that? Whatever the street was and came home. There was nothing. I was home. That was all there was to it. I don't remember anybody saying, "Hey, how nice to get home." I was home and that was the only thing I wanted.

MG: How did your family spend the war years?

SW: My father probably was still selling his stuff and I don't know what my mother did. Maybe she was working. I have no idea.

MG: Why did you decide to stay in the Reserves?

SW: Oh, well, one of the things was they were going to pay us some money. Pay me some money and I sort of thought it was necessary and I was sort of--let's face it, I was twenty years old and the sergeant was saying, "You got to stay in the Reserves. We're going to need you." So, I said, "All right." I didn't think about it. I get out lucky. I was married by the time I left the Reserves in '49 and we thought I'd reenlist because I was going to school. My wife was working as a secretary, but I decided not to and then the Korean War started. I was very lucky.

MG: Remind me what your undergraduate degree was in and where you graduated.

SW: I graduated--my undergraduate degree--we used to graduate from New Brunswick even though we were Newark and my undergraduate degree was in chemistry.

MG: Now, where were you living after the war?

SW: After the war, I got married and we were living for a while with my wife's parents because I didn't have a job and I had to go looking for one. Then, we started living in Jersey, in Linden and then eventually we got, we bought the house in Linden and then we moved. Then, I got this offer here-- no, it wasn't ... I don't remember now. I was at the veterinary school in Pennsylvania. I was commuting after I got my doctorate back and forth from Linden in Pennsylvania to here and we decided after I needed something. They weren't paying that much anyway at that point. I think they were paying about 5,000 dollars a year. We had already had one kid. So, I was lucky and I went to an interview at [Albert Einstein Medical Center] and I met a man who was my mentor for most of my life, Henry Brody and he was the chief pathologist at Einstein. He talked to me for a while. He said, "You can have the job in the Chemistry Division." We moved here … moved to Pennsylvania, where we lived in Wyndmoor for a while and then we bought the house here. We've been living in this house ever since.

MG: So, you finally learned to drive?

SW: Oh yes. [laughter] I learned how to drive. I learned how to drive. One of the people who lived across the street from us in Jersey City, one of the older brothers taught me how to drive, yes.

MG: Did it make you nervous after having been in the Jeep accident?

SW: No, I never thought about it in that way.

MG: I really love the story you told about meeting your wife.

SW: Yes.

MG: Did she know that you had planned to sort of connect with her on the way to the movie theater or on the way to the town?

SW: I don't think so. I don't think so, but as I said, I'll show you a picture of how she looked in those days. She was really beautiful.

MG: Beyond that, sort of your initial attraction to her why did you continue dating her and eventually become her husband?

SW: Well, I found her very compatible. We were talking about a lot of things I guess. We had the same sort of interests and even though she lived in Brooklyn and I was living in Jersey City at that time, I'd borrow my father's car and drive to Brooklyn. It just seemed to be that she was the girl I wanted to be married with, yes.

MG: Can you talk about what kind of dates were like in the late 1940s?

SW: What dates were like in the late '40s. We'd go to a movie most of the time. If we went out--we didn't go to nightclubs, because I never thought about that sort of thing. Yes, now I remember. We would go to the theater. I would go and get tickets for things like *Guys and Dolls*, which were maybe five dollars at that point. We saw all of the rather good theatrical areas, plays, and stuff in those. I'd send tickets to her and then we go, I pick her up and we go to the theater most of the time. We saw many of the plays that were important at that point. One of course, I remember, as I said *Guys and Dolls*. We've seen it several times.

MG: You were eventually married in 1949?

SW: Yes.

MG: What was your wedding day like?

SW: Interesting. We were married in a place called The Twin Cantors. It wasn't a synagogue, but apparently this is one of the kind places that was a caterer for weddings. My father let me borrow his car because I didn't have a car at that point. We had made arrangements after the wedding to go for our honeymoon up to Wildmans Landing in Connecticut. Since we knew we were going to stay with my wife's parents for a while until we got … we wanted to get away by ourselves and we found this--I don't know, maybe a travel agent I think found this place and we went to this place in Wildmans Landing. Actually, I still have an ashtray from the place. We were there for a week and we drove around Connecticut. I don't remember going to Rhode Island. We met a couple who was at the same place and we would go to dinner them. It was a really nice time and that's why.

MG: What was your first job after being married?

SW: My first job. Job I think--that's an interesting [question]. I'm trying to [remember]. Let's see. I think my first job was at Merck, at that point. I didn't--no, no. No, no. I was at the University of Pennsylvania and I had a doctorate at that point. As I said, my first real [job] was at the veterinary school and I taught there for a year. It was a very interesting thing. I had never--one of the things, getting my doctorate, was essentially going into classes and I was working at Merck that time and they paid for this. So, I was going to classes in New Brunswick and I got my degree but I had never--you know, usually when you get your doctorate you do some teaching. I had never done any teaching. When I was a kid I had a very bad lisp. Actually, I went to people and got rid of it. Most of it anyway and I thought maybe it would be a good idea if I taught something, so I could round out my career. So, in those days, I was obviously a veteran and a PhD, so they took me. Dr. (Live?), the guy's name was Israel (Live?), was the chairman of the Department of Microbiology, which is what my doctorate was originally. He offered me this job for a year teaching at the University of Pennsylvania. I remember I was supposed to--he gave me a couple courses I should teach. I get up and … I remember I started teaching some biochemistry which I had. I remember standing in front of this group of students,

I was reading it, just like that because I never taught before and I almost read everything and then after the second or third class I realized they didn't know anything about what the heck I was talking about. Why, if I made a mistake they wouldn't know what I was talking about. So, I stopped reading and eventually it came to me, to a point where I could stand up in front of an audience or in front of the school and I could teach people things like that. So, I eventually learned how to do that and then I went to work at Einstein. They got me and I went back and he wanted me to start at Einstein. They were giving me, I think two thousand dollars more than I had which I think was about four thousand dollars at Penn. Penn didn't want me to leave and they offered me--I was an associate at Penn. Not an associate professor but an associate, they offered me a professorship at Penn and I said no. I needed the money. Then, we eventually moved here.

MG: Where were you the director of the chemical division?

SW: At Einstein.

MG: Okay.

SW: I was the director of the chemical division. I was also in charge of blood collection at Einstein and I had a very large staff. For some reason I remember I was in charge of about fifty people at that point and I had a large laboratory. Oh, now that brought my mind. There was an instrument called the AutoAnalyzer. [Editor's Note: The AutoAnalyzer was invented in 1957.] Have you ever heard of it?

MG: No, was this what you were referring to earlier about what you perfected?

SW: No, that was something else. This was a commercial instrument run by Technicon [Corporation]. Don't forget, in those days, everything was done manually, but the AutoAnalyzer which was made actually by some chemist was an instrument that you would put the blood cell, blood tubes on it, they would pick the blood up and you set up the system you wanted to run and they would give you answers. Now, the guy before me at Einstein, got a job working with the auto company, Technicon company and he left the AutoAnalyzer there, which was the first commercial AutoAnalyzer in the country. It became very big for Technicon. They needed somebody to know something about--I didn't know anything, much about the AutoAnalyzer, but it wasn't that difficult to figure it out. In fact, after a while, I wrote some papers that changed some of the system in terms of that. I worked on the AutoAnalyzer at Einstein. Then, how I got started … we'd go over, pick up the blood--my collection team would pick it up and we'd put them on the system. We'd get any kind--we could work on almost all the chemistry and stuff we wanted at that point. So, we were the first ones to have a commercial AutoAnalyzer in the country. In those years, after a while almost every hospital got one, every laboratory in terms of that. So, that was what I was doing and I remember going to meetings with the company with Technicon and setting things up, making some changes so they knew what to do on this stuff. Suddenly remembered about the AutoAnalyzer. I'd forgotten all these years.

MG: What was the strange instrument you said you perfected?

SW: Oh, this was an instrument that, while the AutoAnalyzer would take whole blood, not whole blood, serum. You know the difference between, they're without the cells. I'd do it. I had worked with this guy, we would separate parts of the test of the serum so we could have

different parts of the serum to put--there's a great big. It was a big instrument in which you would put the cells and they would go into a different tube. Then you collected on the bottom so you would break up the blood and other thing. I worked with this guy. I can't even remember his name anymore and we set it up and I wrote a paper about this and then I got invited to some conferences to give talks on this. It lasted for a while and then other new techniques came in that were better than that.

MG: What kind of scientific or chemistry discoveries were taking place during this time period?

SW: Well, obviously now, they could actually tell you the value of certain chemical tests that you have. They would be able to tell you your blood sugar is this and your other test, your urea, creatine and stuff, everything they nowadays. Before that, they were very limited in giving you the names and the numbers. Actually, you had to take large amounts of blood. You didn't need to take large amounts of blood and that was the kind of thing that we were able to cut down. I haven't been involved in this for twenty years, so it's hard for me to remember all these things.

MG: You had said earlier that you taught the first course on virology.

SW: I was involved in giving the first course. In fact, that virologist--as a matter of fact, he just died about two years ago, his name I've forgotten. We gave the first course in virology in the college at the University of Pennsylvania veterinary school. Obviously, I didn't know very much about virology because we never thought--but we gave it to the students who eventually became veterinarians and this thing. Then, I can remember that but I can't remember exactly what had happened after that. I wasn't involved--see, I didn't go to Einstein as a microbiologist even though my doctorate degree was … at Rutgers in microbiology. I knew [Selman] Waksman. We knew each other but we were in a different part of the University. [Editor's Note; Dr. Selman Waksman was a microbiologist whose research led to the discovery of streptomycin and who coined the term "antibiotics." He won the Nobel Prize for this in 1952.] We were at the University. Murray had his own microbiology department and Waksman had another one. Well he got a Nobel Prize, Waksman. In fact, I knew the people who were with him, Tom Bugie and his wife Betty Bugie who worked with Waksman. He's about streptomycin at Rutgers. He won the Nobel Prize for that, but we were in a different department. I wasn't involved at all with that.

MG: I don't know anything about virology, so what would I have learned in that class if I took it?

SW: Well, you learn what a virus is. You would learn what diseases were involved with the virus. Essentially, instead of bacteria, it would be virology and you'd learn something in terms of how you treat people with viruses and we obviously have it still. People still have viruses and stuff like that. We got a lot of them. So, the gentleman who I was working with and I guess it was his assistant, as I said, he just died but I can't remember his name. He had set up the first program that people could see what was going on in virology.

MG: You said earlier that you had a mentor, Henry Brody?

SW: Henry Brody, he was a pathologist at Einstein. Unfortunately, Henry died several years ago, but Henry was pathologist in New York and he came to Einstein. They offered him a job in the pathology [department], to be a pathologist there. He built the department and he took me in and set me up and told me he wanted me to take care of the chemistry aspect of it. We were

always friends. Henry and Margaret Brody were always friends of ours. I remember on July 5th, you used to get the residents in right after June. We would get residents in for our department. I'd get residents. Always on July 5th or around there, we always had a party up in Henry Brody's house. That was really the beginning of the year for us in our terms. So, and then I had friends--in fact, another guy, when Henry left the department, when he retired, [Irving] Young who is still alive actually, living, he became the chief of the department. He became the chief pathologist. I worked with him for several years and then there was somebody else's name I can't remember and this sort of thing. Then, I guess I reached a point where I was about sixty, sixty five. I can't remember the year and they decided they didn't need people like me. They would handle other things, but I went over and set up the lab at Moss and I stayed there until I retired at sixty seven. So, that was pretty well when I went. As I said, I taught in Temple. At that point, it was the chemistry department. I taught at the University of Pennsylvania. I was a consultant for several corporations. As I said, I sent my kids to college with that. Of course, in those days, I think we paid $3,200 a year for my daughter who went to Colgate. She was one of the first classes of girls, first class of girls at Colgate. They had never had girls before. Then, my other daughter went to Tufts and then my youngest daughter is going to be--went to Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania. So, and they all got to a point where they were doing professional things.

MG: Were you under pressure to publish articles or present on subjects in the field?

SW: No, I don't know if you--I wasn't under pressure since I seem to have been in charge most of the time. Well, I wrote a book. As a matter of fact, we have it here. With a friend of mine who was my associate at that time, Fran Dalal, which is a book based on unusual laboratory tests, which I have a copy of that. I think I've written fifty some odd individual papers over the years. I wrote, shall we say. Haven't written lately, but I've written about fifty papers over the time that I was involved. It wasn't too difficult. I can't remember all of the topics I dealt with, but they were primarily medical topics and what kind of test you would use to get certain diseases. That's how you … doctor could do this and all those sort of things.

MG: What's an example of an unusual laboratory technique?

SW: Well, it's not the routine. It isn't the blood sugar, and the urea, and the creatine, and something. It would be something that would be special, that they would need to learn certain--use this technique to discover certain diseases on this thing. Frankly, if you want to know the truth, I can't remember all of the ones involved. It's been a long time.

MG: I'm curious about some of your consulting jobs.

SW: Yes.

MG: Like with the Surgeon General.

SW: Oh, well, I went to all--I was working at Einstein and one of the residents was a woman and she said her husband, who was in the Army, was in one of the hospitals up in Phoenixville and they had a problem with the laboratories. They couldn't get the right results and she wondered if I could help them out. So, I said sure, but the problem was in order to do that, I had to become a consultant to the Army. I went through all kinds of … they would come around to the neighbors and ask if I was a communist. It was a crazy time in those days, but I eventually

became a consultant for the Army and I went, set up his laboratory. I said when the Vietnam War ended and they had the people coming home who had got involved in drugs, I helped set up the system for using that. Then, when they closed the thing at Phoenixville they asked me if I would go to--I guess it was--wait a sec. Let's see. I guess, it was Fort Dix, in terms of the thing. I went there for several years and theoretically, I'm still a consultant for the Army because they never got rid of me, but I haven't done anything in twenty years. I got paid--oh, that was another reason. I got paid thirty-five dollars a day. In those days, that was money. Nowadays, it isn't. I'd go over. What I would do, I'd look over their systems and I tell them, "Well, I think this ought to be done differently but it's up to you." Sometimes, they would do it and then they would ask me to lecture about certain topics. They would bring everybody into the place and I would talk to them about these topics, medical topics, biochemistry topics, and that went on for a long period of time.

MG: Do any of those cases or topics stand out to you now?

SW: I'm trying to remember. I wish I could remember, but I don't. I don't remember any particular topic other than the setting up for the drug system so they could check the people coming home from Vietnam if there seemed to be a difficult time, but no, I don't remember.

MG: You have just referred to the Red Scare. [Editor's Note: The Red Scare is the hysteria associated with the perceived threat of communists within the United State in the post-World War II Era. Historians also refer to this era as the McCarthy Era as Senator Joseph McCarthy accused many people of being communists and adding them to black lists.]

SW: Yes.

MG: So I am just curious if you can describe what life was like during the McCarthy Era. [Editor's Note: Senator Joseph McCarthy's accusations of Communist infiltration in the US government led to a nationwide witch-hunt in the 1950s to unearth alleged Communists. Many institutions required employees or members to take oaths of loyalty.]

SW: Didn't bother me. I was just annoyed at all the things that were going on in terms of--I never got involved in anything like that, but I can remember the way some people would react to this thing. Everybody was concerned about the Communists and the Soviet Union and would we have another war, if the war was over, and here, the Russians had been our friend and now they weren't and then McCarthy was involved and we all watched television. That was the beginning of the time when people began to watch television and for news, not just for entertainment. We all sat around the television to watch these--it was really--and I don't remember. There was one guy who's name I can't remember who told McCarthy off and that began the end of him in this thing, but that was a different time. [Editor's Note: Mr. Winsten is referring to the hearings of Senator Joseph McCarthy's Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in 1954 known as the McCarthy-Army Hearings. During the televised proceedings, Joseph N. Welch, counsel for the US Army, famously asked, "Have you no sense of decency, sir?" as part of his counterattack against McCarthy, which was cited later as the beginning of the Senator's downfall.] It sort of skimmed over our lives, but it was there. It wasn't something we were really concerned about.

MG: What were your thoughts on the Vietnam War?

SW: I don't know if I really had much thinking in terms [of the Vietnam War]. I certainly wasn't in the Army and I certainly didn't know what was going on in there. I don't really think--the communication, it wasn't like the kind of thing where nowadays if someone turns on a … you know what's going on. In those days, we didn't know for weeks what was going on in other places. The media didn't really cover the kind of things that they're doing now. So, it wasn't that important to us. At least to us, to me. It may have been important to other people. It wasn't that important to me.

MG: Can you talk to me a little bit about your family life, when your children were born?

SW: Well, one of my, the oldest daughter was born in Brooklyn in a hospital in Brooklyn and my two other daughters were born in Einstein. I had a pretty good life. We were doing pretty well in terms of the thing. I can remember talking to a friend of mine who unfortunately now is no longer around, who was chief of hematology. He was an hematologist. We used to go to the Einstein at lunch. We'd always be there all the time and we'd say, "Boy, if we can make ten thousand dollars a year wouldn't we be getting--it would be so good for us." Because I think, when I started at Einstein, as I said, I think I got about two thousand dollars more than I had at Penn teaching and that was about seven thousand dollars. Things were cheaper. Things were a lot cheaper in those days. In fact, I can remember driving by a gas station that said it was sixty cents a gallon and we wouldn't put … in Brooklyn. "We'll find another gas station," I said. Yes, it's really a funny world.

MG: Yes, you must have seen it change so much.

SW: It changed. It has changed so much and this stuff. You go into it--when I was a kid I went to a movies for ten cents. The Fulton Theatre, which was on Durant Street and for ten cents you go in on a Saturday and you sit there for five hours watching a double feature. You come out and you couldn't see. Then, it eventually got up to a quarter, yes, to go to a movie. It was a different world. You had this kind of a different thing. You talked differently, in terms of--I don't think it was any worse, but I don't think it was any better than this. It's all right. I bought a car. I had a Studebaker. I bought a Studebaker because my father had a Studebaker. I bought a Studebaker and I think I paid eighteen hundred dollars for the thing and I traded it in like my father. My father used to buy a car every year. He was a travelling salesman. He travelled around New Jersey and every year he would stop toward the end of the year. He looked at his speedometer. He said, "It's time for me to buy a car." He'd go in, the guy would take his car and give him a new one and he paid for it. But, yes, it was a different world, completely different.

MG: How else have you seen it change?

SW: Well, fortunately, obviously, most of the racial--there are problems racially. There's no question about that, but in those days the blacks were always second class citizens. They were always were treated as second class citizens. They were.

MW: Seymour, do you want to stop and change?

SW: No, I'm okay.

MW: What? This one?

SW: Yes.

MG: Oh wow.

MW: You wouldn't recognize me.

MG: Oh, my gosh.

SW: You see why I picked up the girl.

MG: Yes, beautiful.

MW: Long time.

MG: Sixty five years?

SW: Well, more actually.

MW: We're married sixty five. This was 1946.

MG: Oh wow.

SW: When I first met.

MW: You okay then?

SW: I'm okay.

MW: Okay, then I'll go check the mail.

SW: Yes, you could see why I picked her up.

MG: She's beautiful, yes.

SW: In fact, I still don't know why she went with me, at this point. [laughter]

MG: So, what was it like living through the civil rights movement and the women's movement of the 1960s?

SW: Well, I must think I'm a bit ashamed of myself because I was living with my family and I was doing fairly well at Einstein. I liked what the people were doing, but I really never did anything on this thing. I guess I really should have tried to do more but I really didn't do anything more. We were always upset about--oh, I'll tell you a story about civil [rights]. This happened to be during the war. I met one of my friends and I worked at Fort Bragg. There was supposedly, a place called Silver Lake I think down in South Carolina, which wasn't too far from us. We were going to go down the weekend. So, what were we doing--what you did in those days, you hitchhiked. So, we hitchhiked and we were picked up by a couple--I think what we would nowadays called "rednecks". They were friendly. You know, we were white and they were friendly and they dropped us off on a corner where there was a store. We're standing there and this black man comes up to us and he says, "Can you do me a favor?" He says, "Can you go inside and get me a couple bottles of soda?" Now, I lived in Jersey City. I never even thought of it. What the hell? We had black people … I said, "Can't you go in?" He says, "They wouldn't

serve me in there." So, that was the first time I really realized how different the south than we were in this point. That I remember very well. So, we went in and got him the soda and he says--it was deposit bottles. So, I said, "Are you going to be able to bring the bottle?" "No," he said. "I can't bring that in there. They'll break them." That was a bad time. That was really a bad time.

MG: Yes. What else about your family life, what other memories stand out?

SW: Well, memories. I remember all my daughters' weddings, which were very nice, I thought. We had a lot of friends. My friend Seymour Margulies, who we used to see all the time and we'd go out with them. Though we drove less and less, they still lived in New Jersey. They lived in Springfield, New Jersey. We talked to his wife still, [who's] still alive. I guess we've been doing very well. Unfortunately, I got, developed prostate cancer when in '96 and now I got metastatic disease, but what the hell. How many years can you live anyway? I got, I had a ostomy [colostomy] bag because I also got rectal, colon [cancer]. I guess people are paying me back for taking care of them all these years. But we're getting along. We're doing things. We just spent the weekend in Jersey and a couple of weeks before we had been in Hudson, New York for the wedding of my grandnephew and then a week, a couple weeks before that we went to Milwaukee and we got my grandson married. I'm going to tell you, don't fly the planes nowadays. Have you ever flown leisurely?

MG: Just going for trips and things for that.

SW: Yes. We flew in a plane, which had about forty people in the thing. Apparently, this is what they're doing now, they have these small planes that they fly from--we went from--was it in Newark? No, it wasn't in Newark. Well, we flew, it was from Philadelphia. We flew from Philadelphia to Milwaukee. I remember my first plane ride when I went to a meeting in Cleveland. It was a prop plane in those days, and it wasn't that uncomfortable. This thing, the seats for both of us were about this wide. I was sitting here and my wife was sitting over there. Everybody's sitting cramped up in this thing. In fact, my wife says to me, "Can't you move over?" I said, "Sure, I'll go out the window if you want." I talk to other people. Apparently they're using the smallest planes to take long distances. It must be cheaper for them to do it. That's nice.

MW: Maybe Molly wants to take a break.

SW: Yes.

MG: Oh, I'm okay.

MW: You're okay?

MG: Yes, yes.

MW: Okay.

SW: Okay.

MW: You sure?

SW: Yes, I'm sure dear.

MW: Okay.

SW: So, the last year hasn't been very great, but we're getting there. We're getting along.

MG: Yes. How many grandchildren do you have?

SW: Six. I have three granddaughters and three grandsons. The grandsons got married; my granddaughters haven't. My grandson, he's a television news producer out in Milwaukee. My other grandson works for Lockheed Martin. He's an engineer; graduated from Johns Hopkins. The television producer graduated from Temple and my other grandson, god, my memory is shot. What the hell? Let's see there's Andrew, and there's Gabe--geez, this is awful. Maddie, I need your help. They're all doing something well.

MG: Good.

SW: My granddaughters, one of my granddaughters are now in Boston, at Mass School of Art and this kid is a genius. You got to see some of the things she does. It's just amazing the way she paints. She, I'll show you a picture that she painted. You should take a look on the other side of this wall she setup … of all the grandchildren involved in this thing and she's really great. My other grandchildren are--my other two daughters were twins and one works for the *Washington Post* and just did some video and got a byline and everything. The other one works at a place called Sixth & I, which is sort of like a place where people go and entertainment. It's a synagogue, but it's an old synagogue and what they do is they setup entertainment they have … So, all of them are doing well and we're very pleased and very proud of them and this sort of thing.

MG: Good. What is it like being married to someone for sixty five years?

SW: Hard. No. [laughter] It's difficult, you know. In some ways it's great but, there are times we don't agree with each other. She's a very strong person. In fact, she has to be to take care of me and sometimes we don't agree but we always come out the same. Our children, and our grandchildren are all now--the children are taking care of us now. She drives now because I can't see that well out of my right eye. I had a hemorrhage in the thing, so I can't drive. I can see but I don't want to go for long distances, no. We get along and that sort of thing. It's great.

MG: Why do you think you daughter submitted this survey to the Rutgers Oral History Archives to preserve your life story and memories?

SW: Yes, I guess so. I have no idea because my daughter is married to a guy like me who went to Rutgers twice and he heard [about it]. He met somebody. He teaches now. I told you he was a lawyer and they both decided law was not what the hell they wanted to do, even though he was once the lawyer of the year for New Jersey. He met somebody who was substituting in the school he was teaching and he said that Rutgers was doing what you're doing and he said, "Oh, yes." He told him, he said, "My father-in-law was in the Second World War and maybe he'd be a candidate for you to talk to him." That's why … So, that's the way it goes. … Now, I am so ashamed I can't remember my third grandson's [name]. It's Gabe. God. Oh, also, one of my grandsons, yes, one of my grandsons, Max works with Bill Clinton. He's again--for some

reason, we're all involved in sort of the news. He's a videographer for Bill Clinton. In the Clinton Foundation, he takes the pictures for him. When you see pictures of Bill Clinton, he's the one who takes the thing and his mother is a freelance person up in Allentown. She writes for all the newspapers as far as the editor … So, he does Bill Clinton pictures and we got a couple of them out in the … He's very good.

MG: Does he have any idea if Hillary is going to run for President?

SW: That's what everybody [asks]. He says she won't talk about it. He thinks she will, but he won't talk about it.

MG: Well, I have gotten to the end of my questions, but if there are stories you want to tell me or things I have left out.

SW: I'm trying to remember and I'm so ashamed of myself. Trying to I remember. Let me think. Let me think for a minute.

MG: Could I get you a glass of water or something?

SW: No, no. I'm fine. I'm trying to remember anything else that was involved in my life that I could tell you. [laughter] I wasn't always perfect. Actually, I feel I wouldn't have gone this long. I wouldn't have been here this long without my wife. She takes care of a lot of my problems in terms of this thing. We used to travel a lot and I used to go to places and I gave talks all over Europe and we used to do that, but obviously we don't do that anymore and I think we pretty well covered everything I can remember.

MG: We didn't talk about her career as a secretary and working in real estate.

SW: Yes, well she was working--actually, at the time I met her, she had been still in high school. We had gotten married, she was nineteen. They don't do that nowadays. She apparently got a job working in a rather big real estate company in New York working for one of the bosses as a secretary. She also got involved--I think she was also a secretary for a while for a school board, but once the kids came she didn't work anymore. So, every once in a while I think she got some minor jobs that she used to do. So, she was actually the (bulwark?) of the family. She took care of the things while I was away at times and stuff. So, I don't think what else we could have done without her taking care of all of us.

MG: That's pretty incredible.

SW: Yes.

MG: Well, I could always come back if you think of things you want to add to the record or if I think of questions I forgot to ask.

SW: Fine.

MG: This has just been such a treat to talk to you and I appreciate you taking the time.

SW: Oh, I appreciate you being interested in me. When you get this old and you say, who remembers you, where have you been, and then now recently, those few years, many of my

people, friends, have obviously at my age are no longer around and it's nice to remember this anyway in terms of the thing.

MG: Yes, and this will be preserved for such a long time and available for you grandchildren's grandchildren, to press play and hear you talk about your life in a time and place they will be removed from.

SW: Yes.

MG: So, it's pretty special and I just appreciate this so much.

SW: Well, I appreciate you coming and doing this for us.

MG: Well, this has been my pleasure. So, I will turn this off if that's all right.

SW: Yes.

MG: Thanks again.

SW: Thank you.

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

Reviewed by Molly Graham 11/4/14
Reviewed by Seymour Winston 11/24/14
Reviewed by Molly Graham 12/4/12