RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARK ADDISON

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

G. KURT PIEHLER
and
DARREN PURTLEBAUGH

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
APRIL 13, 1995

TRANSCRIPT BY

DARREN PURTLEBAUGH
and
ELISE KROTIUK
and
G. KURT PIEHLER

Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Judge Mark Addison on April 13, 1995 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and

Darren Purtlebaugh: Darren Purtlebaugh.

KP: I guess I would like to begin by asking you a few questions about your parents. Both of your parents came from Lithuania?

MA: Yes, although it was Russia at that time. My mother arrived in '93. My father, I think in '94. They met here, and were married around the turn of the century, I'm not sure, about 1903 I think, or 1904; something like that. ... My father was seven years older than my mother at the time they were married.

KP: Do you know what motivated each of them to leave?

MA: Oh, yes. My mother arrived here alone from Lithuania. It was quite a journey. At the age of 13. She was technically an orphan. Her father had passed away after he had remarried, and she had a very lovely stepmother. But she also had a married sister here, in the United States, in Tuckerton, in Ocean County. And they sent her a ticket. And she came alone, which was quite a journey at that time. My understanding is, as I recall from what I've heard, that she came to Hamburg, took a boat to a port in England, and then came to Philadelphia. She didn't land at Ellis Island. She landed in Philadelphia. She resided in Tuckerton. My father, on the other hand, came at the age of 19. He was just ripe for the Czar's military arrangements. And he was not an only son, so therefore, he was eligible. And what very often happened to Jewish young men, they were sent to Siberia and nobody ever heard of them again. There were a number of Jewish people in southern Ocean county, in the Tuckerton area, in the Bass River area, New Gretna area. And they wanted someone who would be able to teach their children, Hebrew and something about Jewish tradition and prayer. He had been attending ... a rabbinical school, commonly called a yeshiva, and so they sent him a ticket and that got him out. Of course, that brought him into the same area where my mother had previously landed. Eventually when she grew up, they married. That generally was the background that brought them here to the United States, and together.

KP: How did your parents meet? Was there a story there?

MA: Well, it was not a problem. After all, Tuckerton is not large today; it was even smaller then. There was no such thing as Little Egg Harbor, Mystic Islands, Atlantis, and all of those other developments. So it wasn't hard to meet. After all, the Jewish community was rather small. And anyone who arrived from the other side was apparently immediately grabbed, brought into a house with food and whatever and plied with questions about relatives in the old country. So obviously, they met rather soon after he arrived.

KP: Your father was encouraged to come to Tuckerton because of his rabbinical training?

MA: He was brought over for that, but although he did teach, he saw that, as far as he was concerned, he wasn't particularly religious, and so he went into trade. The first money I recall

him saying that he ever earned that amounted to anything was during the Spanish-American War, when he rented a horse and wagon and went around collecting metal, which of course, had appreciated in the war, and sold it. That was the first money he made. He didn't stay in the junk business for very long.

KP: What business did you father go into?

MA: Eventually, it's rather difficult. My father was killed in an automobile accident when I was 16. So it's just a limited amount of information that I've gleaned, either from him, my mother, or from my older sister. The first business that he really went into was a bakery. He didn't know anything at all about the bakery business. But he bought the bakery business and with it took the baker. So that lasted for a while and that was, where was that, I think that was, originally it was over on Long Beach Island, and then he established it in Barnegat, and eventually, he felt that that wasn't the way he wanted to go so he opened a business involving the sale of men's and women's ready-to-wear, and eventually branched into furniture. And eventually, after my sister was born, a number of years later, I was born.

KP: Your father died when you were still relatively young.

MA: I was in high school at the time.

KP: It must have been a big shock to the family.

MA: Oh, of course. My sister was already teaching in Philadelphia, at that time. It was 1931.

KP: Did your mother then take over his business?

MA: Yes, she took over and ran the business.

KP: Had she been working in the business before?

MA: Oh, yes. It'd been a family affair.

KP: It sounds like they spent a lot of time working in the stores.

MA: Well, in those years, you didn't close your store at 5:30 or 6:00 o'clock. A store usually was open, maybe until 7 or 8. But on Saturday night, it could be open until 11, because Barnegat had become a little bit of a center for people who lived out in the pines that made their living gathering wood, made their living on the cranberry bogs, and so forth. So, of course, they worked six days a week. And their time to do shopping was Saturday evening. There was a movie in town. The nearest other movie, I think, was in Tom's River. So it was sort of a little business center.

KP: How did the Great Depression affect your family business?

MA: Well, it affected everybody's family business. But we managed. And the Great Depression came along after my father died, so it was my mother that held things up. I worked a little bit in the store, and then I came off to Rutgers. I would have missed Rutgers if I could have afforded it, frankly, because I was admitted to Dartmouth and couldn't afford to go. I was happy here.

KP: So you ended up becoming very happy here, but you would have preferred to go to Dartmouth?

MA: I thought I would, but that was before I came to Rutgers.

KP: Before leaving your hometown, how active or inactive was the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s?

MA: Very active. ... That's an amazing story. In Tuckerton, at that time in the '20s, there were two stores that sold ready-to-wear, sheets, pillow cases, beddings, and so forth. One was operated by a Reuben Gerber, the other by a cousin, also named Gerber. There had been a falling out in the family. In Barnegat, my father and mother, {you have my original name there somewhere I guess,} also sold, {now these towns are twelve miles apart} generally the same type of merchandise, yard goods, bedding, personal wear, apparel, furniture. And my father and Reuben Gerber both did a very big business in selling sheets. And, of course, those sheets were used to make triple K uniforms-- very funny, very funny. But they had no other place to buy them. And I know from what I've heard my family say, they said, ... of one of the Gerbers and my father "Well, you're different." We never had a problem as far as fighting or anything of that sort, or people not buying in the store.

KP: So even though there was a lot of Klan activity, it didn't really lead to a boycott?

MA: No, and a matter of fact, my father became the master of the local Masonic lodge. My mother and sister were the worthy matrons of the local Eastern Star, which is the sister organization. So personally, we had no problem.

KP: How observant was your father? You said, he had originally been brought to teach.

MA: My mother kept a kosher house. My father did his best to teach me what little I managed to learn. And ... actually, he didn't care. But he said to my mother, apparently, this is your house. You run the house the way you want. That'll be fine with me. That's the way it happened.

KP: Did you and your parents attend synagogue regularly?

MA: On the high holy days, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we closed the store and we came to Lakewood, where there was a regular, orthodox congregation. And we stayed in a hotel for two days. And came back for the Day of Atonement.

KP: You went to Barnegat High School. How well prepared were you for college?

MA: I was well prepared. It was a high school when I was there that had 150 young men and women. And that included not just Barnegat, but we were a sending district from the little town of Waretown. We also were receiving district from all of Long Beach Island. And we were a receiving district for my first two years, from Stafford Township, Manahawkin. At the end of my second year there, they withdrew because of some kind of argument with the boards of education, and they moved their students to Tuckerton High School, which was really no larger. But we had a full course of, in those days, mathematics, from the simplest to solid geometry. We had a very good history course, sort of political science, what was it called, American something or other, I forget now. We had a full science section: general science, biology, chemistry and physics. We had small classes and competent instructors. And it was no problem. So ... if you wanted to learn, it was a good curriculum.

KP: How many from your high school ended up going to college?

MA: I don't know. Let's see, ... I had a big graduating class, 19--. (laughter) Of those, Bill Gaskell came here to Rutgers, became a chemist, ran a factory for Merck. A fellow named Conover went to college somewhere in Philadelphia, I don't remember exactly where. There may have been one more but remember I graduated in '32, which was just about the bottom of the Depression. So, the four of us were lucky. Or the three of us were lucky. ... I can't remember the other fellow's name. I don't recall any girl in the class that went on to college. Of course at that time we didn't have county colleges.

KP: It sounds like your parents had an expectation that you and your sister would go to college.

MA: Oh, very definitely. My sister went to Goucher. But, of course, she went in the `20s when there was some money around. At that time Goucher was in Baltimore, it hadn't moved out to Tyson. ... She was an English major. Eventually, she taught in the Philadelphia schools ... the new Americans, which was an interesting thing, she told me.

KP: Why did she say it was so interesting?

MA: Because she was dealing with people from many different countries. So that made it interesting.

KP: You came to Rutgers in 1933, and we were still in the Depression, but things had improved a bit.

MA: But remember, if you look at the dates, I stayed home a year.

KP: So you had to wait out a year?

MA: For two reasons. One, for money and the fact that my father had recently died, and my mother would have been completely alone, because my sister didn't come back for a year.

KP: You came to Rutgers; what were your initial impressions? Had you been to Rutgers before attending?

MA: No, I'd just been looking for something new. I was happy.

KP: You really threw yourself into a lot of different activities.

MA: Your record is better than my memory. (laughter)

KP: You listed in your yearbook, for example, you were on the rifle team for several years.

MA: Three years.

KP: You also joined a fraternity?

MA: S-A-M. On the corner, at that time, we were on the corner of Hamilton and ... Easton Avenue.

KP: How did you think the Depression was affecting Rutgers? Did you have the sense that a lot of students were struggling, like yourself?

MA: Oh yes, very definitely. As a matter of fact, some people in my class couldn't make it out of the freshman year, and didn't return for the sophomore year. And a number of people in my class were older than I. They'd had to work a couple of years to make tuition. My recollection is, I may be wrong, that at that time tuition was about $300 a semester, something of that sort. I'm not sure of the exact figure, but it couldn't have been much more. If it had been, a lot of people wouldn't have been here.

KP: Were there any students that you knew who were comfortable, or were most people struggling?

MA: No, there were a number of people that were comfortable. For example, the people that owned the 21 Club, in New York. The Krindlers, they weren't struggling. There were several people in DEK and DU who weren't struggling. But there were a lot that were struggling.

KP: How much of a struggle was it for your mother and your sister to send you to Rutgers?

MA: Well, it wasn't easy. One of the reasons I joined the fraternity, and I was rushed before I even ... matriculated, by a gang from Atlantic City. Let's see, ... one of the reasons I joined the fraternity was because they had a kitchen, and we had two meals a day. We had breakfast and dinner. Of course, everybody scattered mid-day. For a dollar a day. Six days a week. And we ate well, would you believe it?

KP: Were you glad that you did join a fraternity?

MA: Oh yes. ... I also had a cousin who came in the same year. And we were roommates, with a fellow from Perth Amboy. We were roommates for 3 years. I started in Pell, my first year. I

don't think they allowed freshmen to live in fraternity houses at that time. So I was in Pell until I was a sophomore.

KP: What do you think that those students who were not in fraternities, especially those who were commuters, missed out from Rutgers?

MA: The only thing they missed was a social life. And most of them who commuted had set up social lives in their hometowns. I became friendly with some fellows who were in my fraternity who lived in Highland Park, in New Brunswick, in Somerset. And they did as much on the campus as they could. But, of course, they had home obligations, too.

KP: When you entered Rutgers, what did you think you would do with your degree? Did you think you were going to study history and political science?

MA: No. I was going to be a chemist. It didn't take me long to realize that Jewish chemists were about as rare as hen's teeth. And so I switched, because I was a little too independent and I wanted to be on my own. And I thought that in the legal profession I could go out and be my own man, because at that time there very few, if possibly two law firms in Ocean County, neither of which had more than three attorneys. And so I knew that eventually I could probably make a living as an attorney and be on my own.

KP: So you envisioned very much going back to Ocean county when you were here?

MA: I couldn't think. ... My area was rather circumscribed. So, of course, I thought of Ocean County, where I knew a few people, and hopefully they would funnel one or two little cases to me.

KP: You mentioned that you had two favorite professors, one was John George, and the other was Charles Whitman. What do you remember about those men?

MA: John George was a Georgia redneck, bright, and, of course, we've got a bright redneck in the United States Congress now named Gingrich.

Leonora Addison: Did you say bright?

MA: Hmm.

LA: Did you just say bright?

MA: Yes, he is bright, but that's about as far as I go with him. He had an unusual way of teaching political science. He would make you think. And I'll never forget one of his favorite expressions, talking about a political hack, he would describe him as a horse that will stand without hitching. Tell him what to do, tell him where to eat, tell him where to stay, that's what he'd do. Who did I mention? ... Charlie Whitman in the English department? I had had no connection, no thought of being interested in theater. ... To me it was something that, well it existed I suppose, but I'd had no experience. And he made it live. As a matter of fact, it was

with him when he took some people from his class that I saw my first live theater performance in New York City. And I always thought well of him. Of course, there were some other professors. There was little Helgie Johnson. Helgie Johnson was head of the geology department. I took geology one year. And I swear he wasn't any higher than that. But he could move twice as fast as the biggest guys in the class. And when we went on field trips, he wore us out. (laughter)

LA: He was closer to the ground.

MA: I never thought of that. He was closer to the ground, which is good for a geologist, isn't it? ... And then, of course, I think at that time, the head of the history department was Professor Kull. And one of the most interesting courses that he taught was the seminar course, Great Books. We started with the Bible. You had to read the Bible one week, and read it all, he said. And ... let's see, we got through Hobbes, Montesquieu, went back to a number of others. Of course, he threw Plato at us. How do you read all of Plato? You can't even find translations of all of Plato in one place. That was an interesting course. I don't remember what the final survey amounted to, but it was interesting.

KP: I've been through Professor Kull's papers, and he saved some of the papers his seminar students wrote, and it was interesting reading some of them.

MA: I don't think you'll find mine. They must have torn it up or burned it. ...

DP: I wanted to ask, you were on the rifle team for several years and had won some awards on the rifle team. Why did you choose to go on the rifle team?

MA: Well, I was lazy. The best part of being on the rifle team was that most of the shooting was done from a prone position, or from a sitting position. Some from a standing position. So that was fun. First of all, you know, I was from a small, rural area. I had hunted birds, rabbits, ducks. I tried out for basketball, and I wasn't good enough. I was cut about, I don't know, shortly after the beginning of the season, in freshman ball. ... I played baseball in my little high school team, but it was a long way from the competition that I saw here at Rutgers, to make freshman ball. So I said, ah, rifle. Because, incidentally, I went out for fencing. And, of course, they saw immediately I wasn't fast enough for foils, and strong enough for sabre, so they ... put me in the middle, they put me in epee. I didn't win a bout. I decided to go to the rifle team, and I had a good eye. As a matter of fact, when I went military, I made sharpshooter and expert. But, anyway, that's why I went for rifle. It was a lot of fun. We shot Yale, we shot some private clubs and I enjoyed it.

DP: So you got to get out and go around because you were on the rifle team?

MA: Yes. We shot the Essex Troop, up in Newark; Yale away, and then we did a lot of paper shooting back and forth.

DP: Had you traveled much around New Jersey before coming to Rutgers?

MA: No.

DP: So then this was really your first chance to travel?

MA: I was a clam digger. No, this was an experience.

KP: Was the time you went in to see your first play the first time that you had been in to New York City?

MA: I don't recall. I think maybe I had been there once, but it was not easy to get from Barnegat to New York City conveniently, although actually, this Central Railroad of New Jersey, which no longer exists, had its terminus at Barnegat. To get to New York, you went up to Jersey City and took the ferry to Liberty Street.

KP: You were not in ROTC, but you...

MA: Yes I was.

KP: For two years?

MA: For two years, and then I was in the band for four years.

KP: Had you thought of staying in after your sophomore year?

MA: ... I thought of not staying in. (laughter)

KP: What did you think of ROTC for the two years that you were in?

MA: The most interesting part of ROTC was my connection with the officers who ran it and the photographs they had of the horrible things that the Japanese had done ... in the Chapei district of Shanghai, when the bodies were piled up to the second story, back in 1931. And eventually, I was very happy to get to China.

KP: Why did they post that? To teach a lesson?

MA: No, I just happened to recall it. It just happened to hit me. I don't even recall the simple course that we were taught in ROTC, as a freshman and sophomore.

KP: Did your ROTC training help you when you eventually entered the military?

MA: No. But it taught me to keep my mouth shut. Because when I enlisted in the military in 1942, I never told them that I had been on a rifle team. I didn't want to be a grunt, because I enlisted in the signal corps.

KP: When I have interviewed other people, particularly the class of 1942, one thing I'm interested in getting their views on is attending chapel. What did you think of having mandatory chapel?

MA: Oh, I didn't mind. It was only during my freshman year that it was mandatory. And I usually skipped it, and very rarely did they take attendance. My fondest memories of Kirkpatrick is the fact that in my sophomore year there was a freshman that I knew who was a terrific organist. And he would come in and play that organ, to a fare thee well. And that's my fondest memory of Kirkpatrick Chapel.

KP: What about Dean Metzger? Did you ever have any contact with him, for better or worse?

MA: Oh it was a social connection. I assure you. I had no problems with Dean Metzger. I was never a discipline problem. I learned a long time ago to avoid anything of a bureaucratic nature. (laughter)

KP: You came to Rutgers in 1933, which is the same year as the rise of Hitler. What did Rutgers students think about what was going on in Europe and in China?

MA: Very little, very little. Europe was a place they'd read about, and China was a place they hadn't. And there wasn't much activity. There was a little bit of activity, but not much.

KP: I've also heard a range of views regarding ...

MA: Excuse me, may I interrupt?

KP: Sure.

MA: There was an incipient, ultra-liberal group that weren't communists, but they could very well have been, at least communist sympathizers, who thought that the experiment in Russia was a good thing. Even the Jewish groups were not too aware of Hitler's potential, and had very little to do with him and very little to do with what was happening in Germany. However the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity was an exception. In my junior year (1936) the national asked their local chapters to bring a Jewish student from Germany and to support him for a year. I and another brother went to Trenton and conferred with David Wilentz, then our Attorney General to ask for financial and legal assistance. {He was the father of the future Chief Justice of the N.J. Supreme Court.} With his aid a student then in his early twenties was brought over. I don't think he matriculated, but at least we managed to save a life.

LA: Excuse me, I just have a question about the other side of the fence. Were there Bund sympathizers?

KP: That was my next question.

MA: Who's doing this interview? (laughter) Yeah, there were Bund sympathizers, but I never had any contact with them. Nothing of an unfortunate nature, nothing that would even start an argument.

KP: At Douglass, there was a professor in the German department, Professor Hauptman, who would end up being more than a Nazi sympathizer and would end up going back to Germany. Were people at Rutgers College aware of that at all?

MA: Oh yes. We were aware of it. But that's their problem. (laughter)

KP: Is there anything else that you remember about Rutgers that we may have forgotten?

MA: The girls at the Coop, or NJC it was, you know. And the girls in town.

KP: So there was dating of the women at Douglass and also in town?

MA: Oh yes, sure. And, of course, the fraternity was always a social center. So we had an opportunity to meet girls and they had an opportunity to meet us.

KP: Students like Darren, and I have gone through the *Targums* from the `30s, and the one thing that struck me was how Republican Rutgers was. Not only President Clothier and a lot of the other administrators, but also a lot of the students, in polls. Often Republican presidential candidates did well, given that the country was in the midst of the Depression. Do you have any thoughts on that?

MA: No. But it began to change after Roosevelt, especially after he had been in, say around 1935, `36. People began to realize that there were some social changes, and the social changes weren't such a bad idea. But, I was rather immune from all of that. Or shall we say, unconscious of what was happening in that respect.

KP: After you graduated from Rutgers, did you go directly to law school?

MA: Yeah.

KP: And which law school did you go to?

MA: Penn.

KP: How did you enjoy law school?

MA: Oh, I enjoyed law school very much. (laughter) That's why I almost flunked out in my second year. Do you want the story?

KP: Oh yes, please.

MA: You know it.

LA: Well, I wasn't there.

MA: No, we didn't meet until WW II. One of my fraternity brothers who graduated two years ahead of me, was from Philadelphia, and he and his father--his father had been a widower for quite a number of years--he and his father had an apartment in the Hotel Philadelphia, at 39th and Chestnut, only just a few blocks from the law school at 34th and Chestnut. And when he found out that I had been admitted, he said, and I got in touch with him to find out where would be a good place to look for boarders, because the law school had no dormitories. He said, "Look, our apartment ... has enough room, has another bedroom, it's not being used. We have a cook. My father's in business. There's no breakfast or lunch, but we have dinner five days a week, ... you get a decent meal. Would you like to live with us?" I said fine. So for three years, I lived in the Hotel Philadelphia, just a few blocks away. At that time, ... it was a transient hotel as well as a residential hotel. It was a combination. So that was fine. My first year, worked hard. My second year, I discovered that there was a nightclub in the hotel. They had a six-girl line. And I met a few of them. In addition to that, when the Ice Capades came to Philadelphia, that's where they stayed. Now those girls not only were beautiful, but extremely well turned out. So I spent an awful lot of time socializing during my second year, as a result of which I busted Trusts. Fortunately, they gave me a re-exam and I made it. But it was a good year for me, but a lousy year for the law school. Then I got smart, and ... my third year was different. But I enjoyed it. And I enjoyed the classes. And I enjoyed the give and take.

KP: So you enjoyed the law?

MA: Yes.

KP: Did you find that most of the students enjoyed the law too?

MA: Those that stayed. Because one third of them bounced out at the end of the first year.
KP: Having gone to Penn, had you had much contact with Philadelphia growing up?

MA: Yes. Philadelphia actually was the metropolitan area for South Jersey. And so we thought of Philadelphia as "the city," not of New York. Because it was much easier to get to and it had more influence. People in that part of the state read the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. They read the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. They didn't read the New York papers. So I had been in Philadelphia with my father on a number of occasions.

KP: When you entered Penn, did you have the notion of going back to Ocean County?

MA: The notion was that I'd go back to New Jersey. Whether it would be Ocean County or not, I didn't know. But I was definitely going back to New Jersey.

KP: Did you have any notion of what you would specialize in? What type of law?

MA: Making a living. Don't forget that ... was still 1940, when I got out.

KP: What do you remember as the prospects? What did most of your classmates think you would do? Every profession I've interviewed from '42 and before, they expected to have a tough going. Was that a similar expectation?

MA: Absolutely. Even those that were going to stay in the city. Especially those that were going to stay in the city, knew it was going to be tough.

KP: After you graduated law school, where did you get your first job?

MA: Well, let's see. In those years, in the state of New Jersey, before the 1947 constitution, you were required to work with a counselor for a year. And counselors were not necessarily easy to come by. Fortunately, it wasn't required that you work for a consecutive 12-month period. You could split it; summers and then follow it up. I was fortunate in that my sister knew a lawyer in Toms River who eventually became a county judge. And he agreed to take me on as a law clerk in the sense that I had to really work with him for a year. And so that was fortunate. I met other lawyers in Toms River, and, of course, everybody knew by now--here we are now in 1941--everybody had a draft number, and everybody knew that eventually, if you could manage to walk, that you'd get called. So I didn't want to do anything permanent, and I had a friend ... who had been admitted three years before, and he said, "Why don't you come in the office? I'll give you desk space and maybe we can find a little for you to do." And that's what happened.

KP: You mentioned that you had a draft number in the peacetime draft. Did you think that America was going to war? What was your attitude towards the approach of war? Did you give it much thought in 1940 and 1941?

MA: We knew that we were eventually going to war, but we never thought of Japan. Because, first of all, we knew that we had given England all of those over-aged destroyers. We knew that we would probably be getting close. I saw the result of a ... German submarine torpedoing a tanker. Because it happened right off shore, I saw the explosion. It must have been ten miles off shore, but it went up like an atomic bomb. And they didn't care whose tanker it was. Many of them were ours. So I figured it's got to go. Then, of course, after Japan came in, in December of ... `41, I wasn't gonna wait for the draft, because I knew that I wouldn't have any choice in what to do. At that time, I'd been already interested in radio. So I decided, since the draft was going to grab me for the infantry, and I wasn't interested in that, I enlisted in the Signal Corps.

KP: Had you thought of trying to get into the judge advocate corps?

MA: No, my first thought was to get into the navy. And the navy said, "We don't want you. You're short enough teeth to bite the Japanese." So I didn't pass the dental physical. The army didn't really care. So I enlisted in the signal corps.

KP: Why the appeal of radio and the signal corps?

MA: Because I'd been interested in radio before I'd even gotten ... into the army, or even thought about it.

KP: So you had grown up experimenting with radios, and building a radio kit?

MA: Yeah, that sort of thing.

KP: After enlisting in March 1942, where did you initially report to?

MA: I enlisted in Philadelphia and was sent down to Fort George Meade for six days to get a haircut and some uniforms. And they sent me out to Camp Crowder, Missouri, where I stayed six weeks. After I stayed there six weeks, I was interviewed by another attorney from Kansas City. He said, ... we've looked at all of the tests and the result of the tests, and so forth, and the fact that I enlisted in the signal corps, and he said, "Well, it looks to me as though you are qualified for radio repair school, which is the highest rating we can give you as an enlisted man." He said, "We have two schools, ... one is in Chicago and one is in some God forsaken place called Fort Monmouth." (laughter) He said, "Do you have any choice?" And I said, "Well, I don't want to go to a big city; send me back to Fort Monmouth, 26 miles from home." So they sent me to Fort Monmouth. And I went through radio repair school. Just as I finished radio repair school, my application for OCS was approved, I went through OCS at Fort Monmouth, and became commissioned December 18, 1942. And having met this young lady already, in New York City, we were married nine days later.

KP: I just want to back up and even ask a question or two to you about that. I guess I want to start first with Camp Crowder; you were there for six weeks. What did your basic training consist of?

MA: Learning how to survive mud up to your gluteous maximus, and having dust blow in your eyes at the same time.

KP: Do you remember anything about your drill instructors?

MA: No. The drill instructors at OCS were so different that they wiped all of that out of my mind. ... The thing that I can recall best about Camp Crowder, other than what I've already said, is pulling guard duty at night with an empty rifle.

KP: And thinking that this is pretty futile?

MA: They didn't trust me. (laughter)

KP: You went to radio school. What did you think of the training?

MA: I thought it was good. It taught me at least how to repair a radio, the simpler ones, of course. When you were sent out into a unit and the things were more complicated, you were re-trained on that stuff. But I didn't last long doing radio repair work, because after I was commissioned, they thought, apparently, at that point, either they didn't need field officers at, or they had ... more necessity for officers in administrative areas. So my first assignment was Lexington Signal Depot, ... where we took ourselves. And that was training in administrative work, in supply work, and in security work. ...

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

KP: Since Mrs. Addison is here, I guess this is a good point to ask how did you meet and what were the circumstances?

MA: You want it long or short?

KP: Whichever one you prefer. We generally prefer long.

MA: Oh, you want long? All right, I was at Fort Monmouth. I was at that time in OCS.

LA: No, you weren't.

MA: Excuse me, I wasn't in OCS. I was in radio repair school. And my best friend, bunkmate, became ill and went to the hospital. He'd been going into New York every weekend, because he knew New York. He refused to tell me where all these beautiful girls were that he was meeting in some canteen. And it wasn't the very famous Stage Door canteen. But he wouldn't tell me. He became ill, went to the hospital. I had snagged what was a rare item in those days: a portable radio, battery operated. I went to see him with the radio and I said, "Newt," he was bored to death, "this is a radio. You know where these girls are. No girls, no radio." (laughter) [So he said,] "Okay." He told me, he couldn't remember the name, he was lying, but he said, "It's on lower 5th Avenue." You know that's a rather long street. Well, I couldn't find it. I wound up at a canteen operated by the National Women's Republican Club. You can't imagine a canteen any more dull than that. And I couldn't stand that. So there was somebody there, I said, "I gotta get out of here." He said, "Where are you going?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "Do you know any place to go? Well I know there's a canteen down on lower 5th Avenue around 15th, or 10th, or somewhere in that neighborhood." I said, "Well, I'll try anything." Well, I found it. And I walked in and right opposite the door was a long serving bar where they had cookies and milk and soda and whatever. And this young lady was behind the bar. And that's how we met at the Music Box Canteen.

KP: Well, Mrs. Addison, you were behind the bar. How long had you been doing that?

MA: Now, wait a minute, I don't want you to interview her or find out what her reaction to me was. (laughter)

LA: As a matter of fact, my reaction to him was a very funny one.

MA: I introduced myself with my full name.

LA: He said, "I'm Addison Abramowitz from Barnegat." And I looked at him and I was going to ask him if he was serious. The whole thing just sounded completely incredible to me. But something told me I had better just accept what he said.

KP: Had you known where Barnegat was?

LA: Never heard of it in my life.

MA: She wasn't even sure where New Jersey was located. (laughter)

KP: You met each other and then what happened?

LA: That was the end of August.

MA: ... Yeah, that was the end of August, just before I went into OCS. I went into OCS in September. And you know, obviously I asked her for a date. And like most girls then who were cautious, she said, "Alright." But she took me home to her mother. Because apparently, she'd been taking these street sweepings home and giving people a decent meal. And so that's how we met, really.

KP: And the dinner obviously went well.

MA: Well, she didn't cook it.

LA: Dinner went well. He didn't pay for it and didn't pay for anything else. He never took me anywhere, he just came up and ate my mother's cooking, that's all.

MA: I might have been stupid, but I wasn't crazy. (laughter)

KP: You dated for how long?

LA: Oh, we didn't date. He was in OCS.

MA: You didn't date in those days.

LA: I think we saw each other maybe four times, tops, before we were married, if that.

MA: Wait a minute, oh no, more than that, maybe five.

LA: Everything was very accelerated.

MA: It had to be, everybody was under a tremendous amount of pressure. You never knew what was going to happen to you. And so everything was accelerated. What would normally have taken six months to a year, ... could be accomplished in three months.

KP: So you got married very quickly?

LA: To say the least, yeah. In December of `42.

KP: Had you thought of waiting until the war was over?

LA: No, no one thought that.

MA: No, no one thought that.

LA: You didn't know if there would be tomorrow, so you took today.

MA: Oh absolutely!

LA: You made the most of it. And we happened to be particularly fortunate that we had fifteen months together before he went overseas. See, I traveled with him. Many people only had the one night, and then. ...

MA: And then if they came back, ... it was a whole bad scene, because they were two strangers, had to start all over again. We didn't. We had to start over, of course, but we had a basis of a relationship, so we were fortunate. Maybe that's why it's lasted 52 plus years. Next.

KP: I should ask a few questions about OCS. How effective was that training? You said that had washed out your memories of earlier training.

MA: Oh yes. It was difficult. It was tough. They didn't fool around.

KP: Where did you complete OCS?

MA: At Fort Monmouth.

KP: Was it OCS for the Signal Corps?

MA: Yes.

KP: What was the toughest part about the training?

MA: I don't know. I had already been in the army, so I was accustomed to taking orders, performing, getting up early, doing what I had to do, being where I was supposed to be. OCS was just more of it, and a little tougher, and a little stricter.

LA: How about that field problem? You know when you were out for 36 hours and showed up on my doorstep unexpectedly.

MA: Well, part of signal corps at that time was a lot of wirework as well as radio. And wire work in all kinds of weather. ... And one field problem we had was in the worst weather we had in the month of, I guess it was in the ...

LA: December.

MA: ... very beginning of December. ... Laying wire was easy, you put the spool in the back of a six by six, and you just ran it down. Picking it up was murder. Because the wire was laying here, and the truck was going in that direction. Now, how do you get the wire to get up in the truck? You got the wire into the truck by an idiot holding what we called an idiot stick. Do you know what an idiot stick is? Well, I'll tell you what an idiot stick is. An idiot stick is a long pole about eight feet long, seven feet long. And on the end of it is a device. You hooked the wire over the device, the wire now is here, it goes through the device, and the wire is going into the truck, and being wound on the reel. But the truck is moving and the reel is moving and you're moving, and you have to hold it back. Not only is it raining, but it's sleeting, and it's snowing and you're soaked to the skin and cold. And so that field problem took 36 hours. We didn't pick up wire the whole 36 hours, but that was the end of it. You had to pick up the wire that you had laid. And so I managed to get into some dry clothes and I had the weekend, and I went to New York and got in touch with her. And she said, "I'm sorry, I have a date." I said, "Well, you may have a date, but I don't." She said, "Why don't you come back next weekend?" I said, "You take what you can get and this is what I got, and here I am." Anyway, that was that.

KP: Did you go out on that date?

LA: They were both at the house, ... each tried to outstay the other.

MA: The worst part of it was that he was already commissioned ...

LA: And he kept calling him, "Yes, sir. Yes, sir."

MA: ... In chemical warfare and I have a relative rank on, I'm not commissioned; I have a relative rank of corporal. Do you know the vast difference between those two? Anyway, so much for that.

LA: It was quite an evening.

MA: Then he left early, and I fell asleep, and her father came and ordered me out of the house.

LA: It was pouring, and my father didn't care.

MA: So I went downtown and got a place to sleep. Anyway, 701 West 176th Street, wasn't it?

LA: Almost.

MA: Almost, well that was when I came back. Okay, go ahead fellas. ... Alright now, we've made it into World War II.

KP: Where were you married?

MA: We were married in New York City.

KP: A fairly hastily arranged wedding, to say the least.

MA: Yes.

LA: Yes, and we left the day we were married. That evening we went to Lexington, Kentucky, to his first post as an officer.

KP: So you had completed OCS successfully? How many people washed out of OCS?

MA: I don't know, but there were a few.

KP: So it was that rigorous then?

MA: Oh yeah. ... It's inevitable. Either they washed out, not for the physical, because by the time you got into OCS you'd been toughened up, but a lot of them washed out, that did wash out, either for rule infractions of a serious nature, I don't recall what they were at the moment, or because they weren't making it in the classroom.

KP: The signal corps is very technical. How hard was it for you?

MA: It wasn't hard, it wasn't hard. ... I'd always had an interest in science and that sort of stuff, so it was no problem.

KP: You were sent to Lexington, Kentucky. What were your first reactions to Lexington?

MA: Well, we thought it was south. And we found out that in the wintertime it's not south. It's a boundary line between heat and cold. Which meant snow, sleet, and rain, and low temperatures. So that was a surprise. But other than that, it wasn't a bad deal; we were there for six weeks. After those six weeks, I was assigned to the Dayton Signal Depot, in Dayton, Ohio ... near Wright Field. And we were there from ...

LA: Nine months.

KP: Where did you live at both places?

MA: We had to find our own quarters in Lexington, and that wasn't too convenient. But when ... we got to Dayton, we managed to find a house which we occupied with the occupant, a woman who was a typical Rosie the Riveter, and her husband was already in service. He was at Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania waiting to ship out. So that's where we stayed.

LA: She was a real Tennessee hillbilly.

MA: Yes, she was.

LA: Unbelievable.

KP: How much of a surprise was it to see such a different part of the country?

MA: Well, I'll give you an idea. Mrs. Addison had always lived in an apartment house in New York City. And, of course, if there was some problem with the heat, you banged on the radiator pipes and sent a nasty note to the superintendent. But in the house that we rented ...

LA: How about Lexington?

MA: Oh my God, ... in Lexington, Kentucky, we found a small part of an apartment. It was a living room, what they called a kitchen, which had no running water, I might add. Did it have a refrigerator?

LA: Oh yes.

MA: It had a refrigerator. The bathroom was down the hall. ... We shared that with the others.

LA: To get water, to wash a dish, I had to go to the bathroom.

MA: ... And the heat, well, there was no heat in the so-called kitchen. But in our living bedroom, we had a fireplace.

LA: I had only seen electric logs before in my life. You know, this burned soft coal.

MA: Soft coal which we had to bring up in a bucket from the first floor to the second floor. And I was accustomed to, as a boy scout, you know, to lighting a fire and having wood to burn, not soft coal. It was an awful job to learn how to have a soft coal fire and to bank it so that it was still alive in the morning, so that you could get some heat out of it for the rest of the day.

LA: But not smother it. You had to learn that balance. Which kind of eluded me.

MA: It took some time. Anyway.

KP: Do you have any memories of rationing? Did you have a card?

MA: Memories we have of rationing, more particularly, were in Dayton, where we had house facilities. Where, incidentally, we had a hot air furnace with the old-fashioned register in the floor, the furnace was in the cellar. It burned coal. The coal bin was in the cellar.

LA: Have you ever seen the ration books? Have you seen the things that were rationed?

MA: Well, we had ration books for sugar, and we had ration books for ... coffee, and we managed.

LA: The thing I thought you were going to tell them about Mrs. Song, Louise's mother. In the first place, we, at one point couldn't find a ration book, one of the ration books was his, so he went to the ration board and he signed a statement that it was lost and was probably burned in the furnace.

MA: So they believed me, here I was an officer in uniform.

LA: So they gave him another book. A few days later, he came home and I said, "You'll never guess what happened. I found the original ration book." He didn't make any particular comment and then my landlady's mother was going to do some canning, and she knew that I had found the book, so she asked me for the stamps for the sugar from the book that I had found. I looked all over for it, I couldn't find it anywhere. When he came home that night, I said, "I can't imagine what happened to that ridiculous book. It's disappeared again." He said, "It didn't disappear." [I said,] "What happened to it?" He said "I burned it." I said, "What do you mean you burned it?" He said, "Well, I had signed a statement that it was burned, didn't I?" (laughter) So he burned it in total.

MA: Oh well!

KP: Was there much of a black market in either place?

LA: Not that we knew of.

MA: We weren't aware of it, if there was.

KP: How did you get around in both places? Did you take the bus?

LA: That's all there was.

KP: What did you do for fun when you were not on duty?

MA: Well, we had available to us the officers club at Wright-Patterson Field. We were there I guess two or three times, weren't we? And there were movies, and small restaurants and so forth. There wasn't a lot of social time. And don't forget, we were young married, trying to get accustomed to each other, so that was another matter. And Mrs. Addison, of course, was learning to cook.

LA: Disaster.

MA: Pardon?

LA: I said, disaster.

MA: And I was learning to eat. And sometimes we ate at the commissary at the ... signal depot, the restaurant.

KP: Did you work at all outside the house?

LA: Yes.

KP: Where did you work?

LA: Well, I had never done office work before in my life, but I thought, well, I want to be near my husband so I applied and I got this job at Wright Field. But it was a ridiculous job. I hated it, I really had nothing to do. I think two days a month I would hand write a report.

MA: It was with the photo lab, was it?

LA: No, no. I couldn't stand it, and I quit. And in those days, Dayton was declared ... the number one critical war area, shortage of manpower, using that generically, manpower. And you couldn't quit a job in a so-called important industry unless you had a certificate of availability and you had to go through a whole thing to get that. It took quite some time to get that certificate of availability, because I had quit. So I went into my love. And that was merchandising. I had been the assistant buyer at Bloomingdale's at the time we were married. So that's what I did in Dayton after I left.

KP: In a department store?

LA: Yes, I worked for about four departments.

KP: What was it like to cook with a ration book? And eat with a ration book?

LA: You know, it's amazing, I have a theory about many situations which are not "normal" situations. When they become a part of your everyday life, they assume some normalcy. You don't question it. This is it. You know, since every one is doing it, were we the only ones, then perhaps then it would be a problem. But since everyone was doing the same thing, you were sharing, I think, as a matter of fact, there was a greater unity in those days. Because we were all going through tough times together.

MA: Yeah, I'm sure of it.

KP: Your duties on both bases, what exactly did they consist of?

MA: Oh, I was assigned as a base security officer. ... We had several installations of the signal corps in Dayton. And we also did some developmental work. So my job was to review investigative reports of employees to be hired, or those that had already been hired. And to just go snooping around.

KP: How secure was the base? Did you find any suspicious people?

MA: The base was as secure as a piece of Swiss cheese. First of all, it seemed to me that the investigative reports, which were allegedly done by the FBI, were not very complete. But we had to have people to work. The only time that we really interviewed people was in the area of developmental work, where we had to hire people who were doing what was at that time secret work, especially in connection with radar, which was completely new at that time.

KP: Did you ever have any incidents that were real security problems for the base?

MA: No. Not that I can recall.

DP: When did you get your call that you were going to go overseas, and how did you react to that?

MA: Okay, well let's move forward. I left the signal corps. I'd been transferred to the Corps of Military Police because there were so many more administrative signal corps officers than they needed. They needed military police officers. And I'll just give you a quick run down.

KP: So you wanted to stay in the signal corps?

MA: Yes, I wanted to stay in the signal corps. But, okay, the army tells you what to do, where to go. I wouldn't write to my congressman about it. So we went to Battle Creek, Michigan, where I took military police training. And then sent down to Texas ... Abilene. And that's where I took the training, again, assigned to several training companies. And finally, advised that the company that I was in, the company to which I was being transferred, rather, was scheduled for the Pacific area. And then I was the supply officer of the unit. And off we went to California. And in early March, I put my wife on the train and said, "I hope I see you." And she went back to the East Coast and I got on a liberty ship with seven other officers and 30 Nisei. And off we crossed the blue Pacific.

KP: In other words, Mrs. Addison, you followed your husband to Abilene and to California.

LA: To the very end, yes.

MA: That's right, until she couldn't get on the boat.

KP: In fifteen months, you had seen very different parts of the country and very different people. What did you think of all of these experiences, especially in your case, you really had not been outside the five boroughs?

MA: No, that's not true.

LA: I had been to Europe three times, so, as a matter of fact, I had gone alone. And in those days, that was very unusual, when I was seventeen. I just didn't know America. I had been to Europe, but not America.

KP: But what did you think of America?

LA: Well, Abilene was a shock. Abilene, I have to tell you, was a shock. I mean, there truly were no sidewalks, actually.

MA: Not at that time. No way.

LA: It was amazing, and the people were very small-town to say the least, in their outlook. ... Quite a revelation.

MA: Well, anyway, it was an experience.

LA: And we did, by the way, we didn't go together to California. I was not supposed to know where he was going.

MA: She's a better interviewee than I am.

LA: He didn't travel with the company. He traveled alone. I don't remember what time his train was. He told me to take the next train. And we had this pact; he had no way of knowing what would await him when he got to California. He didn't know whether he was going to be put on a ship immediately or not. So we had this pact that if he were not able to meet me at the train, I'd go to Travelers' Aid, which was big in those days, and he would leave a message there that either he'd meet me, you know, later that day or maybe just so long. It was nice knowing you. It was a pretty difficult time.

KP: Where did you ship out from? San Francisco?

MA: No. I shipped out from San Pedro, which was the port for Los Angeles.

KP: So you were not even meeting him in a big city?

MA: No, no, no, not quite. Go ahead honey.

LA: No, thank God he was there waiting for me.

MA: I was waiting for her at the train, because I wanted to know when the next train came in, and I was there. And she was surprised, and so was I that we managed to meet.

LA: We had four weeks there. Which was more than we had anticipated.

MA: We actually lived in two different hotels in Los Angeles. And every day I would go down to the port to supervise supplies for the company and the loading and so forth. And then I had 24 hours notice that we're sailing the next day. That was it.

KP: That must have been very sad.

MA: No, I had two days notice.

LA: It was sad. That's the understatement.

MA: Yes, it wasn't easy.

KP: Did you know where your unit was going?

MA: I knew pretty well where my unit was going, but I didn't tell her. I knew that I was going to India, and probably there was a chance that I'd be flying across "the hump," to China, and that's how it worked out. Although I was in India from, let's see, we left in March, it was 63 days to Calcutta. Arrived Calcutta in May of `44. And left India, ... just before Christmas to fly across the Himalayas to China.

KP: You mentioned that on your voyage, there were several officers and a large number of Nisei enlisted men. Which unit were the Nisei going to?

MA: They were going to be sent out to different units, because, after all, how many interpreters did you need for an organization? ... Most of them were not going into units at the front, because the average GI might have trouble distinguishing between them and the enemy. Most of them went to regimental headquarters or air force headquarters where they needed not only people who could speak, but who could read and write the language.

KP: Did you have any contact with any of them on the voyage? Did you talk with any of them?

MA: Oh sure. I was their official barber. I cut more Nisei hair than anybody else.

KP: There was a lot of anti-Japanese-American sentiment.

MA: Not on that ship.

KP: Had you had any contact with Japanese-Americans before?

MA: No, but here were guys in uniform doing the same thing I was doing and going to be shot at just as I was. So what the hell.

KP: Many of their family members were interned in camps. Did they ever talk about this?

MA: They didn't discuss it, they didn't discuss it.

KP: Did you get the sense that they were trying to be more American than others?

MA: No, I don't think so, anymore than the American Indians who served overseas.

KP: How did you like the voyage?

MA: I loved it. I loved it.

KP: Did you get sick at all?

MA: Never got seasick, I never get seasick. Because I was in boats anyway, from the time I was a kid. After all, Ocean County is along the water. I made friends with the boatswain, who had keys to everything. We were moving 3000 cases of beer, ... for the troops and I figured that I

was a troop. ... And he had access to cheese and all of those goodies, you know. ... Of course, we were traveling on [a] liberty ship and they had a bad reputation that they'd break apart. They were talking about sinking. We didn't worry about that.

KP: Did you go in a convoy?

MA: Oh, we went alone. We went alone.

KP: Any concern of subs?

MA: Well, ... not until we got to western Australia. We traveled through the roaring 40s and the horrible 50s and I recall standing on the bridge wing with the waves twenty feet above me, and the ship rolling 30 degrees. And I don't think I ever lost a breakfast. A little tough to sleep sometimes. But other than that, it wasn't so bad. But after we arrived in Freemantle, we refueled. Then we went up to Ceylon, Sri Lanka, where we met the old aircraft carrier *Saratoga*, had mail for her. And then we joined a convoy. The convoy that was just ahead of us lost several ships in the Bay of Bengal. But we were fortunate, we didn't, we got into Calcutta.

KP: What did you know of India before you got there?

MA: Nothing.

KP: Had you ever watched any movies like *Gunga Din*?

MA: That wasn't India, that was Hollywood.

LA: Of course, he had gotten the National Geographic from the time he was nine, so that many of these places were familiar to him from photographs and reading about them.
...

[Pause]

KP: What were your first impressions of Calcutta and of India?

MA: ... My first impression of India was, as we gradually went up to the Hoogly and I saw my first kite, a kite is a kind of attack eagle or oversized hawk, black; and some of the crew members were throwing food up into the air and they were catching it in the air, just the way a sea gull will catch. ... And my second impression was of strong odors. And when I landed, they assigned me to a very, very bad transit camp on the other side of the river. And I couldn't stand it. It was muddy, difficult. I said "I'm not going to stay here." I walked out. I was lucky, because I was wearing bars on my shoulders, so I could get away with it.

And I asked around and found out that there were a number of officers and other people sleeping at the Grand Hotel, right opposite the racecourse, right in the center of Calcutta. So I went over there. And I found a bed. And that's where I stayed in Calcutta as long as I was there. It had a lot of advantages. First of all, it was just around the corner from the best restaurant in town

called Firpo's which was run by some Austrian people. And, of course, everybody from Austria is really from Vienna, at least, as far as they're concerned, there just isn't any other city. But they are very good cooks. And in addition to that, there was an orchestra in the place, and the orchestra was Teddy Hungerford's. Now Teddy Hungerford was a pianist and had a tremendous jazz persona. In addition to having a tremendous jazz persona, ... he was exactly like Fats Waller, same idea. And when the war ended, if he had lived, he would have come back here, and he would have become a tremendous success. But unfortunately, cholera got him.

Anyway, Calcutta was a tremendous contrast; the British officers, some of the wealthy Indians, and then the people who were lying on the sidewalk, dying of hunger. And it wasn't a clean city. I recall one day I had to go somewhere. I got hold of a jeep, went somewhere around the race course, and as I went around the race course, I just watched this young woman coming; she was actually walking, just walking, absolutely buck naked, didn't have a thing on. And that wasn't unusual. So it wasn't too pleasant as far as looking at the city is concerned. I was glad to get out of it, and I went up river to a place called Barrackpur, where they were actually assembling the supplies that I was going to take up to my company.

KP: So you still had not seen the company?

MA: I hadn't seen my company, because they arrived differently. They came by ship across the Atlantic, through the canal. They landed in Bombay, came across India by train, which wasn't particularly a happy experience. And wound up at the most ... northeasterly base in India up in the Assam jungles, at Dinjan. And that's where I went to meet them, by meter gauge railroad, all by myself, with my supplies.

KP: When you say, all by yourself, what do you mean?

MA: Well, there was no other officer or enlisted man traveling with me.

KP: And you traveled on standard Indian railroad?

MA: It was Tea Planter Railroad, actually meter gauge. We went north to Gahouti, as I recall, and crossed the, I don't know if it was the Ganges or the Brahmaputra at that point. And I was alone, with a million other people, but I was alone as far as American military is concerned.

KP: Who actually guarded your supplies? Or were they just in the baggage car?

MA: Yeah, with me. The only danger that I had was from cockroaches. Did you ever see a cockroach that big? Beautiful. Actually they're not ... cockroaches, ... but I don't know what kind of an insect it was, actually that big, brown, looked like a cockroach, might have been a cockroach. Those were fun.

KP: How grand was the Grand Hotel in Calcutta? Because you were not the only one who has mentioned it.

MA: Well, it really wasn't grand. It was grand for then, under those circumstances. Today, you wouldn't quarter yourself there, I don't think.

KP: You did finally join your unit in the Assam jungle, how did that initial contact go? What did you think of the unit and what did you know of their mission at that point?

MA: Well, ... I knew the other officers in the company, so that wasn't any problem. But ... we had what they call a bash. You've undoubtedly ... heard the word before. But better than that, we also had British army tropical tents. And I don't know if you know anything about a British army tropical tent as it was in World War II, but ... the tents were doubled. You had the tent, and then you had over that what was really an enormous fly, but it was shaped like the rest of the tent, so there was a layer of air between the tent itself and the canvas on top, so that there was better circulation over it. And it wasn't quite as hot. One experience that I had was, one day, I don't know where I was, I guess I was in the office, and one of the men said, "Hey, did you see what's out there in the tent area?" I said, "No, what's out there in the tent area?" He said, "Looks like a large cat." So I went out and I looked at the large cat and I saw it was a tiger cub. And I said, "Everybody out of the area!" Because the mother was around there somewhere. We got it scared and shooed it back in the jungle and we didn't see it again. But that was a little hairy.

But it was fun, we had a company of Gurkha that were there doing guard duty, British officers. They were interesting. The British got a liquor ration and we only got twelve cans of beer. They didn't get any beer. Once a month, we would trade six cans of beer for a bottle of good scotch. It was alright. But the only way you can get, ... you couldn't get cold beer, what did you do? You wrapped a can of beer in something wet and hung it up, hoping that the breeze would chill it. But if you knew a pilot, then you had a deal. Because rather than take a fire extinguisher and shoot the fire extinguisher with the foam over the beer, which would chill it, we said, "Tell you what I'll do, I'll give you half of my beer ration if you'll take it up and fly it around." So they would go up with a C-47 and fly it around at 20,000 feet, which would chill it pretty good, and bring it back down and that was fine. But you had to drink it in a hurry.

KP: You mentioned that you had some significant contact with the British officers and Ghurkas. What did you think of how the unit operated and the relationship between the British officers and the Gurkha troops.

MA: Very well. The Ghurkas were known to be excellent soldiers. ... They would not tolerate a bad officer. They refused to be intimidated and they had a tradition of being ... in the British Raj's army. So there was an understanding between them.

KP: When you say they would not tolerate a bad officer, they were enlisted men.

MA: [To DP] You were an enlisted man. When you had a bad officer in your outfit, how did you handle it?

DP: What we would do is go out of our way to make sure that he would have nothing to do with anything that we had to do. We'd send him off on fake missions. We'd say, "We need

something." We'd send him off to get something and in the meantime, we'd go do our work. We just wouldn't listen to him. We'd make him think he was doing something important. But we made sure that he was outside of everything.

MA: Well, they used different techniques.

DP: Yes, that was war.

MA: That was war-time. They couldn't do that. But they ... made the officer know, in no uncertain terms, that they didn't like him. And they didn't fool around, really. Every time they drew that kukri, it had to draw blood, even if they drew it accidentally; they had to cut their finger. It was sharp. I've got one, it almost cut my fingers, because it is so sharp that it cut right through the scabbard. Next.

LA: How about Karachi?

MA: They're not up to that yet. We're going to be here to well after midnight.

KP: How long were you at this base, this northeastern-most base?

MA: Dinjan.

KP: And, roughly, what month and year was it?

MA: ... In June, ... end of June in 1944. And I was there about two months. And they figured the Japanese at that time were making heavy inroads into eastern China. And the most important thing was to get across the hump; everything had to be flown, was gasoline and ammunition, not people. They had enough ... it was tough enough to take care of the needs of the troops that they had over there. So it looked as though we weren't going to China at all. And they sent me to Karachi to British intelligence school. I spent several weeks there. And I figured, well, if I'm going to stay in ... India, I'd better learn to speak Hindi or Urdu. So I got a hold of a munchi, or a teacher, and I started lessons. It's an easy language. But of course, in a few weeks ...

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

KP: This continues an interview Judge Mark Addison on April 13, 1995 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

DP: Darren Purtlebaugh.

MA: And in the presence of Mrs. Addison. ... I mentioned the incident with the tiger cub. It was very easy for my men to get very bored. Guard duty around the area was not difficult. Most of it was concerned with preventing the Nagas, who were the local tribe, from taking things that didn't belong to them. But we never had any physical incident of any serious nature with them. And so the guys would get bored. A couple of times we went out in the jungle just to walk

around, and to get some fresh fish. But the fish didn't want to cooperate with hooks, so we cooperated with them with quarter-pound dynamite. That took care of them pretty well. And most of the fish were like this. Not like a catfish, but I really don't remember how they tasted, to tell you the truth. But it was some relief from eating buffalo meat.

KP: How much contact did your men have with the Ghurka soldiers or with the tribesmen?

MA: Very little. With the tribesmen? Well, this is a bit racist, but some of our men in their off time. became very friendly with Naga women. Now the Nagas were very light skinned. Not at all what you consider the average Indian in ... northern or central India to be, they were much darker skinned. These were sort of almost, not white, not ivory, but very light, very light. And some of them shacked up. And that was sometimes a problem. Because sometimes we couldn't find our own men. We had to go out and beat the bushes. But it wasn't too bad. And then we got orders to go across the hump.

KP: You were sent to British intelligence school. You mentioned that you tried to learn the local language.

MA: That was on my own, outside of school hours.

KP: What did British intelligence teach you?

MA: The courses in the British intelligence school revolved around the nature of the natives, the necessity for their type of investigations, what they wanted in so far as the relationship between the forces and the indigenous people, and how to go about making an investigation in that land. Now I don't remember the details, I just remember the general subject matter.

KP: What did it teach you about British handling of the Indian population?

MA: Well, you didn't have to think about what they were teaching you, you could see what was going on. ... The Indians didn't like the British, at all. And even my teacher said, "I hope that after the war, they go home." ... So apparently that movement was under foot.

KP: You could feel that?

MA: You could get a picture of it once in a while, but you really didn't think about it. Thinking about it now, you realize what you were seeing and what you were hearing.

KP: The British intelligence was teaching how to deal with the Indian population, but they didn't teach you the language, at the school itself.

MA: No.

KP: Did they assume that the officers already knew the language?

MA: Their officers did. And they figured they weren't going to teach the Americans anyway, because the Americans were only there temporarily.

KP: How many Americans were you with at this British intelligence school?

MA: I don't think there were more than three of us out of 30.

KP: What did you think about how the British army worked and how the British Indian army worked? Relative to how officers acted and treated their men.

MA: Oh yes. I don't have to tell you [to DP], I don't know if you were ever in military service or not [to KP], I don't have to tell you [to DP] how G.I.s react to officers. Or how officers act among themselves. But the British were very spit and polish, very proper. And if you were an officer, you might be invited to a dinner at their mess. But it was still a little bit stand-offish, you know. And there was much more of a hierarchy. I could have an argument with my captain. I couldn't conceive that a British subaltern would have any argument with his commanding officer.

KP: It was that rigid?

MA: Yeah.

KP: What about your supplies versus the British. Did you feel the British were better or worse supplied in India?

MA: We were.

DP: You were better supplied?

MA: Uh-huh. They were more adapted to the climate. But when it came to having physical things that we needed, we had better supplies.

KP: What did you think of Karachi itself?

MA: Oh, I loved it. It was very interesting. My first contact with the *Kama Sutra*. And several times, when we had some off time, we got another friend and we hired a dhow, went sailing. If you've ever sailed one of those things, it's some experience. You had a lattine sail. And the boat itself weighs 6 zillion pounds. And it doesn't move very rapidly. But it was fun to go sailing again. God, it was wonderful to be back in a sailboat of any kind!

KP: It sounds like you have some fond memories of Karachi.

MA: ... And I remember ... meeting some officers who were merchant marine on a ship that was anchored in the harbor. We went on the ship and used it as a swimming platform. And in the harbor, you could see ... the bottom 30 feet away. Absolutely clean, at that time. God knows what it's like today. And I saw my first water spout there. And then eventually, they said, "Okay, we're lifting off." And off we flew. And that was just before Christmas in `44.

KP: So around Christmas of 1944, you were sent to China.

MA: Uh-huh.

KP: And where was your unit initially deployed?

MA: My unit wasn't deployed. My unit was split up. We were short an officer. So we had a captain, a first lieutenant, and I was low man on the totem pole. Apparently, the captain and the first lieutenant decided that they were going to pick the best assignment for themselves. ... So they took half the company, and took it into the Ch'eng-tu area, where our B-29s were based, ... to blast Japan. They had, I think they had two airfields that they were taking care of. They sent me into the backwater with half a company. And I had to split that half a company and turn over one platoon, there were four platoons, I turned over one platoon to a staff sergeant and sent them to an air base for guard duty, east of K'un-ming, on the other side of the lake at K'un-ming. And the other platoon, I kept with myself at a base in far western China called ... Yunnanyi. That was a ball, I loved it. That was nice. Some of the duty I had wasn't too good, but other than that, it was pretty good. I had a good base commander.

DP: Were you officially listed with what was later called the "Flying Tigers," although they had been earlier than everyone in China to have the name?

MA: We were the 1364th Military Police Company, aviation, assigned to the 14th Air Force.

DP: When you were in India, and then went on to Karachi to the British intelligence school, were you officially listed under American command or were you under British command at that time?

MA: Well, we were really on detached service. But we were under American command, because we were, for administrative and other duties, assigned to the 10th Air Force in India, just as we were later assigned to the 14th ... in China.

DP: At that time when you were in India, the British were launching an offensive in Burma, did you have any role in that at all, in 1944?

MA: Oh yeah. Well before that, the British were retreating. The Japanese were moving out of Burma into the Indian states of Imphal and Kohima. And that's one thing that delayed our being sent over into China. And that was the reason that I was held back in Barrackpore for a while, until the danger to that little one meter gauge Tea Plantation Railroad was cleared a little bit, so that they didn't worry about getting me up there. Then the rest of your question?

DP: The British launched an offensive in 1944 against the Japanese in Burma, out of Assam.

MA: We supplied them. Dinjan was one of the bases that supplied the fellows down in Myitkyina in Burma. So was the base at Chabua, so was the base at Sukrating, so were some others that I can't dig out of my mind at the moment.

LA: Didn't they assist in the building of the Ledo-Burma Road?

MA: Yes, that's right.

DP: That was the road that was going from Ledo to China.

MA: From Ledo down to Bhamo, and then up to Pao-shan and on into China.

DP: Otherwise known as the China-Burma road.

MA: The Burma Road. We just called it the Burma Road.

DP: Your duties in China, you were providing security for these airfields. Did you have any problems with security there and what were they?

MA: ... We had a Chinese regiment that was also doing guard duty. So the Chinese regiment allegedly was guarding the airfield and we were guarding the airfield from the Chinese guards. We had to kill two of them. It happened at night. You know, infiltrators. You hear a noise, "Who's there?" There is no answer, there's more noise. Now, of course, ... the MP is speaking English, but the Chinese soldiers know the sound of the voice even though they don't know the exact words. But this kid kept coming, so the guard lifted his gun and killed him. Of course, there were all sorts of explanations and reports and whatnot.

KP: What was the fallout from this incident?

MA: None.

KP: Was there any tension between the commander of the Chinese regiment and your commander?

MA: I don't think he cared, because he probably didn't report that this man had been killed and kept drawing supplies for him and putting the money in his pocket.

DP: Was this a fairly common type of occurrence?

MA: Yeah. In Chiang Kai-shek's army, yes it was.

KP: There were widespread reports of corruption in the Nationalist Army?

MA: That's correct, correct.

LA: Since yesterday was 50 years since Roosevelt died, do you want to tell how you handled it over there?

MA: I don't remember.

LA: I remember from your letters.

MA: All right.

LA: You had a book and people came and signed it.

MA: Yes, that's true.

LA: To express the sympathies of the Chinese military.

KP: Did you send that book on to the White House?

MA: I don't remember what I did with it. I think it went to the base commander, whatever he did with it, I don't know.

DP: You got to Assam in June 1944. Had you heard about the Normandy landings?

MA: Oh yes.

DP: What were your reactions to that?

MA: Well, we still said, "Golden Gate in `48, it's got nothing to do with us."

KP: So that was a widespread attitude: "Golden Gate in `48?"

MA: Oh yes, it was when we left home. We had no inkling about the atomic bomb or anything of that sort.

DP: So you were expecting to have to do a lot more in China and Japan?

MA: Uh-huh.

KP: How big was the base you were on?

MA: Big in what sense?

KP: How many Americans and how many Chinese?

MA: I haven't the faintest idea. I can tell you though, that we had, I don't know what the air force calls it, a group of or flight of ... B-25s, which was a light, attack bomber, we had B-26s, and we had P-51s. We also had C-46s, and 47s for cargo and personnel. We had one strip, that strip was at 7,000 feet. So there was a limit to the amount of load that a plane could take off with. And we had an outrider strip, which was very often used by the P-51s.

KP: So it's a very small airfield.

MA: Oh yeah. We were sort of in a little valley. The mountains were ... around us at about 10,000 feet. And we were in the valley at about 7,200. It was nice.

DP: Did Japanese land-based bombers ever attack any of the fields where your people were?

MA: We had a bed-check guy come over. He usually came over around 10 o'clock at night. Once in a while he'd drop a single bomb, so he could go back and tell his headquarters that he'd bombed the Americans. But the first night I arrived, there was an air raid alert, but no place to hide. We found that the rice paddies were separated by walls, mud walls. Well, the best you could do was to slam yourself up against that wall as tightly as you could. There was one problem. They fertilized their fields with night soil. So sometimes you didn't get up smelling very good, but at least you're alive.

KP: What were your housing conditions like in China?

MA: We had barracks around the field.

KP: How well supplied were you?

MA: We had whatever necessities we needed. As a matter of fact, we were so well supplied we had a Red Cross outfit with two young ladies. And we also had a medical detachment with Cochin nurses. That ... wasn't Seagrave, but they were very much the same sort of people he had.

LA: What about the Jell-O?

MA: Pardon?

LA: The Jell-O you had? How you made Jell-O.

MA: Oh yeah. We made Jell-O by bringing snow down from the mountain. That was the only way we could make it. Oh, we did have a hailstorm once. We gathered up the hail and made the Jell-O.

KP: You mentioned that the Nationalist Chinese were notoriously corrupt and how you quickly realized that. What else did you think of the Nationalist Chinese Army from your dealings with this regiment?

MA: They would have been good soldiers if they'd been given personnel, supplies, and leadership, because they fought extremely well in Burma. The 38th Division had a lot of American liaison with it. They were trained, they were led, and they fought very well. No question about it. But in China, it was somewhat of a different picture.

KP: Did you have any contact with the communist forces when you were in China?

MA: No, no. They were in the north or even in deep central China. I never had any contact with them.

KP: What about your relationship with the air force commanders on this base?

MA: We got along very well, except a few of them got drunk once in a while and created a disturbance. But that wasn't a real problem.

KP: On an average day, what would your duties include?

MA: ... Well, you wanted to see if there was any problem anywhere, try to keep the men from being too bored. I managed to rescue a radio, an all-wave radio, from one of the planes, and hooked it up so that at least they had some radio in the barracks. And, of course, there the principal stations that you could receive would be the BBC. And they had some music and news and whatever, but it was better than nothing, you know. As they say, something is better than nothing.

KP: Did you have any chaplains with you?

MA: Yes, not with us, but there was a chaplain on the base. ...

KP: Did people attend religious services very often?

MA: Sometimes, depends on how they felt. The chaplain's duty on that base, as I remember, was more to be a good ... shoulder ... for someone who had a problem, really. After all, he was a Christian chaplain. Oh, he would conduct Catholic services, Protestant services. ... There was one Jewish chaplain in China. He would make circuits of the bases. If you saw him once every six months that would be about it. ... But most of us were not faced with enemy fire so we were less religious.

DP: How did you hear about the bombing of Japan, the atomic bomb being dropped? And what were your reactions?

MA: We didn't understand it, really. It was one hell of a bomb. They had obliterated this town, this city. And then we began to hear noises over the radio about possibility of Japan surrendering. But the immediate impact of that bomb was something we couldn't understand, really. At least I didn't get an understanding reaction.

DP: When did you hear finally about the armistice? And what were your reactions to that?

MA: The same day. That didn't take long to get around. But I, this is maybe not nice to say, but I enjoyed China. The Chinese peasant was a vastly different individual from the Indian peasant.

KP: What were the differences?

MA: They could laugh; they knew how to laugh. They knew how to smile even though things were tough. They were pleasant to you. They didn't ignore you. They were happy to see you. I guess they were hoping for better things from the American personnel than from the Nationalist government. It was different. And we became friendly with the minor officials in the area, ... down near where I was and in the next county. And, of course, the officers were invited to dinners. And dinner was anything from twelve to twenty courses. And that was fun and interesting.

KP: How was Chinese food from China? It sounds like you some fond memories of good meals.

MA: Well, it was better than one from column A and one from column B, I'll tell you that. It was excellent. And depending on where you were, the dishes were different. I can't describe them now, but we did very well. And then too, if I had to go out into ... the mountains to take the Chinese guides with me, they were very good, because I ... sometimes [had] the unpleasant duty of going out to a crash site. And I tried to rescue whatever materiel had not been burned or exploded. And try to find some personnel if there were any remaining. There usually weren't.

KP: Did you ever find any personnel who had survived a crash?

MA: No.

KP: Then you would also be in charge of retrieving the bodies then?

MA: What was left of the bodies.

KP: It sounds like a very grisly task.

MA: Not a happy day, not a happy day. But I liked China. And I went back in `87. We were back in `92. `87 was a ball. But that has nothing to do with World War II.

KP: Did you have any inkling that China would fall to the communists in a few short years?

MA: ... Well, we had an idea that the communists were going to take over Chaing Kai-shek, because ... we were turning materiel over to them after the war ended and that materiel was disappearing. They were selling it to the communists.

KP: When you say you were turning over materiel on your base, what kind of items were you giving them?

MA: Artillery, munitions, supplies of all kinds. And they would sell it. Or would turn it over to a local warlord, who in turn would sell it. Yes. We didn't understand. Now in retrospect, we didn't understand what was going on in China. We assumed that Chaing Kai-shek would be the government. But the Chinese people obviously felt different. ... Our leaders didn't want to believe what intelligence they were getting because it wasn't what they wanted to hear. So they

said, no and they were ignoring it. That's what happened. It happens too frequently. It happened in Beirut, didn't it?

DP: Yes, it did.

KP: What about your relationship with your men, especially when you were detailed with half the company? What was your relationship with the sergeants?

MA: I had a good relationship with them. You know why? I let them run the company.

KP: Were they regular army?

MA: No, they were all citizens. ... If you have good NCOs, you don't stand there and pound the desk and tell them this is the way it's going to be and I don't care the way you want to do it. This is the way it has to be done, and it's damn sure it won't get done. If you've got good NCOs, and they have a good relationship with the rest of the crew, and as long as things run smoothly, leave 'em alone. Right? [to DP]

DP: Exactly. I was a platoon sergeant and we went for six months without an officer. We had no officers, and I was the platoon sergeant, and we had a warrant officer who would drop by from time to time, and I just would say, "Okay, we need this done administratively." And he handled the things that I couldn't get done, because I had too many things to do, but when we did finally get an officer, it was funny because one of the first things he said to us is, "Well, I'm assigned to you, I'm now your platoon leader, in charge of this platoon, but you know as well as I do, you don't need me. So as long as you guys keep out of trouble, you know, I'll stay out of your hair."

MA: Don't foul up.

DP: That's it! "Don't do anything wrong, just keep everything running and I'll just stop by for these monthly meetings."

MA: That's right. That's why when I sent this platoon over to that other base with the staff sergeant, I said, "I'll see you." And maybe once a month, I'd get in the plane and fly over there and say, "How are you doing? What do you need?" That was it. Check with the base commander on how were they doing. "They're doing fine." "Good."

KP: You mentioned that your men were also bored in China. Was there fraternization between the Chinese and the Americans?

MA: No. There was a language barrier. These Chinese soldiers were from just about every province, and I don't know how many dialects there are in China, so some of them had difficulty communicating. For example, I had assigned me a ... young Chinese officer who had the relative rank of major, but he was also, in effect, a second lieutenant. But he had the relative rank of major and he was my interpreter. I had to do an investigation, and I would take him along. Something happened off the base that affected the base. Okay, I'd take Lieutenant Kwong with

me and we'd get a hold of the village headman. Now Kwong ... didn't speak Cantonese. He spoke Mandarin. The village headman may have spoken a ... little Mandarin, but mostly the local dialect. Now, we're trying to get information from this kid. So what did we do? I would ask the question. Kwong would give it to him in his Mandarin. Hopefully, the village headman would understand, and he would then ask the question in the local dialect. Did you ever play that game where everybody sat around in a circle and when it got back to you it wasn't the same thing that had started? Well, right?

DP: Yes.

MA: It was fun. But it was a learning process for all of us. Okay?

KP: After the armistice, what were your duties in China? How long did you remain in China?

MA: We stayed in China until the end of '45. We boarded a baby carrier, called the ... USS *Macon Island*, which was a baby carrier. And we steamed out of Shanghai. ... I spent some time in Shanghai getting administrative matters straightened up. And I had a very unusual experience involving one of my wife's relatives. ... My wife is of ... Hungarian background. And, as she said earlier, when she was seventeen, she went to Europe alone to visit her paternal grandparents. He was, incidentally, a county judge in Hungary, and her father had ... three brothers. One of those brothers was a chemist. But he was in the Hungarian army and he was captured by the Russians in the first battle of World War I. And they sent him to Siberia. And once they sent you to Siberia, they didn't care what happened to you, just don't come back. So he managed to escape. Apparently he got to Harbin. Opened an ink factory with another fellow. And was in China. Came back to Hungary in the `30s sometime, early `30s to visit his folks, and then went back. And nobody ever heard of him again.

So when I was in China, now I'm writing to her to tell her I'm in China, she said, "If you get an opportunity, see if you can find my uncle." Sure. That's like ... somebody in the middle of Russia saying, "Oh you're from America, you must know my cousin in Chicago." The same sort of thing. So she said, "Well, if you can find my uncle." I said, "Sure, I can find your uncle." He hadn't been heard of in years. Anyway, when the war ends, ... I'm visiting in Shanghai, spending a few days down there. I don't know why I went down there, but I got away with it. And so I said to somebody, "I'm wondering if there's any possibility of finding one of my wife's relatives. He's a Hungarian." "Well, let's see. He was an enemy national. If he's in the Shanghai area," he said, "I would suggest that you go down and talk to the Swiss consul." So I drew a jeep out of the motor pool and went down to the Swiss consul and I gave him the story. He said, "Well, I'll tell you, I don't know if he's here. But every nationality in the area has an organization and every organization has a president and the president will know where all of his nationals are if they are in China." So I said, "Okay." I gave him the story, and he said, "Well, I'll get in touch with him this evening. Come back tomorrow and I'll tell you what, if anything, I've been able to learn." I go back tomorrow. "Yes, he's in China. Yes, he's in Shanghai. And he's living with such and such a person at 17 St. Catherine's Way," which is way out past the racecourse. I drew a jeep. I went out there. Now I'm in uniform, wearing a sidearm. I knock on the door. This lady comes to the door, sees me, turns all different colors. "Something the matter?" I said, "I'm looking for," and I gave 'em the name. And she spoke fairly good English. She said, "He's working." I

said, "Where is he working?" "He's working at the American port on the river." I said, "When does he come, when will he be home?" "He'll be home such and such a time." "I'll be back." I come back, it's about 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Knock on the door. This little man comes out. I said, "Are you Parag Tibor?" "Yes." I said "I'm Leonora's husband." He said, "I don't want to go in the house, come on outside. These people were Nazis." What the hell, he'd been living with them. He was a Hungarian national. So anyway, we talked and a couple of times I took him to dinner, because he looked as though he could use ten good meals. Here was a chemist who was working as a plumber's helper just to have a job, so that he could put food in front of him, and that was unusual. That was a very unusual experience.

DP: Have you heard from him since?

MA: ... He tried to get into the United States, and he couldn't get a visa to get into the United States. But he got a visa, oh no, he did get to the United States on a short visitor's visa, but I didn't know it.

LA: See, my parents were divorced too. I didn't see my father.

MA: So he couldn't stay here and he went down to Colombia, I think it was, hoping to get in from Colombia. And while he was there, he was murdered. What else do we have?

KP: What were your impressions of Shanghai? I have read that it was a fairly raucous place.

MA: I liked it, I liked it. I stayed in what was then the French concession; very nice, beautiful homes. I had a room in an apartment building. I slept on the floor, of course. But that was nice, the British concession. And you know, it was a big, wide-open city. Anything you wanted, you could find it there, whether it was money, or sex, or anything at all. It didn't matter.

DP: How long were you in Shanghai?

MA: I made two trips to Shanghai. Once I was there for about three days. Once I was there for ... more than ten days getting the outfit ready to load up and come home.

KP: I take it your men were really glad to leave.

MA: I think so.

KP: Once the armistice was declared, were they more anxious?

MA: Oh, you counted the days, "How many points do you have? How come he got home first? I've been ... in longer than he has!" You know, the rotation. Yeah, they were counting the days, the minutes and the hours, believe me.

DP: Where did you come back into the United States?

MA: We came back into Bremerton, Fort Lewis area. And we re-organized there and then we scattered. I brought a planeload to what ... is now LaGuardia. That was the only airfield in the New York area. And we went down to Fort Dix, where we de-commed.

KP: Had you thought of staying in the military?

MA: Yes, I thought of it, very little. (laughter)

KP: In retrospect, were you glad that you got the duty that you had gotten?

MA: Yes. I always wanted to go to China.

KP: Really?

MA: Oh, yes.

KP: Why was that interesting to you?

MA: I don't know, but I did.

KP: Had you read about China for years?

MA: I'd read about it. It was a far away place and I wanted to see a far away place. And as I said, I enjoyed my duty there. I did a fair amount of traveling around. I had some interesting experiences, got sick once and I said to my CO, base commander, I said, "I've got to have a week off," because I had a chest problem or whatnot. He said, "Okay, where are you going?" I said, "I'm going up to Dali." It is in western China on a great, big lake. I knew that there was a group of French missionaries up there. And I said, "I'll go up there and stay with them." And I had a portable radio and ... they hadn't heard news for years. And I just strung up an old wire and we listened to the BBC. I went out in the woods ... I went out on the town and bought food for them. Met a ... Spanish priest, who had walked in about 200 kilometers, as he walked in every year to meet with his fellow missionaries. And he spoke a better English than they did. I polished up a little bit of French. It was a little bit, but I managed to get across. And he took me out and I bought Mrs. Addison two great, big skins. What were they?

LA: Leopard.

MA: Two big leopard skins, which I sent back to her for a coat. Unfortunately, I didn't realize that they tanned their hides with rice powder and urine. And, of course, they had to be shipped back through the tropics. So I've been informed that they had a beautiful, ripe odor when they arrived. And they had to be re-tanned. And they weren't re-tanned properly, but she did make a coat out of it. Right honey?

LA: Uh-huh. We had the skins hanging on the fire escape, they were so overpowering.

KP: What were you getting in the letters while your husband was doing these exotic things ... in China and India?

LA: In the first place, I'd given him some very brief lessons in drawing and painting before he went overseas, so that in case ... he wanted to record and he didn't have a camera, he could do it on his own. And he did do some really charming, little watercolors, which I have since framed. And his letters were very descriptive.

KP: I hope you still have them.

LA: Well, that's a long story. (laughter)

MA: That's another story.

DP: Were the letters censored?

LA: Some of them.

MA: Some of them were. Most of them weren't. They couldn't check everything.

KP: You returned to China. What were some of your impressions years later?

MA: Well, let me explain this. In 1987, I'm now I'm a licensed radio amateur. And we have a magazine called *QST*, which is a very good one. And one day I saw a little block ad for a trip to China. And I got in touch with a man out in Colorado Springs that looked good to me. I assumed it was a radio amateur trip. And I got in touch with a friend of mine in town and said, "Hey, how would you like to go to China?" He said, "You're crazy." Anyway, I convinced him. And off we went. Well, it turned out there were only nineteen of us. There were ... ten ladies and nine males of all age spreads. But we went into the interior. Not only were we in Beijing, and Xian, we were in Ch'eng-tu, we were in Chungking, we came down the Yangtze through the three gorges, which are not going to exist once they put the dam up, all the way down to I-ch'ang, where the Russians had built a dam on the Yangtze. And then we flew to the Wu-han cities, which included Hankow, where I had had the unit right after the armistice, right after the surrender, rather. ... I was provost marshal in Hankow, which is about the size of Philadelphia. And our unit participated in the ... relationship between the Chinese and the Japanese 6th Army that was headquartered there.

KP: Please hold that thought.

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

MA: ... We went down into southwest China, at the confluence of two rivers that flow into the Yangtze, where the tallest Buddha in the world is carved out of the living rock, at a place called ...

LA: Le-Shan.

MA: ... Le-Shan. ... And also went to a place further north, called Dazu where there are tremendous number of carvings out of the living rock of all Buddhist devils and figures. We went down toward K'un-ming, and we were east of K'un-ming, at what is called the stone forest area. Then K'un-ming, Kuei-Lin, then we took a trip on the Liang River, the green river. From Que-lin we went to what used to be Canton, Qwangchou. From there we trained into Hong Kong, and spent some time in Hong Kong and came home. That was a ball.

LA: It's interesting to note that the group traveled under the aegis of Radio Beijing. And they had representatives of Radio Beijing with them at all times.

MA: ... Yeah, that's right. Thank you. And they took care of everything, because the man who arranged the trip had formerly been with CBS, and had gotten into the business of exporting radio and electronic equipment. He had contacts in China. That was a ball.

KP: You mentioned that you were provost marshal of a city that is the size of Philadelphia. What were your duties, and what happened there?

MA: To keep Americans out of trouble. That was it.

KP: What kind of trouble could they get into?

MA: Are you kidding? Ask him. [referring to DP]

DP: I once worked as an interpreter for a judge advocate general in France, doing similar things. Of course, it was after they got into trouble. It was anything and everything that they could do after they got involved in alcohol.

MA: Or women.

DP: Or women.

MA: One of the problems that I had was to keep the American soldiers away from the Korean comfort women that the Japanese had brought in and had left. Didn't know what to do with them.

KP: Did you have any dealings with what would happen with the Korean comfort women?

MA: No. What their ultimate disposition was, I assume, I would bet that they didn't want to go back to Korea, because they would have been looked down upon and no one would have touched them.

DP: Did you have any dealings with any Japanese? Say any that had surrendered?

MA: Yes. ... Not my men, of course, my men were paragons of virtue. (laughter)

LA: They learned from their commanding officer.

MA: (laughs harder) But ... the Japanese, of course, had surrendered. And we had a raid conducted by a lot of the GIs, who were in the area, into the Japanese quarters. They took all the guns that hadn't been yet turned over, took all the swords that hadn't been turned over, ... and cameras and whatever. So, you know, these are American soldiers, and so they turned to me. I got my men out there and I said, "Look, whatever you do, you gotta get all of this stuff back. If we can get some for you, we'll try." We must have collected in one haul 1000 ... Samurai swords. Now most of those Samurai swords were Japanese GI issue, issued to sergeants, you know, they just manufactured them. But some of them were old, officers' swords, and they were valuable. So anyway, I was in charge of getting everybody to get all this stuff together, and I got a hold of one of the Japanese officers, I think he was a major, and told him what we had done, and showed him what we had recovered and he was very thankful, much bowing and hissing. (hisses) I don't know how they do that, how they can talk and draw their breath in at the same time, but they do. And he said, "What can I do for you?" I said, "If you want to do something for me, I'd ... like two things; I'd like two of these swords." He said, "Pick any ones you like." And I said, "Frankly, I lost a camera, could you get me a good camera?" "Absolutely." Well, I pulled out two very old swords, one of which I kept, and the other I brought back for my friend who never got out of the Army War College in Washington, although he was dying to get overseas.

LA: He was the one, by the way who had found the canteen in New York.

MA: ... He was the one who was sick and did me the favor of leading me to my wife. But he didn't know it.

KP: So you had known him [to LA]?

LA: No, I hadn't known him, until our wedding day.

MA: That's when they met. So anyway, he comes in with a camera. ...

LA: A Rolleicord.

MA: A Rolleicord, which was at that time one of the best cameras you could get. It was a German camera. I still have it. It still works. So that was that. While stationed at Hankow one of my men was killed by Japanese ammunitions that had been stored in an unmarked area, and unknown to us. Upon receiving a report of a fire in the area he drove over to investigate. Unfortunately he arrived in front of the storage area just as it exploded. Writing to his family was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do.

KP: Did you have any more dealings with this Japanese commander?

MA: No, that was the last incident.

KP: How long did the Japanese remain in the area?

MA: Well, they were still there when we were transferred out to go home.

KP: Was there any sort of power vacuum that you could observe between the Japanese having surrendered and the Nationalist Chinese and the Americans there?

MA: The Americans had nothing to do with power. It was all ... Chinese. So we didn't observe any power vacuum in that sense.

DP: Who was coming in your place to watch the Japanese?

MA: The Chinese. We didn't watch them, we were there to watch the Americans.

KP: Where was Mrs. Addison? Were you in New York City?

MA: Mrs. Addison was in New York City, yes. Of course, that was her mother's home, so she was with her mother, while I was overseas.

KP: Where did you meet each other again?

LA: Penn Station.

MA: Penn Station. How did I get to Penn Station from LaGuardia? I don't remember.

LA: ... I don't think you came through LaGuardia. I think you took the train.

MA: No.

LA: I think from someplace, from Chicago or somewhere.

MA: No. I don't think so. She is correct. On further recollection, we flew from Seattle to Chicago and took the train to New York at Penn Station.

LA: But I went with him to Fort Dix.

MA: Yeah, we met in New York and she went with me to Fort Dix. For three days while I was mustered out.

DP: That's where you were mustered out.

MA: Oh, to be a civilian again!

KP: So you were glad to be one again?

MA: Very glad. That was the end of my military connection on active duty.

KP: You mentioned that you joined the American Legion.

MA: Did I mentioned that? Oh, I joined every organization I could find, because it was the only way a young lawyer in those days could advertise himself and meet people. Oh yeah, sure.

DP: So you went right back into law and tried to get back to a normal life then?

MA: Yeah.

KP: Had you given any thought to using the GI Bill for further education?

MA: I had my education.

KP: No desire to go to graduate school?

MA: No, a desire to make a living and have a family maybe some day, you know.

KP: And you did what you initially said you would do when you came to Rutgers and go back to Ocean County.

MA: Well, I didn't. If I said that, I don't want to create an impression that isn't accurate. I didn't decide to go back to Ocean County when I finished with Rutgers. I didn't have any idea of going outside the confines of New Jersey on a permanent basis. That was it. This was the only thing that I knew, when I was still a hick. Or to put it this way, uneducated in the ways of the world.

KP: You got a lot of education after Rutgers?

MA: Oh, yes.

LA: He married me.

MA: [laughs loudly] That's been a continuing education, I assure you.

KP: Had you thought of going elsewhere outside the Ocean County area? New York, Philadelphia?

MA: Yes, as a matter of fact, when I came back, I had no place to live. Obviously, we weren't going back to live with my mother. And hopefully, we weren't going to stay with my wife's mother, although that's where I went, because that's where my wife was. And there was a discussion, "Well you're licensed to practice law, you're not licensed in New York, but you're licensed at the federal bench. Maybe you could get a job with the federal outfit." And also, Mrs. Addison had some connections due to her work with the Office of War Information, with people in the movie industry. So there was always the possibility that, you know, I was offered an opportunity to go back to China. And that was the last thing in the world that I wanted to do. ... Was that (Picker's?) outfit?

LA: No, it was Loews.

MA: Loews.

KP: What were you to do?

MA: See, if I were to stay with Loews, I'd be a very rich man today. I hope.

KP: What did they want you to do in China?

MA: They wanted me to go back for the film industry. And I said, "No, I don't want to go back to China. I'd like to see the United States for a little while." Then I said, "But there are law firms in the city that primarily [are] at the federal bench." And I thought about that sort of thing. But it didn't work out too well, because I went to an outfit that was real old school and my name was still Abramowitz. And that didn't work. So I said, "the hell with this. I'll go back to New Jersey."

LA: Which is what, I think, subconsciously he always wanted.

MA: Probably. And that's how that ultimately occurred.

KP: Two questions for Mrs. Addison. What did you do for Office of War Information?

MA: Oh boy!

LA: I didn't know anything about office routines. But see, I thought that if I got a job with the OWI, that then they would send me to where my husband was. That was bold motivation. And actually, I discovered afterwards that they would have sent me overseas, but not to where he was.

MA: Didn't they offer you Egypt?

LA: Pardon?

MA: Didn't they offer you Egypt?

LA: Yes. The only way you could go to the same theater as that in which your husband was, is if you had a request from the theater commander for your specific presence for the successful waging of the war. And obviously, I didn't know Wedemeyer or Chennault well enough. ... But there I was. I was with the overseas motion picture bureau of the Office of War Information, and I did bookings of films, and I had my own file system.

KP: Oh, there is a professor who will probably want to talk to you who is doing work on history in film, Professor John Chambers. I'll have to mention that. So what kind of duties would you do?

LA: ... I did bookings of films for screenings. And, then I was supposed to be in charge of the files. And I had what I thought would be my own, very logical system, and when I wasn't there, no one could find anything. Because their logic wasn't the same as mine.

MA: I think that on a rainy day, everything got filed under R.

KP: But it also sounds like you made some contacts, being in OWI?

LA: I did, but for selfish reasons, I did it specifically thinking that he would avail himself of it, not knowing that, you know, deep down in his subconscious he had no intention. He just made the gesture to do all those things when he came back. But he had no intention of really doing them. ...

MA: It might have been smart if I had taken that offer up and gone with Loews, really. You never know. Loews is now owned by a Lakewood outfit anyway.

KP: How did you feel about moving to New Jersey?

MA: Oh, she thought it was, she was sure there were Indians on the other side of the Hudson. I'm sure she did. Anyway, no, it was normal. It's a completely different milieu, and she's away from New York, she's away from her mother. She's ... an only child, so there was a very close bond between mother and daughter. And for the first few years, it wasn't easy. Now you can respond yourself, honey. That's just my reaction.

LA: No. ...

KP: I guess Lakewood and Ocean County was a lot different when you moved down.

MA: Yes, there were about 8,000 people. Now there are between 45 and 50 thousand. And, all of Ocean County was nothing, but woods and pine and sand. And now it's nothing but people in my age group. Well, a lot of them, a tremendous amount of senior citizens.

KP: Has that surprised you how many senior citizens have come down to Ocean County?

MA: No. Yes and no, I guess. It was convenient. Then they made it easy for them. And there are a lot of facilities for them within their own complexes.

KP: I've actually interviewed a number of people from Ocean County who live in complexes. You are one of the few native Ocean county residents I have interviewed.

MA: Yes, that's right. In my age group, anyway.

KP: Did you initially practice law as a solo practitioner?

MA: Yes.

KP: And how long did you remain in solo practice?

MA: From 1946 to 1967 when I went on the bench.

KP: I have a friend who is a solo practitioner and it is particularly hard when you start out.

MA: Very difficult.

LA: The first year, you pay income taxes. It's sheer delight.

MA: Yes, that was a pleasure to pay taxes. I assure you.

LA: And it wasn't the first year ...

MA: No.

KP: What kind of legal work did you specialize in?

MA: I did a lot of incorporation law, business law, a lot of real estate, litigation, some trial work, and general practice that ... every attorney in a rural or semi-rural area has to do. Didn't do any criminal defense work to amount to anything. Oddly enough, when I went on the bench I spent ten years doing criminal trials. But that was different.

KP: What particular types of law did you enjoy doing and which did you enjoy doing for the rewards, but were more boring?

MA: Well, I enjoyed dealing with people. I enjoyed that.

KP: Did you seek the bench or did the bench seek you?

MA: I was asked whether or not, I would be interested. And I talked it over with Mrs. Addison, and we decided that first of all, it was very nice to be considered, and secondly, I realized that it would be physically easier. Solo practitioner has to be out a lot at night, going to various municipal bodies, representing clients. If you do any research or if you have an appellate case, then you're going to be in the office at night. You're going to be in the office Saturdays, you're going to be in the office Sundays, doing work. And, of course, this either leads normally to a cardiac condition, or an ulcer, whereas the bench has different pressures. But you don't worry about those things, or you don't have to worry about collecting from the dissatisfied client for whom you couldn't possibly achieve whatever he wanted. And so we said, "yes," even though it cut my income exactly in half. But I've never regretted it.

KP: What did you enjoy about being a judge and what did you not enjoy?

MA: I didn't enjoy bureaucracy. I didn't enjoy a lot of the nonsense that came down from Trenton that you should do it this way or do it that way or file this report or that report, which I felt was a waste of time. I enjoyed the people. ... I sat in juvenile. I sat in marital relations, civil

trials, criminal trials, various other things that are purely legal matters, with or without recourse to juries. I enjoyed it all. I disliked, however, most of all, divorce. And questions of custody. That was bad news. I don't know any judge who really enjoys it.

KP: As a sitting judge, what were your most difficult cases?

MA: You mean types of cases or specific cases?

KP: Types of cases or specific cases that stand out.

MA: The types of cases that I disliked most was contested divorce in which children were the bait in the middle. I disliked them intensely. The cases that I liked the most? Oh let's say a hotly contested case involving rather abstruse questions of land titles. That's one. Another one would be a criminal trial that didn't last more than four days.

KP: What was your longest trial?

MA: The longest trial was a trial called, "The Great Adventure Trial," in which eight young people were killed as a result of a fire down at Great Adventure in Jackson. That took eight weeks. I tried the other half of that case before there was a crime. I decided exactly what it was that the Great Adventure people had bought because there was a big argument about what they had bought, where they had bought it, where their lines were, and exactly what the title of the property was. And ... that took about fifteen trial days without a jury. That was fun. I finally got to the point where I made a map and I drew a line. I said, "This is it. You don't like it, ... this is what you get and this is what you sold." And they accepted it. They were fun. What else do we have?

DP: That's everything that I have.

KP: It sounds like you and Mrs. Addison talked about the war a bit, coming home. How often would you talk about your experiences.

MA: Very rarely, really. ... We talked about what I saw and that sort of thing. But war experiences, no, no. The fun things, the interesting things. ...

[Pause]

KP: None of your children served in the military.

MA: No. My son was very fortunate. When Vietnam came along he had a high number. And they canceled the draft before they reached his number. So he was very lucky, very lucky.

LA: It was 260 something. Thank God.

KP: If he had been called up for Vietnam, what would were your feelings?

LA: I would have taken him to Canada, or anywhere.

MA: Right. It wasn't a popular war in our house.

LA: It was before McNamara came out with his new book.

MA: No. I just missed being called back for Korea.

KP: Had you stayed in the reserves?

MA: Yep, foolishly.

KP: How close did you come?

MA: But we didn't go. When my five years was up, I was out.

KP: Is there anything we forgot to ask?

MA: If there is, I can't imagine what it might be. No, you've covered the territory. Honey, is there anything you want to add onto this?

LA: No, I don't think so. It was pretty thorough, all-encompassing.

MA: I think you have just about everything, except, of course, my old uniforms don't fit me anymore. What else? Oh, I came home weighing 135 pounds, I might add. My normal weight was 155.

DP: What rank were you when you finally mustered out?

MA: They finally gave me a silver bar, big deal. ... You know, the TO [table of organization] for a military police company was one captain, two first lieutenants, and the guy at the end, that was, yours truly. So I was 30 months in grade, would you believe it or not? And finally, if you'll excuse the expression, I went down to 14th Air Force headquarters and I bitched. I said, "I'm the oldest second lieutenant in the army and think I deserve to be upped, especially, since I've been really a half-baked company commander for all these months." And they said, "Okay."

LA: Did you speak about the liaison you did with the Chinese military? You did a great deal of that.

MA: Yeah, well, of course, I did liaison with the Chinese military because you had to do business with those thieves. We had ... the colonel commanding the guard regiment was a Colonel Ma. One of the four meanings of the word is horse. I never figured out which end of it he was. He was really a venal guy. He would say "yes" to almost anything you would ask, but never got it done.

LA: He must have been under Chiang's tutelage.

MA: I think so, I think so. But that was interesting. ... Oh, I had to deal with the ... local officials to get anything done in the villages. If you had some sort of a problem.

KP: What type of thing would you need to have done?

MA: Sometimes my men were a little difficult, walking out in the villages and you'd have to straighten things out. But that's routine. You could explain it to them better than I can [to DP].

DP: If you had the opportunity to go back to India, or to what is now Pakistan, would you take that?

MA: Yes, but my wife wouldn't. She wouldn't go. I want to get to Nepal, but she won't go. It's a little rough, physically, that is. I wanted to take her to Siberia.

LA: And drop me there.

MA: (laughter) Well, I didn't say that. See, I used to be able to talk to some hams in Siberia. The difficulty is, of course, now we're on the down cycle of the sunspot cycle, so communication is very, very poor, very spotty. But, anyway.

LA: We were in Vladivostok.

MA: Yeah, we were in Vladivostok. That was very interesting. Oh well, maybe someday we'll go there.

DP: Did you deal with any other British Commonwealth forces, other than the British themselves? Australians? South Africans?

MA: No, I had no contact with them. There were none in the area where I served. I don't think I saw an Aussie or an ANZAC at all, no. No, they were just primarily British. A lot of Irish officers in the British Army. But nobody from down under.

DP: Any British colonial troops from Africa?

MA: I don't recall any South Africans, no.

DP: Nigerians?

MA: No, none at all. ... Not in that part of India where I was, anyway. Not even in what is now Pakistan.

KP: Did you ever encounter any black American troops while in the service?

MA: No. ... They were not handled too well, and they were given mostly labor assignments of one kind or another. There were a number of them in the South Pacific. Some in the Seabees.

But I didn't encounter them, although I believe they had a great deal to do with building the Burma Road.

KP: I meant to ask this earlier. You were a Boy Scout. What rank did you achieve?

MA: Senior patrol leader.

KP: You didn't make Eagle Scout?

MA: I was too lazy. I got up as far as ten merit badges and I said, "What's this for?" No. I was out in the woods half of the time anyway. If I were not in the woods, I'd be down in the water on the bay, so I had a lot of other things going for me.

KP: Did you sail after you returned back in 1946?

MA: No, I couldn't afford it, then, you know. But I had one before I left. I sailed, yeah. No, after I became sufficiently affluent to acquire a boat, I bought a stinkpot, had a motor. That's something with a motor, which we sailors decried and cursed. But it was a nice boat. I had it for several years. Okay?

KP: Well, thank you very much. We appreciate it a great deal.

---END OF INTERVIEW--
-

Reviewed by G. Kurt Piehler 10/15/97
Edited by Gloria Hesse 10/15/97
Edited by Mark Addison 11/1/97
Entered by Melanie Cooper 11/15/97
Reviewed by G. Kurt Piehler 11/20/97