

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CLAUDE V. BACHE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SANDRA STEWART HOLYOAK

LEESBURG, VIRGINIA

AUGUST 12, 2008

TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview on August the 12th, 2008, in Leesburg, Virginia, with Colonel Claude V. Bache. I would like you, first, to tell me where and when you were born.

Claude Bache: I was born in Upstate New York, in a place called Montgomery, which is Orange County, New York, and it's, oh, I don't know, twenty miles west of Newburg, isn't it? near West Point, and my father was Claude Lenardo Bache and he married an English girl, Esther Aves. My mother was brought to this country by her aunt, because her mother, in England, had had a daughter who'd died at around age three and the doctor said it was because of the climate and they were afraid that my mother would not survive in England. So, her aunt married a German wine master and they were immigrating to New York and they brought my mother. So, she grew up as an American. [laughter] So, I'm really, technically, half-English. [laughter]

SH: I can see that.

CB: And she met my father [in] Upstate New York at a shooting gallery. ... My mother hated guns and I don't know why she was in the shooting gallery, but this big, tall, dark-haired man put his arms around her and showed her how to shoot a pistol and that did it, [laughter] ... but he didn't live much longer. They were married in 1917. I was born in 1921. He died in 1923, unfortunately. ... He had diabetes. In those days, they didn't know about insulin yet. They were just developing it. So, he came along at the wrong time for that. So, my mother went to work in New York. ... I was born on a farm in Upstate New York and she went back to work for Henri Bendel, which is a prestigious dress manufacturer. ... Growing up, she had been told, ... when she was a sophomore in high school, that she had to leave school and go to work and bring home a salary. So, she entered the garment industry and she became a wonderful dressmaker, worked for Henri Bendel's and made prestigious dresses for all kinds of people. [Editor's Note: Henri Bendel opened his first shop in New York City in 1895 and became famous for his hats and gowns.] ... I was raised, until I was nine, by this aunt of mine, Eloise Davis, who was the wife of the biggest ... fresh fruit and vegetable wholesale importer in New York, Wilmer Davis, and he died and they had some friends. Christofer De Winter was the biggest poultry man in New York and De Winter's wife died, so that my aunt and De Winter married, [laughter] and she got quite a fortune out of it. ... We were living in 79th Street and Broadway in New York City and the first school I went to was a private military school, at the age of six. There wasn't any kindergarten in those days, so, I spent the first grade in this military school and it really impressed me. What you teach a child, or what a child discovers or learns, at that age, quite often, has an effect for the rest of his life. Well, I became enamored of the military. ... They had a regular Army sergeant who came in, drilled us. We did the manual of arms once a week and things like that and I thought, "Wow, this is fun." [laughter] Well, then, ... her second husband, apparently, was an unhappy man. He committed suicide, after they were married about a year or so, and I found him, ... one night, in this apartment in New York. ... We came home from shopping and my aunt said, "Go find your uncle," and I knew where he was. He was in the guest bathroom. I went in, I found him and he'd shot himself. ...

SH: How old were you then?

CB: I was seven then, and, ... of course, it was quite exciting. He had shot himself in the heart and his shirt was full of blood. I didn't see the pistol at his feet. So, I ran back in to get my aunt and I said, "Uncle Chris has had a nosebleed and he fainted." See, I had nosebleeds in those days and I thought that's what it was. So, the police came, and then, they discovered he'd shot himself, and the thing that really impressed me, though, was that the detective who interrogated me was the brother of Jack Dempsey, the prizefighter, [a boxer who held the heavyweight title during the 1920s], and I thought, "Wow, Jack Dempsey's brother is asking me questions." [laughter] That was more important than anything else. [laughter]

SH: At seven, it would be.

CB: Yes. So, we got rid of the apartment and moved to Westchester County, Larchmont, New York, and I grew up in Larchmont. ... My aunt died when I was nine years old and my mother came back. ... We had traded homes. I had an aunt; my family, ... in my father's generation, was extensive. There were seven brothers and sisters. ... There was an aunt Maude who lived in this smaller house, a very nice house, in the middle of town and my aunt Eloise had built this brand-new, Norman-style, gray stone castle up in Rye, [New York], and it looked like a castle, with turrets and lead glass windows, quite a place. ... In her will, she gave me the house in Larchmont and aunt Maude, who had owned that house, took the big house. So, we traded places. So, I grew up in Larchmont, New York, and it was a wonderful town, nice, small, commuter town. Everybody's a commuter, and this was the Depression, and my mother just worked as hard as could be. ... We operated a boarding house and, at one time, we had ten boarders in this house, five-bedroom house. ... My mother, with her knowledge ... of dressmaking, made dresses during the day for the ladies and, all by word of mouth, she never advertised, ... people kept pouring in the house. I would come home from school and there'd be women everywhere and cars in the driveway and my mother took over the sun room, and so, that was her dressmaking place, and then, after working at that all day, she cooked meals at night for the boarders. I don't know how she did it. I used to help do the dishes. [laughter] ... She washed them, I dried them, and I would serve, serve the guests, and this lasted until I graduated from high school, and she worked very, very hard.

SH: I wanted to back up and clarify one thing. The aunt that you went to live with in New York, the first year that you were in the military school, was she your father's sister?

CB: Yes, yes, my father's sister, and, to back up a little bit, when I was going to school there, I was in the first grade, ... I remember, one night, my mother was teaching me how to write my name, Claude Valentine Roosevelt Bache. ... I said, "Why did you name me Valentine?" She says, "Oh, I think it was an uncle." She had only been in the family about four years and really didn't know the family history, and so, I accepted that and I said, "What about this Roosevelt?" She says that, "You are related to the Roosevelt Family, and not the immediate family, but you're a cousin," and I thought, "Oh, I never see any Roosevelts, I never meet any; how can I be a Roosevelt?" Well, it was true and there was a family doctor who knew the history. I never met the family doctor, either. So, growing up, I always had this in the back of my mind and, when I went to Rutgers, I decided that being Claude Valentine Roosevelt Bache is too much. [laughter] So, I just signed in at Rutgers as Claude Roosevelt Bache, Claude R. Bache, and then, well, World War II came along. ... When we were freshmen at Rutgers, I lived in Pell Hall, and with

a roommate. I had had ROTC [Reserve Officer Training Corps] for two years. ... I chose Rutgers because I wanted to study journalism in those days, I wanted a school that had a fencing team, and Rutgers had a fencing team, and it also offered ROTC, and I said, "That's my school then." [laughter] ... It wasn't too far. It was a two-hour train ride from Larchmont. So, that's why I went to Rutgers and I thought it was a very nice school. The dormitories were nice and I enjoyed it there, and I took the kind of classes I wanted to take, and so forth. ...

SH: Was it at Rutgers that you dropped the Roosevelt?

CB: Well, no, I used it at Rutgers. Later in the Army I dropped the Roosevelt and kept the Valentine. I applied for Advanced ROTC, because I was still very interested in the military, and they interviewed me for the advanced course and they asked me if I had any medical problems ... in childhood. ... I said, "Oh, yes, I had asthma." I didn't think that was too important, because I got over it and I never had it since, and I thought, "Well, they'll give me a test," you know, and the moment I told the board that, that kept [me] out. I found out I didn't get into Advanced ROTC, and the war was blooming on the horizon in Europe and we all felt that we were going to get into the war. ... Of course, Pearl Harbor happened in December 7, 1941, and I remember, my roommate and I were listening to the radio while we were studying and the announcement came on about Pearl Harbor and we thought, "Oh, boy, that's it." ... I waited until mid-year exams and I finished those and I left school, enlisted in the regular Army. I did not want to be questioned in the Army about the Roosevelt name. In the back of my mind, I wanted to obtain a regular Army commission, and it was possible through ROTC, but you had to work for it. So, I enlisted in the regular Army and they sent me to basic training in Alabama. ... Because I had been in ROTC and I knew the routines, the drill and everything, I impressed the company commander and he made me a drill instructor. A DI is what they call them. ... When we finished the, I think it was eight weeks we had in basic training, ... in Alabama, and when the company left and was shipped to other places, they kept me back and sent me to another company, made me a drill instructor and [laughter] the other cadre men were kind of suspicious of me. They didn't like me, because I was a college boy and they were not college boys, and [laughter] I've always looked younger than I am; my whole life has been that way and, here, I looked very, very young. [laughter] ... I was twenty years old, but I didn't look it, and so, they used to throw all the dirty jobs at me and, one night, I was the charge of quarters. The charge of quarters goes around the camp at night and says, "Put the lights out." You know, at nine o'clock, he sees that the camp is all locked down, and I went up to the cadre tent, a different cadre tent than the one I slept in, and I told them to put the lights out and they sassed me back. So, I thought, "Okay." The next morning, my job was to wake them up. I didn't wake them up. [laughter] So, the company is out at reveille and standing out in the company street, in formation, and the company commander looks around. ... He didn't see these cadre men, who were missing, and he asked where they were. I said, "Sir, they're still in their tent." [laughter] He said, "Go get them." So, I went and got them, and, here, they stumbled out, in the company street, in front of the two hundred troops, in their pajamas, [laughter] and that did it. [laughter] ... Nobody said anything to me, but they put me on overseas shipping orders, immediately. That's how they ... [were] going to take care of this smart college kid, see. Well, they were really doing me a favor. They didn't think they were, but they were. So, I got shipped, with eighteen other soldiers, to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, and we didn't know what we were getting into. We had no idea and we were inquiring of each other [about] our backgrounds, and

so forth. ... It all turned out that we had something to do with administration of something, and I had taken some courses in business administration and economics while at Rutgers. ... I guess that's how I got picked for that and we were assigned to something called special troops, and we had no idea what special troops were, and we were shipped out on the biggest convoy that ... had left the United States up until that point. It was huge and ... we found ourselves on a cruise ship that used to run, make the South American trip, from New York down to South America. ... It was a very luxurious trip. They packed ten thousand men on this vessel, and I'll never forget it. ...

SH: What was the name of the cruise ship?

CB: The *Argentina*, and it so happened that we were really destined to be headquarters troops, but we didn't know it. That's what special troops meant, and we were told that we were elite. [laughter] So, we're lined up ... in a long column to eventually get up on the ... ship and there was a battalion of aviation engineers lined up next to us, and they're in their fatigue clothes, and they look at us. We had the brass button uniform on and everything else. I remember this engineer looking at me and asking me, "Well, what are you duded up for?" and I said, "We're elite troops," [laughter] because that's what they told us. He said, "Oh, don't get yourself dirty." [laughter] So, we climbed up the gangplank.

SH: Where were you?

CB: This is in the New York Harbor and we ... went down in the bowels of the ship and we're going along this companion way, and the first sergeant says, "First forty men in that room," and that included me and they put forty of us, I'm not exaggerating, in this one room.

SH: Could you even stand up? [laughter]

CB: Barely. They had bunks piled four high, and ... it had been a cabin for maybe four passengers on the tourist trade. ... We had to sail under blackout conditions, because of [the] submarine menace.

SH: Do you remember the month and year?

CB: This was June 1942, and, as I say, we didn't know where we were going. I had no idea. They couldn't tell us, of course, and the trip took ten days at sea and [laughter] we couldn't bathe, [laughter] couldn't take baths, ten thousand men, didn't have enough water for it. [laughter] ... We wore the same clothes all the time and, I remember, I was on a bottom bunk and there were three above and the porthole, one porthole, was closed all the time. So, there's no fresh air; [laughter] forty men, unwashed, in this one place, with no fresh air. We ate two meals a day, standing up. They had ... bolted standup-type tables in the dining rooms, and we ate two meals a day. They didn't have time to serve three to all those troops, and, at the end of five days, we exchanged places with troops on deck. Troops were all over the ship, and they were even up in the forecabin; the engineer battalion was up there and the waves were breaking over them. ... [It] was full of saltwater and we were glad we weren't up there. [laughter] We slept on the top deck, on the side of the ship. ... Five of us slept in a row, together, and fully dressed, and we

piled our blankets together, [laughter] so [that] we were warm enough, [laughter] and we kept asking each other, "Where are we going?" Obviously, we were in the Atlantic and we thought, "Maybe it's Iceland," and then, we kept sailing and sailing. We figured, "It can't be Iceland. [laughter] It's got to be some other place," [laughter] and, I remember, the weather got warmer. ... The last night at sea, it was quite pleasant and I left the gang and I went up and slept under a lifeboat, just stretched out on the deck, under a lifeboat, and, in the morning, when I woke up, we were sailing. It was a beautiful day and we were sailing down a river, somewhere, and it turned out to be Scotland. We asked a crewman, "Where are we?" "We're in Scotland." It was the Firth of Forth, and so, we docked in Scotland. ... This looked pretty good, and we got on a train. [laughter] ... At that point, you looked sort of ragtag, you know, not changing your clothes and must have smelled terribly, and I remember this soldier from one of the Scottish regiments and he was wearing kilts and he's standing at the railroad station and he's looking at us and shaking his head. [laughter] So, we got on the European-type railroad cars, which we'd never seen before, except in the movies, and we rode the train down to the middle of England, ... a place called the Cotswolds, that was the area, and stayed in a very nice town there. ... I forget the name of the town now; it was Cheltenham. Anyway, first night, ... they took us to a racetrack and we slept under the stands in the racetrack and took our first shower in ten days. [laughter] Oh, that was wonderful. [laughter] ...

SH: Same clothes?

CB: Same clothes, yes, and then, they took us to a place about four miles outside of town and there were some Quonset huts. They were metal-type, temporary houses, Quonset huts, and we were quartered on this British estate for about a week or so. ... While we were there, a German bomber came over one day, very, very low, and dropped a bomb in town and it flew out over our camp and we were ordered to hide and not shoot at him, and so, we did and he went over and disappeared. ... Then, we walk into town and inspected the bomb damage and we realized that, you know, this is the first thing of war we had seen. Coming over on the ship, the whole convoy had to keep turning, every so often, because of the submarine menace and destroyers were running around. We had very heavy protection and the ships had to zigzag, ... but, aside from that, you know, nothing looked very warlike until we had this bombing experience, and they were very afraid of the Germans using gas at that point. ... We wore these gas masks that they had at that time. Every time we went outdoors, we had to carry these gas masks. They were huge things, which you strapped across your chest and wore under your left arm, very uncomfortable, bulky and everything. Anyway, I remember going to town one day and I had neglected to bring my gas mask along. [laughter] I was walking down the street; a MP [military police personnel] stopped me and told me to, "Get back to camp. You can't go around here without a gas mask." [I] said, "Okay," and I walked around the block and I met the same man again. [laughter] So, I went home that time. [laughter] We enjoyed the camp there, for about a week or so. ...

SH: How large was the camp? Do you have any estimation on how many people were there at that point?

CB: Oh, there probably were about, I would say, around six hundred to eight hundred, something like that.

SH: What instructions were you given on how to interact with the British people?

CB: We weren't given any instructions, but it's funny you bring that up, because, one Sunday; I had a buddy named Gus Zupa, from Buffalo. ... Gus had been a steelworker in Buffalo and we became very close. ... We decided to go have a Sunday dinner in town, and so, we walked to town and we're walking down a sidewalk and this mother and her daughter were walking along. The mother looked over her shoulder and she saw us coming and she grabbed her daughter and hauled her off the sidewalk until we got by. [laughter] We thought, "Oh, boy." [laughter] Well, the reason for that was, just previous to the Americans arriving in town, there had been a Canadian contingent there and, apparently, they were hell-raisers. So, they thought, "Americans, Canadians, practically the same; the Americans are going to be the same way," you know. Well, we weren't as bad as they were. [laughter] We didn't raise any hell, [laughter] and we walked into a nice, small restaurant, sat down and ordered, and it became very quiet in the restaurant. ... We started to eat and Gus turns to me and he says, "You know what?" He says, "Everyone's watching us," and I looked around; it was true. No one was eating. They were watching us. We were the only Americans there, and the reason being, it was the way we used our knife and fork. [laughter] We didn't use the back of the fork, we used the other side, [laughter] and they had never seen anything like this before. [laughter] So, that was the reaction of the townspeople, and I had told my friend, Gus, ... that my mother was English and she had some family living down in a town right on the English Channel, and Gus says, "Let's go visit them." I said, "Gus, ... we can't go down there." He says, "We can get a pass for [the] weekend and we can change the pass." ... I would never think of doing anything like that, but we did. He talked me into it and we did it, and my mother's older sister lived in the town of Shoreham-by-sea, right near Brighton, right on the English Channel, and we altered the passes [laughter] for Shoreham-by-sea. ... We took a train to London and changed trains for Brighton and traveled down to Brighton and got another train out there, and Shoreham wasn't too far from Brighton. So, we got there and I found my aunt's address and I knocked on the door. She opened the door and she was wearing one of my mother's green dresses, and they were the same size, same coloring, and it was like my mother standing there. ... They had a clothing problem, along with a food problem, during the war, and my mother had shipped [her the clothes]. Being in the clothing business, garment business, she'd sent lots of clothing and my aunt was living there with my cousin, female cousin, and it was just like my mother opening the door, Aunt Nellie, [laughter] and my cousin Elsie, who was a year older than I was, was there with her, and we had been corresponding before the war. ... So, we had a very nice visit and we knew that they were short of food and they didn't have things like oranges and a lot of other things like that, certain canned foods. So, Gus and I each brought a knapsack filled with food, and we dumped it out on their dining room table and they were just aghast. They couldn't say a word. They were astounded, [laughter] and we, later on, took them to a dinner and to movies in Brighton, and so forth, and then, the evening was over and we had to get back to camp. So, we took [the] train from Brighton back to London, this is all in the middle of the night, from London out to Cheltenham, and got off the train there. ... We had to walk to camp and, by the time we got to camp, it was about six AM and a guard was patrolling the boundaries around the camp. We waited until the guard went by and we went to the Quonset hut, climbed in bed, and I was just in bed about ten minutes when another buddy came over and said, "Claude, wake up." I said, "What's the problem?" He says, "You and I are being sent to London." [laughter] I didn't tell him I had just

been there. [laughter] Anyway, we got up. So, I had to get dressed and he and I got on the train. We went down to London. [laughter]

SH: Thank heavens for that ten minutes. [laughter]

CB: We were the advance party for this contingent, ... this group of eighteen people, and we were assigned to Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, big supply headquarters, and our job was to, ... the whole headquarters, was, essentially, build a supply system and take care ... of the millions of men who were going to come to these bases all over England. It was a big job and we were assigned to something called Special Service. We had no idea what Special Service is. Well, it was a morale-type organization, and it turned out that my buddy, Jimmy Taylor, and I were assigned to the motion pictures section. ... Where there were a couple of officers there and with this little group of about six of us, altogether, at that time, we were to start film distribution and build theaters and, also, organize mobile film units, for this huge army which was just going to come over, and films were very important for morale purposes. Hollywood produced a lot of great films in those days and we would get the films before the civilian theaters in the United States got them. So, the troops hadn't heard of them. They didn't think they were brand-new films. They were so new, they were right out of the laboratories.

SH: Really? It would be shipped to you.

CB: Yes, and we had organized, it was my job to handle distribution, coordinate the distribution between the States and the Army in England, and insure that everybody got to see everything, in that they were exchanged, and keep track of how many and who got them and who handled them, and so forth, and it was a job that kept mushrooming and mushrooming all the time. ...

SH: Where were you housed in London?

CB: In London?

SH: Yes.

CB: Well, we were the advance party. That's why the two of us went down ahead of the others. We were housed ... on a place called Green Street, which had a whole row of bombed out buildings. ... Evidently, the British had turned over this whole block of houses, they were like brownstone fronts, to the Americans. We were a couple blocks from the American embassy, and Jimmy and I were assigned to this particular address. [laughter] When we arrived there and we went and inspected it, ... there was absolutely no heat. We got there in the summertime, but we could tell there was no heat, no hot water, and the lighting consisted of one light bulb in each room, one bulb hanging down [from] the ceiling, and the rear of the house had been bombed out. There was nothing. We could look out, and they had been ... undergoing air raids there for two years and the whole block had been wiped out behind us. I mean, the houses, you could see the insides and everything, just [these] huge craters. We were backed up against that and [laughter] Jimmy and I slept in a very small room, on cots, with absolutely no heat and with blankets and long-handled underwear, and so forth, [laughter] and we existed there for almost a year.

SH: Where did you take your meals?

CB: Well, they had been allocated a restaurant on Green Street. Down at the end of the street, there was a fairly large restaurant, which was turned over to Americans, and so, we put an Army mess in there and we owned the whole of Green Street. We had formations there, and so forth, and we were assigned to work; they took over a department store a couple blocks away and that was our initial headquarters. We were given offices in there and what really bothered me [was], the roof was glass, [laughter] and I thought, "This is not good, not [when] the place is being bombed all the time." [laughter] ...

SH: I can see your point. [laughter] Where did you archive the film, in that same building?

CB: Yes. ... It was a temporary arrangement. Later on, they moved us to a building, and it had been an apartment house, it was an apartment house, which was taken over by the government, just like the other buildings were, and that had not been touched by bombs at all. ... It was in a place called Marble Arch, which was right across the street from Hyde Park. Marble Arch is an entrance to Hyde Park and ... we were on the fourth floor, I think it was, of a six-story building, and, in Hyde Park, there was a British antiaircraft battery manned entirely by women soldiers.

SH: Really?

CB: And, well, your form [the ROHA pre-interview survey] asked, "Were you in combat?" and it wasn't my job to shoot at anybody and nobody shot at me on the ground, but we witnessed combat all around us. ... There were air raids two or three times a week, usually, and these gun batteries would go off and the building just shook. I mean, it was tremendous. ...

SH: Where would you go during an air raid, to the basement or out of the building?

CB: Well, no, they had air raid shelters, but you didn't go outside when this was going on, because everything they shot up into the air came down as shrapnel and you could hear it tinkling on the sidewalks, you know, and, sometimes, ... the noise was just absolutely fantastic and everything was blacked out at night. The cars had special things where you could see headlights, but they didn't throw a beam and the headlights were not visible from the air, and they had buses with the conductors walking in front of the buses with a flashlight to lead it.

SH: Really?

CB: Yes. ... We had smog. I had read about the smog in London and they said, "You can't see your hand in front of your face." It's true, and, sometimes, we would go back to the office at night and we would show films to entertain ourselves. We had to ... check the films out, anyway. [laughter]

SH: You cannot have them looking at something bad.

CB: No, [laughter] and I remember, one night, it was just so thick, like pea soup. It was yellow and I held my hand in front my face. I couldn't see my fingers, really. That's how bad it was,

and you got used to it, though. I mean, it became a way of life, you just get used to [it], and still wearing the damn gas masks, [laughter] and we had to carry our rifles and our helmets. They were afraid of airborne attack, and I thought to myself, "This is ridiculous. No parachute outfit is going to come down in the middle of a city." You know, that's crazy, but we had to do it anyhow. [laughter] So, we got so expert that we would listen to these dogfights in the air and we could tell; we got so we knew the sound of the planes. The British engines had one sound, the American engines had another sound, Germans had another sound. We could tell who was flying around, and they were having these dogfights above the city, dropping bombs, and so forth, and you got used to it, really.

SH: It is amazing that you can do that.

CB: You can do it. ...

SH: You were still on Green Street, with no heat.

CB: Right, right. Well, my buddy, Jimmy, says, ... "I have an idea," he says. There are servants' quarters in the back of the apartment that we used for office space. It had two or three bedrooms, and then, ... there were two small rooms in the back for the servants, ... with a private bath for them. He says, "We'll tell the company commander that we have to stay there ... for security reasons." [laughter] So, okay, I wrote something up and we gave it to the company commander and he bought it. [laughter] So, we moved out and we moved over to a place that had light and heat. [laughter]

SH: Movies any time.

CB: Movies any time, [laughter] and our shows became very popular at nighttime. People would drop up, [laughter] come up and see the latest films and everything, in our office. [laughter] ...

SH: What was your rank then?

CB: Well, I was a corporal. They called them technicians, and then, we wore two stripes with a "T" under it, technician, fifth grade, and ... things went on like that for about a year, and then, I discovered that corporals and sergeants were getting commissions and I said, "That's for me." [laughter] So, I applied for a commission, went before a board, and Jimmy and I had learned to polish our brass buttons a certain way. Well, the British troops did that. So, we looked real sharp, with polished buttons, and troops today don't do that, but the British did, and so, we thought we'd do it, too. So, I went before the board and I had a uniform with gleaming buttons on, you know, [laughter] and I told them I'd had two years of ROTC and I had done two-and-a-half years at Rutgers, and so forth, and they said, "Okay," and I was made a second lieutenant. One day, I took my two stripes off and put on a gold bar [laughter] and stayed in the same kind of work. ...

SH: Did you get to stay in the same quarters then?

CB: Oh, no. ... I had an apartment down near the American embassy. I shared that with another lieutenant and [the] two of us had a very nice, little apartment. We walked to work and the officers' mess was in the Grosvenor House Hotel, which was just around the corner. ...

SH: Did your friend Jimmy also apply?

CB: No. He went up ... through the enlisted ranks. He became a master sergeant, but staying in the same work. We still worked together. I was his boss now, [laughter] but we got along all right. We just ... couldn't associate anymore, and we worked, really, seven days a week.

SH: What kind of hours did you keep, and what kind of leave did you get, or how did that work for you?

CB: We never took leave. One time, after I was commissioned, I was ordered to take a leave. There was, I can't remember their names now, but there was a very well-to-do family, again, back in the Cotswolds, in the middle of England, and he had been, I think, the British ambassador to India, or something like that, but he was of that rank, and he and his wife arranged a deal. Gasoline, of course, was rationed and food was rationed, but they used their estate as a vacation spot, a leave spot, for officers from the ETO Headquarters, European Theater of Operations Headquarters, and the deal was, they got American food rations and petrol in exchange for using their estate as a leave spot. So, I was ordered ... [laughter] to go on leave, three days, in the Cotswolds, [laughter] with Lord and Lady Somebody, [laughter] and that's the only time we ever took leave, except, later on, ... almost near the end of the war, I married a British girl. ... I was in France at that time and I got leave to come back and do that. Otherwise, you didn't get any leave. You just worked all the time.

SH: Did you get another opportunity to visit your aunt?

CB: Yes, several times, yes.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: Please, continue. You said you had gone down to see your aunt on several occasions.

CB: Yes, yes, and, of course, the aerial bombing was still going on. ... The war had started in September '39, but it was ... called the "Phony War" for about nine months. Then the Germans attacked in France and the British had to retreat and they had their Dunkirk, [where the British Expeditionary Force evacuated to England from the Continent in 1940], and so forth, ... but the Germans did not start bombing ... until May 1940. ... They kept on bombing. So, when we arrived, they'd been getting this bombing, undergoing this bombing, for two years and we endured it for [our time there]. They kept on going. It wasn't as intense, but it kept on going and we endured it for two years and, obviously, things were [happening]. We could tell what's going on, by the camps we were working with, what we were doing for them, that the buildup was coming, that D-Day was coming.

SH: That is what I wanted to ask. How quickly did that happen? You went, as you said, in the biggest convoy at that time. Did that continue to steadily build ...

CB: Yes, yes.

SH: Or did it come all at once?

CB: No, it was just a gradual, gradual buildup, and, besides the Americans, there were Free French and Poles and Czechs and Dutch and all those nations. ... Their troops were in the UK and things were building up. I saw a figure one time, I think there was a total of maybe three million men, ... military Allied men, at one time. So, things were continually building. It was getting pretty crowded and we were working with the different bases and this roommate of mine, he worked with putting theaters in and thirty-five-millimeter projectors. ... Building the regular theaters in these Army bases, that was his specialty. I was working in distribution, he was doing that. ... He would ... take trips out to these airbases and, in June of '42, he came back one night and said, "I think this is it. I think it's going to happen."

SH: This would not have been 1942; it would have been 1944.

CB: I mean '44, right. You're right, '44. ...

SH: I just want to back up; when did you get your commission?

CB: July of '43.

SH: 1943, okay.

CB: He had been to an airbase and he had seen the troops with their faces blacked up, these were the paratroopers, and he realized what was going on, it was going to happen, like, almost immediately. So, he came back that night and he told [me]. I'm surprised that they let him off the airbase.

SH: I am as well.

CB: Really, and, coincidentally, I was feeling pretty rotten at the time, and what I did, I was coming down with pneumonia and it started that night when he came back. ... He went to work the next morning and I slept in, and I decided I was going to go to the hospital. ... It was early in the morning on June the 6th and I heard this tremendous sound, tremendous, and I threw open the curtains and the sky was black with aircraft. It was the attack, D-Day, and I can still see it now, I mean. ... [The] sky was covered with troop carriers and bombers and dragging gliders and that was it. So, I went to the hospital and they said, "Well, you've got pneumonia. Get in bed," and Hitler decided that the best thing he could do was to start the "buzz bomb" operation going. [Editor's Note: The Fieseler Fi 103, better known as the V-1 or "buzz bomb," was a German cruise missile.] They had been organizing this capability of a "buzz bomb" attack at different bases, and so forth. ... His side was not prepared. ... The Germans had built these tremendous fortifications, but they didn't have enough troops in the various places. The *panzer*

divisions [armored divisions] were not where they were supposed to be, and so forth. They had troops there, but not the right kind, on the fortifications, and so, he sent the first "buzz bombs" over that night. ... I was in a room with about, I guess it was about twelve patients, and they got us up at two o'clock in the morning and the nurses said, "Follow us downstairs." So, we went down. They had bomb shelters under the hospital and we were sitting there and we could hear all of this bombing going on, ... fire engine sirens, you know, and all that stuff. ... We were sitting in the darkness and a doctor came in with a flashlight and he said, "We've got a report that they're sending over pilotless aircraft, planes with no pilots," and these were "buzz bombs," and they looked like airplanes, but they were smaller, but they had stubby wings and they're configured like an aircraft. We thought, "Wow, pilotless aircraft, that's 'Buck Rogers' stuff," you know. [laughter] You're a kid, you're growing up in those days, you listened to *Buck Rogers*. "It's here," you know, [laughter] and we stayed there the rest of the night. [Editor's Note: Colonel Bache is referring to Buck Rogers, a fictional action hero created by Philip Francis Nowlan in 1928, who went on adventures in space in the 25th Century in comic strips, films and radio.] ... They took us upstairs when the bombing stopped. ... Oh, they took us upstairs and we got in bed and, all of a sudden, one came over and hit close to the hospital and it ... knocked out the glass in our room and we decided, [laughter] the patients decided, we'd work out a drill, how to get under the bed in three moves. [laughter] ...

CB: So, the first move was to throw off your blanket, grab your pillow, and roll under the bed, and we practiced it [laughter] and we were so funny looking. The nurses were hysterical, [laughter] see all these guys disappearing under the bed on the command. [laughter] So, the next thing that happened was, they'd figured out that the hospital was right in the path of these "buzz bombs." When they came over, they came over very low and ... they had a distinctive sound, a really loud sound, like ... a speedy aircraft. They were only flying, I guess, about a couple hundred miles an hour, but, as long as you could hear the sound, you knew they were flying. When the sound stopped, you knew they were coming down, and the authorities decided to close the hospital and move us out of range. So, they put us in a convoy of ambulances and took us up to Oxford, England, where we were out of range of the "buzz bombs." ...

SH: Were you in a hospital then in Oxford?

CB: Yes, I was in the hospital in Oxford for a couple of weeks and, in those days, the treatment for pneumonia was just stay in bed and they didn't have the exotic treatments they have today. I've had pneumonia twice since, [laughter] but I was in a room with about six or seven other guys. ... Some of them [had] been shot down in the Channel and, for some reason, I had simply caught pneumonia in an office, you know, [laughter] but the wounded paratroopers from the attack were coming back. ... I remember them coming into the hospital, whooping. They were so happy to be alive, you know, [laughter] and they were cheering and everything, just to be in a clean place and be alive, you know, and the only thing they could do for me was give me Irish whiskey. [laughter] I was amazed. The nurse came in and said, "Here, drink this," and it turned out it's Irish whiskey, and I was the only one getting it. The other guys weren't getting it. [laughter] I don't know why. [laughter] So, years later, when I got pneumonia again, I was in the hospital, I said, "Where's the Irish whiskey?" [laughter]

SH: And they said, "What?" [laughter]

CB: The second time I had pneumonia, I was in the Navy hospital on Long Island, New York, and the chief nurse was a Navy lieutenant commander, and I mentioned the Irish whiskey and she drew herself up and said, "This is a Navy hospital. We run it like a Navy ship; no booze onboard," [laughter] so, ... no Irish whiskey. [laughter]

SH: To back up a little bit, you were in a hospital in London. Was it a military hospital that you went to in Oxford or was it a hospital building?

CB: It was a military one.

SH: Was it a building?

CB: It was a building, yes.

SH: Okay, not one of the tents, like the field hospitals.

CB: No, no.

SH: As the attack progressed and you noticed the wounded coming back, was there a huge influx into your hospital?

CB: The one up in Oxford, yes, there was.

SH: Were you asked to do anything? Was there anything that people who were ambulatory could do?

CB: No, no. Well, they just told me, first thing they said, "Get in bed and don't move your toes even," and then, after awhile, they let me get up and I could go out and walk around Oxford and look at the place, which I enjoyed, you know, and that just lasted a couple days, and then, they sent me back to duty in London.

SH: How long were you in the hospital in Oxford?

CB: Just about a week, I think, ... a week-and-a-half, maybe, or something.

SH: I kind of wondered about the timeframe for how long this lasted.

CB: Yes. ...

SH: Did they talk about what they had experienced, those that were coming back from the D-Day operation?

CB: No, I didn't get to talk to any of them.

SH: You said your roommate had seen the blackened faces of the paratroopers. Did you have any knowledge of where the landings were going to be?

CB: No, no.

SH: Had anything like that been disseminated to you?

CB: No, no. We weren't involved in anything like that. We were strictly involved in the motion picture business. ...

SH: Once the invasion commences, how did your distribution routine change?

CB: Yes. ... First of all, we allocated film for them to store and hold and they actually set up film shows on the beaches, later on, and we ... would get film prints back with bullet holes in them. Isn't that something?

SH: Amazing.

CB: Yes.

SH: Primarily, I am going to guess, that your film distribution was to the air bases.

CB: It was to everyone.

SH: It was to everyone. Was it to all of the services or just the Army?

CB: Oh, no, all of the services. Well, the Air Force, at that time, was part of the Army.

SH: Right.

CB: And, no, the Navy ... had their own. ... I don't know what they did. [laughter]

SH: Did you have any interaction with all of these different countries that were part of the Allies, either in London or elsewhere?

CB: No, no, we didn't.

SH: You did not get to meet any of the other Allies.

CB: Oh, I ... met some socially, yes.

SH: That is what I wondered.

CB: Yes.

SH: What kind of social events did they have for American officers in London?

CB: Well, in London, you were more or less on your own. ... They had Red Cross clubs and brought USO [United Service Organizations] shows in there, [laughter] and you're reminding me of something. [laughter] One of the first USO shows that came over was the blackface singer.

SH: Al Jolson?

CB: Al Jolson, and it was Al Jolson, Patricia Morison and Merle Oberon, and another male comic, and I can't remember his name now. [laughter] This is when I was still an enlisted man and we hadn't been working very long in there, and this Air Force captain was escorting this USO show around, with Al Jolson, and he had a sound system with him, with an amplifier, speaker. [laughter] ... He comes in our office, and I'm just standing there, watching him, listening to what's going on, and he says, "You," and he points to me. He says, "You're going to operate the sound system." I had never seen a sound system in all my life before, [laughter] and he says, "You know, you just hook it up, you know, and there's a control panel and you control it." "Okay." So, my buddy, Jimmy Taylor, and I loaded [it] on a truck and they were going to do two shows and the first show was going to be at the Eagle Club. There was a club of American flyers in the Royal Air Force, the Eagle Squadron, and they had their own club [in] downtown London. So, we were instructed to go over to the Eagle Club and set it up, and so, we did, and I was trying to be very professional and turned the thing on, ... see if we had sound on the microphone, you know. [laughter] ... The first person up is Al Jolson, and, of course, he starts to sing his signature song, *Mammy*, you know. Well, it didn't sound right to me. So, I'm twiddling the dials and I had his voice going up and down like this. [laughter] It's wavering, you know, [laughter] and he's shooting me dirty looks, you know. [laughter] ... We had no rehearsal. They didn't even tell me what they were going to do. [laughter] I didn't know Jolson was up first, nothing, see. [laughter] So, I ruined his number, absolutely ruined it. [laughter] I had his voice going up and down. I finally got it set and he was finished, [laughter] and then, Patricia Morison got up and she was a soprano and I had her coming out bass. [laughter] So, I kind of ruined her number, too. [laughter] Well, the two that had speaking parts, that was no problem. Merle Oberon just told stories, you know. So, okay, we got through that and we, Jimmy and I, break down the equipment, put it in the truck. We run over to the, it was an American USO club, and we set the equipment up there and, that time, they had Merle Oberon, [who then] came over and sat next to me, right next to me. She said, "Turn it up, turn it down," you know, giving me the elbow. [laughter] So, with Merle Oberon's help, I got through the second show, [laughter] but they never asked me to do that again. [laughter]

SH: So much for technicians, right?

CB: Yes. [laughter]

SH: Did you see any other shows then, either as an enlisted man or as an officer?

CB: Yes. ... They would take over one of the theaters downtown. I remember Glenn Miller's Band coming over, going to that show, because he was later killed. We saw Glenn Miller's Band and one or two others, but that was it in London. They didn't concentrate on London. They sent

the shows out in the field, but there was a dance hall downtown and it was in the Covent Garden area, and are you familiar with that?

SH: Yes, slightly.

CB: Yes, the opera house or something, and they turned it into a big ...

SH: The coventry thing.

CB: Yes, and they had a bandstand there. I used to go to dances down there. I liked to dance, and I couldn't talk my friend, Jimmy, into it. He didn't dance; he didn't enjoy it. So, I would go down there and I met a nice Welsh girl and we dated for a couple of years and it was platonic. I told myself I wasn't going to get serious with this girl, and I remember, ... she lived in Elephant and Castle, which is across the Thames River from downtown London, and I would take her home at night on the tube [subway], under the Thames, and I'll never forget the people, the bombed out people, sleeping in the tube stations, and, I mean, you almost stepped on them when you got out of the subway. They were just a yard away from the door, there were so many of them, and these are the people who had been bombed out of their homes. I saw a figure somewhere that, in the four-year bombing period, before it eventually stopped, there were thirty-five thousand people killed in London, in that four-year period, and you saw the same thing in every station you went to. It was heartrending, and, I don't know, you got sort of inured to it after awhile, but ... it really bothered me. I remember, there was one daylight attack at the opposite end of Hyde Park, not where we were, but the opposite end, and people were running for a tube station and somebody tripped and the people coming after them tripped over the people in front, and something like seventy people were injured, just by accident. ...

SH: What were you hearing from home about how things were on the home front in the United States, with your mother working in the garment industry, such as the rationing? Did she talk about it at all?

CB: My mother got a job in a button factory. [laughter] She was going to do her bit, somehow, and she got a job in New Rochelle, which was a couple of miles, a few miles, from where our house was, sewing buttons on.

SH: Had the boarding house closed at that point?

CB: Essentially, yes. A couple of the boarders got drafted and she was renting part of the house, I guess. ... I don't think she was cooking meals anymore or doing that.

SH: Okay. I wondered how she could, with the rationing, feed people in the boarding house.

CB: I don't know. She never mentioned it. I never thought about it at the time, and I really don't know how she [managed]. I think she stopped that altogether.

SH: Did you ever ask her to send you anything? Was there something, like CARE packages, that you requested from her?

CB: Yes. Sometimes, you couldn't get the different uniform shirts or pants in London. For example, the Army came out with what they called "pinks." They're really sort of gray, you know, and they came out with "pinks" shirts for awhile and I wanted some of those and I had to send home for her to get them, because you couldn't get them there. ... I never asked for any CARE packages. I really didn't need them. ...

SH: For some people, there were just certain foodstuffs or something that they wanted in particular. You had talked about dating a Welsh girl for a couple of years and you said you married an English girl. When did you meet your wife?

CB: ... Well, the Welsh girl suffered a nervous breakdown for some reason. I never found out what happened. She came from Hastings and she went [back]. I just got a letter from her one day, said she went back to Hastings, she'd had a nervous breakdown and she stayed, and that's the last I ever saw of her. So, I was in London, ... over there for two years, and in London for two years, and, after I got commissioned, I would eat at the officers' mess in the Grosvenor House Hotel. ... We did some work with the British Information Agency, which was called the British Council over there, and I worked with their film office. What happened was, ... the American camps found out about the British films and they would request a film to be sent to them, and then, they wouldn't return them, [laughter] and this girl named Jeanne Marshall was in charge of their film distribution. She would call me up and chew me out. [laughter] I didn't know anything about it, you know. It wasn't my fault, you know. [laughter] So, I would apologize and said I'd try. I never could handle the situation. It was out of my control, and I went over, one day, to her office, didn't talk to her, I talked to her boss about this issue, but she was in the office and she saw me and I didn't see her. ... A few days later, I was standing in the mess line to get into the officers' mess, outside Grosvenor House Hotel, and this friend of mine, who worked in another part of the headquarters, and he had something to do with assisting the Red Cross and making packages at nighttime, or whatever they did, and this Jeanne Marshall, I don't know how or why, but she worked with him in this office at nighttime, for the Red Cross. ... One night, she asked him if he knew me and he said, "Yes," and, when he saw me in the line, he says, "You ought to get to meet her." [laughter] I said, "Oh, really?" and so, I didn't do anything about it for a couple of weeks, and, one night, I thought, "I'd like to have a date with somebody." So, I called her up at her office and asked her for a date, and I was getting ready to go to France and I was on advance echelon for our headquarters to go to Normandy, and so, I met her one week before I was going to France and I met her on one date and she was beautiful, beautiful, nineteen years old, and I was twenty-three at the time, and we had a second date. I proposed on the second date, and I got accepted on the third date. [laughter]

SH: She did not hold off for one more date. [laughter]

CB: And I went to France at the end of the week. My roommate said, "You stayed a week in London too long." [laughter] ...

SH: Was she in the British military or was she a civilian?

CB: She was a civilian, working for the British Council office, in downtown London. ... Paul and I, this roommate of mine, the two of us went ahead to this advance echelon, for our part of the office, to Normandy, and this is well after the fighting had gone on. This was D-plus-eighty-six, or something. It was in August and they put us in a camp in Carentan, no, in Valognes rather, Valognes, and General Patton was starting his drive for Paris and his outfit took all our vehicles. So, we couldn't do anything but sit in this camp. We had no vehicles. We sat there for two weeks and, finally, Patton captured Paris and they returned our vehicles. [laughter] Then, we could go. [laughter]

SH: Then, you moved up to Paris.

CB: So, then, we went to Paris, yes, and I was designated to lead this convoy to Paris ... by this major, who was a very nice guy, but he sat in the back. He let me do all the worrying about how to get there, you know, and I guess he was impressed with the job I did, because we got there all right. [laughter]

SH: You did not get lost.

CB: And he didn't know it, but I had another guy in the car who had been to Paris before. He knew the way. [laughter]

SH: How had the man been to Paris before?

CB: Why? How? I don't know. He'd just traveled there as a civilian, before the war, I guess.

SH: Okay.

CB: Yes. [laughter] So, he did the work; I didn't. [laughter] I got the credit for it. [laughter] So, we got to Paris and we set up the same kind of operations in Paris and we hired Frenchmen to provide mobile units, to follow the troops and give them shows, and so forth. ... We were safe in Paris. There wasn't any bombing in Paris.

SH: Right, that is true.

CB: Right. ...

SH: Where was your physical location in Paris?

CB: Right in the heart. Our office building was on Rue de Berri, which was just a few blocks from the Champs-Élyées and the Arc de Triumf. ...

SH: How were you received?

CB: Very well, very well. ... Our part of the headquarters set up operations in an elementary school, just took over the school, and we hadn't been there but a few days and this French

businessman came in and asked me if I would come to dinner at his house, ... which I did, on a Sunday. He just wanted his son to meet an American.

SH: Really?

CB: And I could speak a little French in those days. I've forgotten it all now. [laughter] So, we did, I did, and enjoyed it. ... I was assigned to billet with a French family and that was interesting. They were a few blocks from our office, I could walk back and forth, and they had lost a son during the German attack in 1940, and so, they gave me his room. ... There were three generations, a different generation on each floor, and they invited me to dinner, and so forth.

SH: Were they provided with provisions?

CB: No, no.

SH: Any help from the Americans?

CB: No, no. ... The French were in bad shape. A lot of times, they didn't have hot water and they didn't have much food in Paris. We were not allowed to go to French restaurants. We did initially and they told us to stop it, because they didn't have enough food and, again, we were given a restaurant, which was taken over by the Americans, with French chefs. ... The food was great. I mean, it wasn't French style, ... but they were good cooks and that was just a block from our office.

SH: Again, you were just distributing film right up to the front.

CB: Yes. I got another job at that time, too, because I could speak French and translate, in those days. I'm too rusty now, but I was producing newsreels for the Americans, taking French newsreels and translating them into English and distributing them. That was interesting. I enjoyed doing that.

SH: How did that work? Did you do the voiceover yourself? What did you do?

CB: No, no. I had a professional narrator do that, but I would do the writing.

SH: The script writing.

CB: Yes.

SH: Wow.

CB: Translate it.

SH: The French newsreels were being produced by French photojournalists.

CB: Yes.

SH: Do you remember what some of the topics were?

CB: I remember horseracing. That was one topic. This didn't start until after the war ended.

SH: After the war ended, okay.

CB: Yes.

SH: I was just going to say, was there horseracing still going on?

CB: Oh, yes, it was still going on, in Paris.

SH: Really?

CB: Yes.

SH: Was there any talk about who was a collaborator, who was not, who had been in the Resistance? Was there any of that?

CB: Yes. ... The French were pretty severe with women who had collaborated with the [Germans]. They cut their hair off, and I remember seeing a parade where they were marched up the Champs-Elyees, a group of them. They were treated pretty badly.

SH: Was there any talk of Charles de Gaulle or the Vichy Government [the post German occupation French government]? I am thinking of the family you were housed with; did they talk politics at all?

CB: No, no, never talked [about] that, no.

SH: I just wondered how that was perceived.

CB: Yes.

SH: How long were you in Paris, until the end of the war?

CB: Yes. You could feel it, when the end was coming, I mean.

SH: Coming to an end?

CB: Yes. Well, again, just like the D-Day operation, we could sense ... what we heard about, [and] so forth. The American *Stars and Stripes* was in the same building we were, the staff to put that out, and, of course, there was information there. ... I'll never forget, when the war ended, they called us all together in a place called the Palais de Chaillot, which is right across the river from the Eiffel Tower, right across the Seine, and the headquarters was huge back then. It

was, you know, several thousand people, and the three-star general who commanded it called us all together and told us the war was over and he says, "Go celebrate." [laughter]

SH: Really?

CB: So, we did, [laughter] and, I remember, we walked out on the balcony of this *palais* and looked across the river at the Eiffel Tower, and, just as we were standing there, this American fighter plane came down, ... flew through the legs of the Eiffel Tower and zoomed up into a chandelle.

SH: You are kidding.

CB: No, unbelievable.

SH: Oh, my. I wonder if that man was ever ... [laughter]

CB: I don't think anybody ever ... did anything to him. You know, it was pure celebration, wild. ...

SH: To see that is amazing.

CB: Yes, yes. ...

SH: I cannot imagine flying a plane under that.

CB: Yes, yes.

SH: Having been there.

CB: Yes, yes, he did it, and so, everybody poured out into the streets and, when we walked back from the *palais*, we came to [the] Champs-Elyees and everybody was walking the same direction. So, you just had to walk in that [direction]. Everybody's walking down past our place, past Rue de Berri, down to the Place de la Concorde, down at the end and, I mean, ... the street was just covered with people and we passed one street where there was a bar down the side street, on the right-hand [side]. So, a group of us headed for that bar and, of course, it was mobbed, you know, and champagne is flowing. ... While we were there, a champagne delivery truck came up [laughter] and parked right [outside] and they had to load more champagne. So, we went out to help him carry it in. Of course, we'd take a few bottles as we carried it in. We had a wonderful time. [laughter]

SH: You were so helpful. [laughter]

CB: Yes. [laughter] That's what I remember about that time.

SH: This was just when the war ended in Europe.

CB: [Yes].

SH: What were you hearing of what was going on in the Pacific from the time you had come to England, and then, made your way to Paris?

CB: Practically nothing.

SH: Really?

CB: Yes. There was talk of units being transferred. As a matter-of-fact, we had propaganda films. There was a series of propaganda films. There was one called *Two Down, One to Go* and that referred to the defeat of Germany and Italy, and the "one to go" was Japan, and that film had to be shown to every soldier in Europe in ten days, every soldier, millions, and, of course, I was right in the middle of that, and the idea was that they were going to send so many divisions, whatnot, and air squadrons to the Pacific. ... It had to explain to everybody the need for this and how some people who had fought in Europe might be fighting over in the Pacific. Well, it turned out it wasn't necessary, but that's what they were planning, and I was the chief film distribution officer for the US headquarters. So, I had to figure out how many film prints [were needed] to cover everybody in Europe in ten days. [laughter] ...

SH: Scattered all over Europe.

CB: And the officers in charge of this planning were a group of lawyers and judge advocates, and they called me up and asked me to come over and talk to them. ... I had known about this plan. So, I went over and talked to them and they said, "Lieutenant, how many film prints will we need to cover everybody?" and I said, "Two hundred." They looked at me; here, I look about eighteen. You know, I'm twenty-three and I look about eighteen. They said, "Oh, we suggest you go back and check with somebody." So, I went home, went back to my office, called them up and said, "The answer is two hundred prints," and that's what it was. [laughter]

SH: You thought long and hard about that. [laughter]

CB: Yes, and then, [laughter] we had a new lieutenant show up in the headquarters and they assigned him the job of doing nothing but controlling these two hundred prints, the circulation of them, who was shipping them, who was assigned to this and that, and so forth, and I'll never forget him. His name was Green, [laughter] and this had been planned a long time before the war came, I mean, before the war came to an end, and we got the signal that, "Now is the time," and I couldn't find Lieutenant Green. [laughter] ... I found out where he lived in Paris. He lived in an apartment someplace and I got on a subway and went over to his place and there he is, sitting in his living room, playing the guitar. I said, "Green, you know what's going on?" [laughter] I said, "Now, now is the time," So, we got him back to the office and he went to work. [laughter]

SH: He was taking it all in. [laughter] How sure were you that all of those troops saw that film in ten days?

CB: Well, I took the attitude [that] it couldn't be guaranteed. There's no way you could guarantee that, but, from my knowledge of how many prints to order, and I'd been doing this for a couple years, I knew how many you could squeeze into a show and how we could move it around, and two hundred would cover it and I was confident and it did.

SH: Did commanders really sit their troops down and say, "You are going to watch this film?"

CB: Oh, yes, yes.

SH: Yes, they did.

CB: [Yes].

SH: Did this also include film that went to Italy?

CB: No, no. That was a different theater. That was the Med.

SH: That was considered the Mediterranean.

CB: Yes, yes.

SH: Okay. When you were in Paris, did you ever get a chance to go back to England?

CB: Oh, yes. I asked for leave to go back and get married, and the war was winding down, and this was in March and the war ended in May. ... It was granted and the boys gave me a farewell party in Paris and I took leave to go to England. I had to take a train to the coast of France. There was a leave camp on the English Channel and I had to sit there for two days, because German submarines were still running around the English Channel and it was deemed not safe to send a troopship, a leave ship, over. So, I had to contact my bride in England, by phone, and she had to set everything up, and then, just put it on hold for two days, [laughter] didn't know, and I couldn't tell her when I was going to get there. I was on my way, but I couldn't tell her, you know. Well, it turned out to be just two days. They decided it was then safe for a leave ship to take troops over. ... I walk into her office in London, she was home, ... and asked if she was there. ... They said, "No," and I stopped, and I started to go out and they said, "Are you Lieutenant [pronounced "LEF-tenant"] Bache?" [I said], "Yes, I am." "Oh." [laughter] So, things started from there.

SH: Was her family from London? Was that her home?

CB: Yes. ... She was actually born in Scotland, but she didn't have a Scottish accent. Her father was a retired warrant officer in the Royal Marines and he worked in a civilian job. He had retired from the [Royal] Marines and they lived in the outskirts of London, a place called Greenford. ... When I got there, we had left an echelon back in London, and I walked in, ... [I] said, "How about being my best man?" [laughter] you know, just like that. ... There were three of us. We had another fellow who lived in England. He was American, but he lived in England. ... We got him to drive us out and I had two of my friends with me and we didn't know the way

to Greenford. [laughter] We got there. Somehow, we got there. [laughter] So, things were touch and go. [laughter]

SH: Had you met her family before that?

CB: No, no.

SH: Before the wedding?

CB: Not before. ... Her father had told her, "Don't bring anyone home until he's the one." So, that's what she did. [laughter]

SH: I wondered if there was any hesitation on her family's part in this.

CB: Well, I'll never forget, her father came in to meet me for the first time. I had stayed there. ... I stayed there overnight. I hadn't met him, met her mother, but he came in the next morning to meet me and he took one look at me and he said, "You've taken a great load off my mind." [laughter]

SH: You must have passed the test.

CB: I was dressed in ... "pinks and greens," [a dress uniform], and [laughter] all polished up and he said, "You've taken a load off my mind." [laughter]

SH: Thank heavens. Did she have other siblings?

CB: She had one married sister.

SH: Were they able to be there?

CB: Yes, they were there.

SH: Were you married in the home?

CB: No. We did it in a Catholic church. I'm not Catholic, but, ... when I was in Paris, I had to get permission.

SH: I wanted to ask, how did that go?

CB: Yes, oh, I had to satisfy the Catholics. Are you Catholic?

SH: No, sir.

CB: [laughter] Anyway, I had to sign papers saying that I would bring up [any] children as Catholics, and I told her, I said, "I will never become a Catholic," I'm an Episcopalian, "but I will

agree to bring children up as Catholics," which I did, but I had to go to the Catholic chaplain's office and get lectured and sign the papers, and so forth.

SH: How difficult was it, with the government, to get married, while you were there?

CB: There was no problem.

SH: Did the Army give you any kind of a hard time?

CB: No, no.

SH: You did not have to obtain permission.

CB: No, no, just permission to go on leave, and, of course, they knew the purpose for going on leave.

SH: I have heard from men who were lectured that they should not marry ...

CB: Oh, really?

SH: ... Their, so-to-speak, "war bride." There are stories on our website. You can read about it. Yours sounds quite painless, compared to what some went through.

CB: Yes, no, didn't encounter anything like that.

SH: That is wonderful. How much leave did you have at this point?

CB: They gave me a week's leave.

SH: Okay. Did you go on a honeymoon?

CB: We went on a trip to Wales, to Land's End in Wales, and stayed in a very nice place and roamed throughout, took long walks around the countryside and stopped at teahouses and places like that.

SH: You had a car or a vehicle that you used.

CB: No, no, we'd just rent taxis. ...

SH: Did you? Your friends then found their way back to London.

CB: Oh, yes, yes. [laughter] ... Let me tell you one thing that happened; the week before I went to France, I forgot about this, from my office window, I could see the top of the Grosvenor House Hotel. ... They had a flagpole on it and, when there was a "buzz bomb" attack, they would put the red flag up and, [in] the Army, on a shooting range, ... if you miss the target, they wave a red flag and we call that "Maggie's drawers." ... They tell you, you shoot at it, and then,

they put up a number, ... what you did, but, if you missed completely, you get a "Maggie's drawers." So, that week before I went to France, we were on the phone. I was on the phone in my office, I could see the hotel and she was on the phone in her office, and, in the course of conversation, we hear this "buzz bomb" alert. [Editor's Note: Germany used both the V-1 rocket, nicknamed the "buzz bomb" for the distinct sound its engine made before dropping and detonating, and the V-2 rocket, which gave no warning before impact, in the bombing of London.] ... I told her, I said, "I see 'Maggie's drawers' going up the top of the flagpole." So, I got under the desk in my office, she got under the desk in her office, we waited until the bomb came down, I mean, and blew up, and then, we got back on the phone. [laughter] ... The greatest thing [that] happened was, ... after the "buzz bombs," the Germans were sending over [V-2s], which were more powerful and you couldn't hear them coming. There was no warning until they struck, ... so, nothing you could do about it, you know, but the day we got married, they stopped the [V-2] bombing. I thought that was very nice. [laughter]

SH: Just for you. Was it difficult for your bride to find a wedding gown and all of that, because of all the rationing?

CB: No, no. What happens is, my mother, being in the garment industry, she got her measurements. I mailed measurements to my mother and she made the most beautiful wedding gown and it fit her like a glove. ... They hadn't seen anything like that in England, and so, that's what she wore the day we got married.

SH: I cannot believe, with all that was going on, that it made it there and everything.

CB: Yes, and then, when I came [back], I had to come back before her. I was sent to Germany ...

SH: From Paris.

CB: From Paris.

SH: Did she get to go to France or did she have to stay in England?

CB: No, no, and our troops had moved into Germany and the war was over, and I got shipped there.

SH: Whereabouts in Germany?

CB: Frankfurt, and I wasn't there too long, just a couple of weeks. ... They told me they'd give me a promotion if I stayed and I had been away from home for three years and I said, "No, I want to go home. Keep your promotion," [laughter] but I came back home ahead of her.

SH: I was just going to ask about that.

CB: Yes, and she came over on a "war brides ship." [Editor's Note: Former troopships and hospital ships that transported non-US citizen brides of service members to the US from Europe and Asia after the war's end were coined "war bride ships."]

SH: Tell me about that. I have heard that term before.

CB: Well, before she came over, when I got home, and [being] mindful of the clothing situation, I had my mother pick out, and I helped, three different kinds of dresses and sent them to her, and she was so excited over those dresses, you know. They hadn't seen styles like that in England in years, you know. So, she had those when she came over. ...

SH: How much time?

CB: I think it was ...

SH: You were in Frankfurt, you said, just for a couple of months.

CB: Yes, and then, I got shipped home.

SH: How were you sent? Were you sent from Frankfurt to ...

CB: ... I was sent from Frankfurt to France, to Marseilles, France, and got a troopship there.

SH: Out of there.

CB: Yes, and she came over, I think it was about two months, later on.

SH: You came back in August.

CB: No, November.

SH: November.

CB: Yes, and, when I got to the camp for soldiers returning in Marseilles, they'd just group people together. ... They had the point system. ... You got so much combat or so much work time over there, or decorations or whatever, and put those points together. ... That decided when you went home. ... They didn't follow a regular, formal organization procedure any longer. ... Just for accounting purposes, we were assigned to an engineer battalion, number such-and-such, and we weren't engineers, but ... everybody was assigned [like] that, and people came from all over, Italy, Germany, France, England, and so forth. ... Another lieutenant and I were assigned to pay the troops. We were assigned ... a job as finance officers, and so, that meant, since ... everybody came from different countries, we had different kinds of money to deal with. [laughter] So, we sat for a whole day computing, you know, what the *francs* and the pounds and the *lira* and everything [equated to in dollars], you know, and trying to figure out how much each guy gets, you know, and that took a whole day. ... We got all that information and it turned out that we had thirty thousand American dollars to pay these troops with, but we couldn't pay them

until we got on the ship, and so, I picked up this thirty thousand dollars. We had no safe. ... We were just sleeping in bare tents, you know, had no safe, no weapons or anything. So, that night, I slept with thirty thousand dollars under my pillow, [laughter] and, the next day, we're getting ready to leave. ... We get on trucks to go down to the ship, to get onboard, and I'm standing there, holding thirty thousand bucks in this paper bag.

SH: A paper bag?

CB: Yes, and I got tired of holding it, so, I gave it to him, [the other lieutenant]. So, he held it for awhile. Then, he put it down on the ground and the trucks came along, and we got so excited, "Oh, we're going home," you know. So, we get on the trucks and I look back and there's the thirty thousand dollars. Seriously, this really happened. He had left it on the ground. So, we got off and got the thirty thousand. I could have killed him. [laughter]

SH: That is probably the most dangerous situation you were in.

CB: So, we got on the ship and we paid everybody. You know, it took hours and hours to pay everybody and we were ten bucks off. We couldn't figure out where this lousy ten bucks is supposed to go. [laughter] I thought that was pretty good, out of thirty thousand dollars and troops from all over.

SH: I would think so. What did you do with the ten extra dollars?

CB: I don't remember, I don't remember.

SH: When you were in Frankfurt, were you transferred there after the war ended in Japan?

CB: No, no. Let's see, when did the war end in Japan? It was September, wasn't it?

SH: August.

CB: August? Yes, I guess it was it. Yes, that's right, yes, it was after that. [Editor's Note: V-J Day was declared on August 14, 1945, in the United States. The formal surrender ceremony took place on September 2, 1945.]

SH: You were in Paris when this happened.

CB: Yes.

SH: What did you know when they talked about Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Did you understand? Did you hear about the atomic bomb?

CB: We heard about it, yes, and we thought it was fantastic.

SH: I just wondered how that came about, because you said you heard very little about the Pacific operations and, yet, you showed a propaganda film to help convey the message that some GIs would have to go there.

CB: Yes, and, fortunately, ... they didn't have to fight. ...

SH: What about the displaced persons? By the time you were sent to Frankfurt, there had to have been displaced persons. What did you see as you traveled from Paris to Frankfurt?

CB: The only thing I saw was parades of them in Paris. Again, they were marched up the Champs-Elysees. ... [The] French were always having parades, of one kind or another, on the Champs-Elysees, and I remember one very sad-looking group, ... naturally, of individuals, still in their prison garb, marching up towards the Arc de Triomphe. That's all I saw.

SH: What did you hear about the labor camps, the extermination camps and concentration camps?

CB: We didn't hear much. ... In fact, we heard nothing until the end of the war, when all of this started to come out.

SH: Were there any film crews brought in to film? Would that have been something that you would have dealt with?

CB: There were crews to film that, yes. They were combat photographers with the advancing troops, but we didn't get involved in that. I got involved in that later on.

SH: Okay.

CB: Yes.

SH: That is what I wondered, did anything like that come to your office?

CB: No.

SH: In Frankfurt, what were you assigned to do?

CB: Same type of work, but it wasn't organized. You couldn't pin things together. It was really disorganized and I didn't feel I could accomplish anything in Frankfurt, because of the lack of organization. It was too new.

SH: What was the reaction, that you noticed, when President Roosevelt passed away? What was the reaction? It was in April.

CB: Well, everybody was sad, of course, and we realized that it was an extremely important event. I mean, everybody thought the world of Roosevelt, at least people I knew, anyway, and

that's all. We didn't hear about politics or anything. Our only source of information was the Army [newspaper], *Stars and Stripes*, and that didn't have a lot of political news in it.

SH: Since you were related to the Roosevelts, were your family members Democrats or Republicans?

CB: [laughter] My family were all Democrats; I mean, I'm sorry, they were Republicans. I consider myself a Democrat, [laughter] and I wasn't interested in politics, in those days, anyway.
...

SH: I wonder what kind of confidence people had in Truman. Was that ever discussed at the officers' club or wherever?

CB: No. Nobody knew anything about Truman, to my knowledge. Of course, I wasn't interested, a bit interested, in politics in those days. I am now, but I wasn't then. ...

SH: I was just curious about how that filters down to the troops. As you said, the *Stars and Stripes* was right there in the same building. I was wondering if you ever ran into people who were writing these stories.

CB: No, no.

SH: You talked about the point system and how disorganized it was, after the war ended in Japan. In addition, Patton was also killed. Were these issues talked about?

CB: Yes. We thought that was a terrible thing, of course. You have to realize that, in the Army, because, ... at that time, we were so busy all of the time, we didn't sit around and talk politics. Later on, when I became regular Army and thought about it a little bit, you're instructed to be apolitical. So, I can never, ever, and I spent twenty-four years in the regular Army, I can never, ever remember a political discussion. We just didn't do it.

SH: Okay. That was one of the questions that I had. Political science was one of your majors in college. I wondered if this was something that you had kept up with.

CB: No.

SH: Okay, that is fair enough.

CB: Yes.

SH: In Frankfurt, you talked about the disorganization, but what were your day-to-day activities like at this point? Were you just waiting to get enough points to be allowed to go?

CB: Yes, right.

SH: Were there any attempts to keep the troops busy, because there were still thousands and thousands of troops?

CB: ... You have to remember, I was in a headquarters, ... which was completely different from being in a troop outfit, you know, and we were basically just marking time, because everyone wanted to go home. No one wanted to stay, and that's why they were running around, offering promotions, and we were all just counting our own time.

SH: The films that you were sending out, were they coming back just as regularly? Were you involved in that sort of thing?

CB: Yes, they were.

SH: When you were in Marseilles, what kind of ship did you come back on?

CB: It was a Liberty ship, and I get seasick. [laughter]

SH: When you were in the four-high bunks, ten thousand men on the one ship, did you suffer from seasickness then?

CB: No, I didn't. I tell you, it was, to me, ... so exciting, such an adventure, you know, I never thought of getting seasick. [laughter] But, I mean, I had been, as a child, earlier, I went to Cuba one time and got seasick on the ninety-mile passage to Cuba, you know, but, no, I was so full of interest in this whole adventure, you know. But, coming back in the Liberty ship, ... I know I would grab my food and run out on deck. In the fresh air, I could eat. I just couldn't eat it below decks with the ship rolling. The Atlantic was pretty bad in the wintertime.

SH: Because you were coming back in November.

CB: Yes.

SH: Were you coming into New York?

CB: Yes.

SH: Were there other ships traveling with you or were you alone?

CB: No, we were alone then.

SH: Two meals a day again; was it that crowded?

CB: No, it was three meals a day, ... wasn't any crowding, just regular capacity.

SH: Did your mother meet you when you came in?

CB: No, no, she didn't. I was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey, and we had to go through administrative paperwork. It was a bit of that and we were signed up in the Reserves. They encouraged you to stay in the Reserves, and I got a commission in the Reserves. ...

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

CB: I really still had the regular Army in the back of my mind.

SH: Did you?

CB: Yes, and, during the war, you get a temporary commission and, because it was so huge, they can't make everybody [a regular officer]. So, they offered us, when we came back, a Reserve commission and I thought ... I would like to try for a regular, eventually, which I did, and got accepted.

SH: What were your plans? You have had a few months of just sitting and marking time.

CB: Oh, I figured I was going back to Rutgers.

SH: Is that what you planned?

CB: Yes. I wanted to go back to college, anyway, and I didn't know whether ... I should try another school or not. I did go down to Columbia and they said, "Go back to Rutgers. That's where you've been, you're known. There's no use starting over at Columbia." Columbia would have been a commute for me on the train. ...

SH: Did your mother still have the home in Larchmont?

CB: Yes, and my wife came over and I went back to Rutgers and she came with me, of course. ... Have you heard about the trailer camps?

SH: I need you to tell me your experience.

CB: [laughter] And we lived in this trailer camp.

SH: Did you come back in January, that semester? Did your wife get back in time?

CB: No, no. ... We arrived at the trailer camp in September. I only had half a year more to do. ...

SH: You came back to the States ...

CB: No, wait a minute; I had a year-and-a-half to do, that's right, because I had left in the middle of my junior year.

SH: You come back to Rutgers in January, or September ...

CB: September.

SH: ... of 1946?

CB: ... Yes, '46, that's right, yes, but, ... when you graduated, they credited you with your original class number, because my class number has always been '43.

SH: Right. I was wondering how much time there was in-between.

CB: Yes, and we rented a trailer camp[er], which was right next to the football stadium, and along came football season. My wife got a job with the University and she worked in; you've heard of Dean [Earl Reed] Silvers.

SH: Yes.

CB: She worked in some adjunct part of his office there, and along came the first football game and I'm a passionate football fan. [laughter] ... She didn't want to go to an American football game, didn't know anything about it, didn't want to know. I dragged her anyway and, after the first game, she became so enthusiastic, she would drag me. [laughter] She became a fantastic football fan.

SH: Did she?

CB: And you've heard about these trailers, I guess. ...

SH: Tell me what you saw.

CB: Well, they were not new trailers. They ... had been used by factory workers during the war and they were very small and we found grass growing up under the bed. [laughter] ... I used to smoke in those days and I would sit there, studying at night, and the clouds of smoke around me, my feet are freezing. [laughter] ... We had kerosene stoves and God forbid you spilled something on the stove, because you'd get this tremendous gas, and we had a dog, and the three of us are hanging out the window, getting air, because somebody spilled something. [laughter] Oh, that trailer camp was quite an experience, and the showers were in another trailer next-door, double trailer, showers and the bathroom and everything. That was something else. ...

SH: Did they have running water?

CB: Oh, no, that's another thing. No, we didn't have running water. You had to carry everything in and carry the dirty water out. That's right. I remember that, and the funniest thing was starting the cars in the morning. The camp was on a hill and we all had old cars, you know. ... I had a 1935 Dodge I had bought from somebody for two hundred bucks, yes, [laughter] and, some mornings, it wouldn't start. So, what we'd do is, we'd get it over to the top of the hill and push it and get a running start. Somebody would push me, and then, the engine would start and we'd go to school, [laughter] or my next-door neighbor was a guy named Gibson, and he wasn't

in '43. He was in '44 and he was the iceman for the camp, [laughter] and we had chunks of ice delivered. He would deliver the ice and put that in our refrigerator. So, sometimes, we would ride to school sitting in the back of the ice truck. [laughter]

SH: Did your wife ride with you to work?

CB: Yes.

SH: How different were you, as a student, prior to the war as opposed to the student who comes back?

CB: Very serious.

SH: Were you?

CB: Yes. I didn't go out for anything, meaning, before the war I was on the fencing team and [I was] a member of Scarlet Rifles, and I didn't do any of that after the war. I was very serious.

SH: We kind of breezed through Rutgers before. I think we should go back now, because you said Rutgers had everything that you wanted in a school. You had gone to school in Larchmont, or had you gone to a private school?

CB: Larchmont. No, I went to the public school. Larchmont is a village of the Town of Mamaroneck. It was the Mamaroneck ... school system, and so, my high school was called Mamaroneck Senior High.

SH: What had you been involved in as a young man in high school? Had you done fencing there?

CB: No, no. I'd only had one or two lessons. We had an athletic instructor come in my last year there in high school and he had been a fencer and he taught us just a little bit, which whetted my enthusiasm for it. ... One of my biggest disappointments in life, I didn't grow bigger, [was that] I couldn't play football, you know. I thought I'd like to do something and, in fencing, you can be a fencer with any size and weight, you know. ...

SH: You talked about how you had been involved in helping your mother with the boarding house. Were there activities that you were involved in during high school?

CB: Oh, I was deeply involved in the Boy Scouts and I became an Eagle Scout and junior assistant Scoutmaster and went to Scout camp for four years and loved it, loved it. ... That prepared me for the Army, because, when we went on hikes in basic training, it didn't bother me at all. It was old stuff to me, you know, carrying packs and marching, and I thought it was all great fun. [laughter]

SH: You had talked about having taken the ship to Cuba. Was that just a family vacation?

CB: My aunt, her husband, first husband, had been the big fruit and vegetable importer for New York City and he did a lot of business with the Indian River Fruit Company, and I forget the name of the town now. Anyway, one winter, after he died, she rented a small house; Vero Beach, [Florida], that's the name of it, Vero Beach. It's where the company is, and we lived one winter in Vero Beach. ... During that winter, she took me on a trip to Cuba, Havana, Cuba.

SH: Did you go to school in Vero Beach?

CB: Yes, yes. ...

SH: You were a well-traveled young man.

CB: Oh, yes. She had a colored family as a cook and chauffer who lived with us, and I remember, one night, I guess my aunt had a social affair or something and she told the colored woman she'd like her to take me to the movies. So, we went to the movies in Vero Beach and that's where I first found out about segregation, that she had to go up in the balcony. I couldn't go up there and I had to be downstairs, which I couldn't understand. At the age of seven, I couldn't understand that.

SH: About how old were you then?

CB: I was seven then.

SH: When you were in Paris or in Frankfurt, did you have any interaction with the colored troops, the Red Ball Express?

CB: No, no. I knew about them, but I didn't see any of it.

SH: When you were in Europe, did you see any of the luminaries, like Patton, Bradley or Eisenhower? You were part of Headquarters Company.

CB: No. The commanding general of the headquarters was John C. H. Lee. We called him, "Jesus Christ Himself" Lee. [laughter] No, the only luminary we saw was the King of Yugoslavia, and the reason we saw the King of Yugoslavia is, he was a personal friend of the colonel that commanded the echelon above us, that commanded the whole thing. ... He had a sports car which had a radio, which needed repair, and I had a repairman working for me, an electronic repairman, and they asked me, one day, if I could get the King's radio repaired. So, I got Corporal Ramsey to go out and work with the King. So, here's the King and Ramsey, both bending over this radio in the car, and Ramsey says, "Say King, will you hold this, please?" [laughter] So, the King did and [laughter] things got taken care of. I'll never forget. [laughter] It wasn't, "Your Majesty," or anything, just "King;" "King, will you hold that?"

SH: Are there any anecdotes that we should talk about? I want to jump back, then, to your decision to pick Rutgers. How did Rutgers get on your radar scope in Larchmont?

CB: Well, I had this criteria, fencing, ROTC and journalism, and [there was only] one other school for that and that was Cornell, in Upstate New York. ... Rutgers was closer, and I read about Rutgers and, I mean, I got the catalog and read through everything and I thought, "I think I'd like that." I went out. ... They had an introductory day for students who were considering the school and this was in March or April, or something like that, and I went out there and got acquainted, saw the campus, and I thought I'd like it very much, and so, I applied.

SH: You did tour.

CB: Yes.

SH: You said you were in Pell Hall when you arrived. Who was your roommate?

CB: My roommate was a boy named Owen Jones and he was a chemist and, ... boy, he used to study, study that chemistry, and here I was, a journalism student. I thought, "Oh, boy, I'm glad I'm not a chemist." [laughter] I mean, ... I don't have a scientific bent, you know, and he and another chemist would come in and they'd sit there and talk this jargon. ... I learned to tune it out. Well, a very sad thing, the war came along and I decided I was going to leave school in ... the middle of the year and Owen kept on with his chemistry studying and he was interested in flying. He was always running out and taking flying lessons while he was a student. So, when I left, we lost contact with each other, but, when I came back after the war, this other chemistry student met me on the campus one day and said that Owen had become a B-24 pilot in the Pacific. ... He'd been on a lot of bombing operations and he got shot down twice, twice, and got fished out of the ocean, floated around in a rubber raft until they fished him out, and so, he came home a big hero and everything. ... After Christmas, after he came home, ... a friend of his had a small sports plane and he went up for flights with his friend, he was a passenger, in the sports plane and they crashed the plane and he was killed. The plane took off and didn't make it. After going through all that, the whole war, comes home and gets killed as a passenger in a sports plane, terrible.

SH: Can you talk about your first two years at Rutgers? What were you involved in and did you have part-time jobs?

CB: I had a part-time job with the University. I used to be a clerk in the bookstore.

SH: In Winants Hall? [Editor's Note: Winants Hall served several purposes in the 1930s and 1940s, including housing a dormitory, the cafeteria and the bookstore. It is currently an administration building.]

CB: Yes, in Winants Hall, and I felt very important, because I would go to the post office in New Brunswick and pick up the official mail for the University and bring it back, and I thought that's a pretty important job. [laughter]

SH: Did you consider a fraternity?

CB: Yes, I was pledged in my junior year. I was pledged to Delta Upsilon. I was only there a few months, and then, I left school. So, I never became a brother, but I liked it. John Archibald, [a Class of 1943 classmate], was in that, too.

SH: When you were at Rutgers your freshman year, what kind of initiation was there? I understand you had to wear a dink.

CB: [laughter] Yes, the freshmen, you had to wear these caps and you had to tuck ... the bottoms of your pants into your socks and you had to carry matches at all times, in case an upperclassman wanted a match, needed a match. That was it, the three of them. Did he [John Archibald] tell you about that?

SH: Some have talked about that. Had you always been a football fan?

CB: Oh, yes. In fact, the way I met Archibald, I weighed exactly 150 pounds, and I guess he did, too, and we both went out for the guard position. In those days, they had 150-pound teams. They had a freshman one and a varsity one, and we met out on the football field, trying out for this, and I got injured about the second week. I got a terrific bone bruise in my hip, which didn't heal for a few weeks, and, by that time, I'd missed too much training, so, I never went back, but that was the way we met, playing football. [laughter]

SH: What were some of the other activities that you were involved with your freshman year?

CB: That was it.

SH: As a journalism major, did you write for the *Targum* or had you done any writing at all?

CB: No, no.

SH: Why journalism? Why did you want to be a journalist?

CB: I wrote things in high school and the teachers encouraged me in high school. In fact, one of them offered to arrange a scholarship at Drake University, in Iowa, and I thought, "I don't want to go out to Iowa," you know. The scholarship wasn't very much, you know, and I wrote for the high school newspaper, just a small bit, and I wrote for a magazine, a school magazine, and they enjoyed that. Well, I just wrote a small story and I was in acting in high school. I enjoyed acting and the English teacher thought I was great. I was in the honors English class all the time, and I realized that journalism was probably my best thing.

SH: When you were at Rutgers, were there women in your journalism classes?

CB: Yes, there were some. I only got to know one of them, I think. There were women in some of our classes. They came from across the town, Douglass.

SH: Were there ways to interact with the women other than journalism class? Were there social events with NJC at that time? [Editor's Note: NJC stands for the New Jersey College for Women, now Rutgers University's Douglass Residential College.]

CB: There were, I guess. I wasn't interested in NJC. ... Coincidentally, one of the boarders, back in Larchmont, was the assistant minister of the Episcopal church and he came from Plainsville, is it?

SH: Plainfield, [New Jersey]?

CB: Plainfield, Plainfield. His family owned a farm in Plainfield and, when he heard I was going to Rutgers, he said, well, he would fix me up with his young sister, and so, he did and I would date her and bring her to football games and dances, but I wasn't much of a socialite in those days.

SH: Were you at the famous Princeton football game in 1939, when Rutgers beat Princeton?

CB: Oh, yes, for the first time in decades. No, ... I think that was an away game, I think. I don't think it was at Rutgers and that's why I didn't go. I was very aware of it, yes. ...

SH: What were the other activities that you were involved with at Rutgers?

CB: That was about it.

SH: You did not write for the *Targum*.

CB: No, no.

SH: Who was your favorite professor?

CB: Charanis, Dr. [Peter] Charanis, do you know of him?

SH: History, yes, by reputation.

CB: Yes. I'll never forget him, because ... the first class I was in with him, ... we were supposed to study Greek and Egyptian history. We never got around to Egyptian history. He was born on the Island of Lemnos.

SH: Was he really?

CB: Yes, and which he told us about, in fact, and we spent the whole year on Greeks. [laughter] I enjoyed him, though, and, after the war, when I came back, I was walking down College Avenue, been back a few weeks, and I was astounded, because he walked past me and he stopped and he said, "Mr. Bache." He remembered my name, after thousands of students, you know. He remembered my name and he says, "Well, have you been around to see the world?" and I thought that was wonderful that he remembered me.

SH: He was teaching in Bishop House at the time.

CB: Yes, right. All our classes were in Bishop House, history classes.

SH: I understand he was quite an orator.

CB: Yes. Another one I enjoyed was [Edward McNall] Burns, who taught Russian history, and I found Russian history fascinating.

SH: Did you study a foreign language?

CB: I studied French, and I had studied French in high school and, after testing me, they said, "Mr. Bache, We don't think you ought to ... study conversational French. Why don't you study the other kind?" [laughter]

SH: Stick to grammar and literature.

CB: I couldn't speak through my nose. [laughter]

SH: At Rutgers, you went out for the Scarlet Rifles. Did you compete all around? Was there competition?

CB: Yes, there was, yes. ... As a child, I had been in the first school and it was a military school, and then, they used to have something called Citizens' Military Training Camp, which had nothing to do with schools. ... They don't have it anymore. They stopped it when World War II came along, but it gave you the same type of instruction that ROTC did, if you took it long enough. ... The thing was, you would go four summers, and then, you could get a commission that way, and I did go. The summer after I graduated from high school, before I went to Rutgers, I enrolled in that and went to Plattsburgh Barracks, New York, where you were trained by the regular Army people, and so, I had a couple weeks there. [Editor's Note: Between 1921 and 1941, the Citizens' Military Training Camp (CMTC), established by the National Defense Act of 1920, offered four-week military training summer camp programs to approximately thirty thousand volunteers each year. CMTC trainees were not subject to active duty call-ups and those who completed four summers of CMTC training were eligible for a Reserve commission.] So, I knew all about that military drill and everything and, when I went to Rutgers and they had competition to get into the Scarlet Rifles, it was a piece of cake for me. So, I got into it.

SH: Did you stay in that?

CB: For two years, yes, and we would do exhibition drills at the football games.

SH: Did you travel?

CB: No, we didn't travel. I understand, today, they've ... made a big thing out of it, with the Queens Guard, and so forth. We didn't do any of that, no.

SH: When you came back to Rutgers, were you given any credit or did you just start right where you had left off?

CB: They gave us credit for the Army service, gave us ROTC credit.

SH: That was all.

CB: Yes.

SH: What was your wife's reaction to Rutgers, living in University Heights?

CB: She loved it, she loved it. She had never seen anything like this, of course, you know, and, being British and with her accent, she was kind of an oddity and kids thought that was amusing, and she made some good friendships there. ...

SH: You stated that you had considered the military as an option. You graduate in 1948.

CB: ... Yes, I guess it was. Yes, I did a year-and-a-half, yes.

SH: You graduated then in May of 1948.

CB: In January.

SH: Midyear?

CB: Yes, I didn't graduate, I just finished, and went back for the graduation ceremonies, and that's the only time I saw Eisenhower in person. He presided at that graduation. [Editor's Note: General Dwight D. Eisenhower, then President of Columbia University, was the keynote speaker at the 1948 Rutgers University commencement ceremony.]

SH: What were your plans for after graduation in 1948?

CB: We were going back to New York and, while I was at Rutgers the second time, the Army was having boards for regular Army commissions, and I did go to one in Fort Dix and I flunked it. I wore civilian clothes on it and there was snow and I had snow boots on and I guess I didn't impress them. So, I flunked it. So, I thought, "Well, I'll go back to New York and I'll get a job in New York," and I did get a job in a shipbroker's office and, believe it or not, it was buying and selling steamships, like houses, only ships. ... My job was, ... I had a big, thick notebook, with all ... the characteristics of these ships, different kinds of ships, oil tankers, cargo ships, banana boats, and so forth, and you had to know the design, the kind of engines, the capacities, and so forth, and I worked there for six months. It was a strange business, because you worked on the phone all the time and you were trying to disguise, in a sense, what you were talking about. You wouldn't give him the ship's name, you'd just give him the characteristics of the ship, you know,

and one shipbroker would talk to another about a deal and the price, and so forth, and there might be five shipbrokers in the line between buyer and seller. So, you talked all day long on the phone, you know, and nothing would happen and it wasn't like houses, where you go around showing [them]. So, I worked there for six months and I did have a sale going on a banana boat, and I was so proud of myself, because it was all mine. No one else had gotten involved in it. It was a 120,000-dollar banana boat [that] I was selling to some South American and I noticed our company, apparently, was in financial straits. They were cutting back on their staff and there were about eighty people working there at the time. ... When someone would go on vacation, he wouldn't come back. That was their way of letting him go. So, after six months, I was eligible for vacation and [I thought], "Uh-oh, this is not good," and I went on vacation. Sure enough, I got a letter, "Don't come back."

SH: You never got the commission for your banana boat.

CB: No, but I know I made the sale, but I never got it. So, at that point, they were trying to rebuild the Army and we were now a world power and everybody had been getting out of the military in droves. I guess it got down to a point where they thought, "We'd better stop this. We'd better build it up again." So, they wrote to all the Reservists, saying, "[If] you can see your way clear to come back, why, please do so." So, I accepted and I thought, "You know, this is what I was looking for all the time." So, I came back on active duty as a Reservist and I was assigned to Fort Totten on Long Island, which is fairly near Larchmont, and the only problem was, it was a medical installation and here I was, a motion picture man. [laughter] So, I said, "Put me some place where I can't do any harm." [laughter] So, they gave me a nothing-type job. ... The Army Pictorial Center was just thirty miles away and that's where I wanted to work, because I had become enamored of films and I wanted to learn how to make them, and I had done enough production work in Europe, you know, making the newsreels, where it really intrigued me. ... I made application to Washington to transfer from the Medical Administrative Corps to the Signal Corps and they said okay. The Army agreed and I was transferred to the Signal Corps, which I stayed in forever after, and I got assigned to the Pictorial Center and, while I was there ...

SH: Did you have to go to Fort Monmouth, where most of the Signal Corps is?

CB: No, ... I went to Monmouth later, okay. I went to the Pictorial Center because that's strictly a motion picture outfit.

SH: Where is that?

CB: Astoria, Long Island and that's where they physically made the films. ...

SH: What did you do there?

CB: They put me in distribution, because I'd been in distribution in Europe, you know. ... It wasn't exciting there. It had been in Europe, but not there, and I applied for a regular Army commission and I got it. In the Signal Corps, the primary mission is communications. ... The Army got in a habit, let's say, of anything scientific got shoved into the Signal Corps, I mean,

weather, for example, weather, or the first airplane pilots were Signal Corps officers, because it ... didn't fit in with the infantry or the artillery or the cavalry. "So, we'll give it to the Signal Corps." So, the first people, the first pilots, were Signal Corps people, and radar. It gets all the odds and ends of technical stuff, ... but the primary mission is radio, telephone, Teletype, that kind of communication. So, when I got this regular Army commission, naturally, the first thing that happened is, the Army's going to stick me into a communications school, right. [laughter] ... While the paperwork went through, I was still at the Pictorial Center. One day, I get this letter assigning me to the Signal School at Fort Monmouth, for a six-month course, and so, we moved to Fort Monmouth and I went to school there and I found myself in a class with two types of students. They were either electrical engineering, graduates, or West Pointers who had that kind of training also, and they've all got slide rules, "slip sticks," you know, but Bache doesn't have one. ... They started right in the middle of this complicated theory of electronics, and so forth, and while I'm just writing down the questions; all these guys got the answer already, with their "slip sticks," you know, [laughter] and about a month went by and Bache wasn't doing too good. ... So, they called me in one day and said, "What's the trouble?" I said, "Well, sir, I've never had any physics," and I said, "The only science I took in school was geology and biology." I said, "That doesn't equip me for this kind of stuff," and they said, "Well, you're not doing too bad. You're studying second-year electrical engineering." I said, "I am?" [laughter] It was second-year, not even the first-year.

SH: Never mind introductory. [laughter]

CB: ... But, I found out one thing; I could memorize. I didn't have to understand. It was the understanding that was getting me, and so, I realized, if I studied real hard every night, every time we had a test, I could memorize this stuff and put down good, logical answers, you know, and I started getting nineties and ninety-fives and all, and that's how I passed it. ... Of course, later, it got off highly technical, engineering, and, later on, it got to other, more military things, which was fine with me. That's how I did it. [laughter]

SH: Amazing.

CB: I'll never forget that day, "You're studying second-year electrical engineering." [laughter]

SH: Where did you go from there? Did you stay at Fort Monmouth? Did you finally get back into the motion pictures?

CB: Not right away. The Korean War was going on.

SH: Had the Korean War broken out at this point?

CB: Yes, while we were out at Monmouth. ...

SH: Okay, while you were taking this course.

CB: Yes, and, oh, let me back up a little bit. Now, I finished the course, and then, again, with the film distribution background, they had a training film library there and they put me in charge

of that, because they had an officer in there, [who] didn't know anything about it, and they put me [in there], and I did that for a couple of years, and the Korean War continued. Then they made me a company commander in the officer candidate battalion, school battalion. I did that for a few months and got promoted to captain, and, while I was there ... I got assigned to the advanced officer's course, which was nine months more of advanced study, only it was more military the second time, and some of the engineering stuff, which was actually a repeat for me, and so, I did that for nine months, and then, at the end of that, the Korean War halted. We graduated and ... most of us were shipped to Korea. I was assigned to the Korean Military Advisory Group, and stationed with Korean soldiers. I was the signal advisor for a Korean division, and that lasted for a year.

SH: Were you flown or did you go by ship? How did you proceed from Monmouth? What did you do with your wife?

CB: Well, I left the family home, in Larchmont.

SH: Did you have children by then?

CB: Yes, and a friend of mine had been a radar officer during World War II and done a lot of flying and walked away from a number of crash landings. He didn't want to fly anymore. So, he asked me to take the train with him to San Francisco, which I did, and then, we found out we had to fly anyway, to Korea. [laughter] So, we flew to Japan, and then, to Korea, and I spent a year with the Korean troops, which was interesting.

SH: Talk a little bit about that, where you were and what you had to do, if you would.

CB: Well, they had stopped the shooting just a few months before I got there. So, we sat there, the two armies, looking at each other, and right on the edge of the Demilitarized Zone, and there was clandestine fighting going on. ... I would get telephone calls about wounded being passed through the lines, and so forth, ... but, officially, you weren't supposed to know about that. So, I did that for a year. ...

SH: How did you communicate with the Koreans? Would you have an interpreter?

CB: Well, yes, they assigned a Korean lieutenant to be my interpreter and we would advise the Koreans, if they were doing something wrong. We would do a lot of driving around the countryside and I would inspect radio stations. ... If telephone lines were down, we'd tell them, "In such-and-such a road, this point, there's a telephone line down," and, in those days, they used crystals in radios, for different frequencies, and we'd try and settle the differences. Maybe one outfit would get all of the crystals and not give some to any other outfit, and we'd say, "Don't do that, you know. Share them, you know," [laughter] and they had what they called sound-and-flash platoons, where you had electronic instruments with batteries in them and they would pick up the sounds of artillery, and this instrument could estimate the location, but they wouldn't work if the batteries were missing, and they would take the batteries out. ... We'd say, "Don't do that. Put the batteries in. It might save your life," [laughter] and it was that kind of thing.

SH: How did they treat you as an American, being the only one there?

CB: Oh, no. I was the signal officer there. ... In this division advisory detachment, there were sixteen of us. There were infantry advisors, artillery advisors, quartermaster advisors, and so forth, and my job was the signal, and the detachment commander didn't know anything about signals. ... He left me alone. That was fine with me. [laughter]

SH: What would be a typical day then for you? Are you, the Americans, quartered ...

CB: We lived in a little compound, right next to the Korean division headquarters, you know, with our mess, and so forth, and a few troops to help us, and there was also a naval gunfire team, composed of Marines, which was stationed with us, in case something happened, and it was essentially just living in tents up in the hills for a year.

SH: It had been a United Nations operation. Was there any interaction with any of the other UN forces that were assigned to Korea?

CB: We didn't see any. Other people might, but because I was with a Korean division and there weren't any others around us and we were on the frontlines, so, I didn't see any of that.

SH: Did you know how long you would be assigned to Korea?

CB: Yes. The deal was, if you spent ten months there, you could transfer to Japan and, actually, they made me stay there for twelve months. ... I got a transfer to Japan and I was assigned to an American signal battalion in the Tokyo area, and then, I brought the family over and we were there for a couple years.

SH: Your wife was the daughter of a British marine. Had she done a lot of traveling, lived in different places around the world?

CB: Not too much. That was the reason she married me. She figured, "This guy wants a military career; he's going to travel." She loved travel, loved it, and she thought she had to have a vacation about every four months. [If] she didn't, she was hard done by. [laughter]

SH: Had to have a holiday.

CB: So, yes, travel somewhere, you know. I [have] never seen a person who enjoyed travel so much, really.

SH: Did you come back and travel with your family, or how did you send for them? Did you stay in Japan?

CB: No, I stayed in Japan and they came over on a ship. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

CB: We were quartered on what had been an airbase in Tokyo, commercial airbase, which was in the heart of Tokyo and which, when the Americans took over the country, they ceded to the Americans and they built an American community on this airfield, and so, when you were inside, it was like being in the United States. You went out the gates, you were in Japan. ... We didn't have a car, because you didn't need one. Taxis were so cheap and the Japanese are terrible drivers. [laughter] ... If he hit you, another Japanese driver, he was embarrassed, and then, you had to pay him for his embarrassment. It was that kind of [arrangement], really, seriously.

SH: This is 1954.

CB: This is '54, yes. ...

SH: The war has not been over that long.

CB: Japan, in those days, for Americans, was a paradise

SH: Really?

CB: Really, because we weren't treated as [conquerors]. I mean, we were nice to them and they were nice to us, in reciprocity. So, relations were fine and, financially, it was so cheap. I'll give you an example. I threw a birthday party at the officers' club for my wife and we had four guests and we had drinks and flowers and desserts and everything, thirteen dollars, for six people.

SH: Unbelievable.

CB: ... First, I was a company commander, and then, I was battalion adjutant. Battalion adjutant oversees all the personnel records, and I took a look at these records one day and people are refusing to go home. They're reenlisting, they're doing anything to stay in Japan, ... because things were so cheap, you know. I mean, you could go to the officers' club and buy a cocktail for ten cents. You could be a big spender for a dollar. I'm serious.

SH: Of course, at that price.

CB: Yes, and they were marrying these Japanese girls in Shinto ceremonies, or some other kind of ceremony, and then, they'd go home and leave them, because, they said, "That didn't count. That wasn't a regular religious ceremony." That's what the answer was. It was sad, you know, and they would marry these girls and live with them for a couple years, for the duration of the tour, and then, they go home, forget about them.

SH: Did the American government have a policy?

CB: No. There was no way of preventing it, but I found that people were falsifying their records just to stay there, and I raised hell with the personnel officer about that, [laughter] but, ... for the Americans, at that time, it was a paradise.

SH: When you would go out, did you do any touring of Japan?

CB: Yes, yes, we toured around. We had some friends, ... another Signal Corps family, up in Northern Japan, and we went up and visited them by train and saw some of the country and traveled around. It was very nice. I'll never forget my first impression of Japan. This is when my friend and I flew to Japan and landed at the airbase outside Tokyo. ... It was in the middle of the night, and so, everything is dark, but they have these, like, paper/glass windows, I forget what you call them, and the light shines through these windows and it looked like a fairy land, you know. ... We were driving in a bus from the airbase to the camp we were going to stay in and I heard these wooden shoes going along the road, "Clip-clop." I thought, "This is toy land," didn't seem real. It was fascinating. That was my whole impression of the place, the whole time we were there.

SH: It is interesting that you got to go there at that stage, after having been in Europe.

CB: Yes.

SH: Was there any anti-American sentiment at all, that you were aware of?

CB: None.

SH: When you were there, did your children go to school? Were you there that long?

CB: No, they were too young to go to school. We only had two at that time. We had four more later on.

SH: Did you?

CB: Yes. [laughter]

SH: Obviously, your wife was not working at this stage, with two little ones at home.

CB: Right.

SH: Were there social activities for the wives? How was it set up?

CB: Yes. ... Well, everybody was in the same situation, you know, and so, we were friends with all the neighbors and there was a lot of socializing and parties at the officers' club. ...

SH: Did you have Japanese that were helping you in your home?

CB: We had a Japanese servant all the time, and, in fact, one of them we liked so much, we tried to talk her into coming back to the States with us, but she was smart. She realized it wouldn't be the same. We went back from there to California, and she was wonderful, though, really.

SH: In the Army at that time, during the Cold War, did you have an opportunity to come up with a wish list of where you wanted to be transferred next or what you wanted to do?

CB: Yes. Well, while I was at Monmouth, the Signal Corps had different career patterns in those days, fields that you wanted to be going to work in. At that time, they had a photographic field and I had put down my interest in belonging to that and the Army, and all of the services, have master's level, and sometimes doctor's level, training at different universities, which they give to their regular personnel, and so, I was approached by an officer from the Chief Signal Office in Washington. He came to visit me in my quarters in Monmouth one night and asked me if I would like to get a master's degree in cinematography, cinema work, and I said, "Yes, I'd love to," and so, he put me into the program. ...

SH: This is prior to going to Japan.

CB: Prior to going to Korea.

SH: I meant Korea.

CB: Yes, and I got orders for Korea and I asked them about this. I said, "I'm supposed to go to this university," and they said, "No, we'll put you on hold and you can go to the university after you finish." So, after I finished the Korean and Japanese [tours], and one of the officers came through one time, who had been at Monmouth, and he remembered me and he met me on an inspection and said, "We haven't forgotten about sending you." So, it was all laid on, that when we left Japan, we would go to California and I would go to the University of Southern California to study cinema. It was perfect.

SH: I was just going to say, where else?

CB: Yes, and that's what happened.

SH: While you were at Monmouth the first time, there was the spy scandal, the two people defect to Russia and the Rosenbergs are arrested. [Editor's Note: In the early 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed that Fort Monmouth had been infiltrated by spies during his anti-Communist witch-hunt.] Was that something that you were aware of?

CB: I was aware of it, yes.

SH: Personally, were you asked to appear?

CB: No, no.

SH: Was there anything involved with you there?

CB: No, no.

SH: Was that a shock to hear?

CB: Yes. I was disturbed to hear about it. I thought it was terrible.

SH: What did the officers think of Senator Joe McCarthy and his investigation at that time? I know you told me quite clearly that they were very apolitical in the Army.

CB: I never got into a discussion with anybody about that. It was never brought up when we associated. It was just not there.

SH: Okay. You were in Southern California. Where are you housed? What does the Army supply for you and your family?

CB: I bought a house in Redondo Beach. I had some money left over from ... my aunt's estate. When she died, she put a nice amount in her will for me. So, I had that to back me up and I bought a nice, modest home, and right overlooking the Pacific, in Redondo Beach. We could look down across the roofs in front of us over at the ocean. It was wonderful and it was a nice; ... oh, well, how to explain it? The drive into the campus at USC wasn't too bad. It was traffic-y. A lot of traffic you had to be careful about, but it wasn't too far, and I enjoyed the university very much. We had student film crews and we would make films and critique them and study writing and camera work and editing, and everything to do with lab work, everything to do with motion pictures, and it was wonderful. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

SH: At this point, in the school, are there people there on the GI Bill? Are there other more mature people, such as yourself?

CB: There were some, yes.

SH: Was there a real mix?

CB: Yes, there was. There were about six of us who were military officers, a couple of Air Force, a couple of Navy, a few of us from the Army, and the others really envied us. They'd say, "What? You're getting paid to go to school here?" "Yes, isn't it wonderful?" [laughter] ... You know, [we would] wear civilian clothes all the time and we'd go down to the Army commissary at Fort MacArthur, which is about twenty miles away, just once a month, [to] remind myself I'm in the ... Army, [laughter] but, yes, that was [it], and there were lots of people going on the GI Bill.

SH: Do you remember what your project was?

CB: Yes. My student film was called *The Wise Bamboo* and I worked with a friend of mine who later became an editor in Hollywood. It's from a poem, some kind of a Japanese poem. The saying was, "The wise bamboo bends with the wind." So, we used that for our title and ... we made a story about the Japanese *Nisei* in California, the first generation of Japanese, and it was a film about them and their customs and some history. ... We filmed in a Japanese school, which really impressed me, because these kids would go to a regular American school, that's six hours a day, and they'd go to a Japanese language school for two more hours. I can't imagine American kids, that age, in elementary school, doing that, you know.

SH: You actually did the filming.

CB: Yes.

SH: Was there any talk of the internments that they had been subjected to?

CB: Yes.

SH: What did you hear of that?

CB: I used that as the reason for making the film. I had to get the project approved by the cinema section, top advisor; ... well, he was a dean of the cinema department, that's what it was, and I said, "These people have been terribly maligned and I could make a film about their story," and he said, "Yes. Go ahead." So, we did, *The Wise Bamboo*, [laughter] and ... it was a lot of fun. ... The University of Southern California has one of the biggest enrollments of foreign students and the cameraman on my crew was from India, and there were Australians there and Pakistanis and Chinese and whatnot, and there's a very interesting student body there.

SH: This would have been in 1956.

CB: Yes. That's right, '56, '57. In '58, I was reassigned to the Army Pictorial Center, as a producer, and made training films.

SH: Did you actually produce training films at Monmouth? What was the distribution going to be?

CB: ... We had different sections. I was in arms film. Arms was infantry, artillery, armor, and so forth, the fighting troops. Then, there was another section that handled service films, quartermaster, medical, [and] so forth, and so, ... all the films I worked on were with the Infantry Training School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

SH: Were you working in Monmouth or were you filming in Fort Benning?

CB: No, no, filming was in Benning and the production ... wasn't at Monmouth, it was at Long Island City. It was back at the Pictorial Center in Long Island, which was a regular studio.

SH: Where was your family housed?

CB: I brought them back to Larchmont.

SH: I wondered where you found a central location for them. How often would you have to travel and be away to do this work?

CB: I would travel to Benning every couple of months. It wasn't until later on, when I was working in Hawaii, that's when I really started to travel, when the Vietnam War was going on.

SH: When you were in Europe, either England, Paris or Frankfurt, did you ever run into any Rutgers men?

CB: Yes, yes, I did, one time. It was in Paris and the war was over and there was a dance, something, and I met one of the cheerleaders, Rutgers cheerleaders, that had been at these football games when I was attending Rutgers. ... There was one particular game, and I forget what the circumstances were, but everybody in the audience pulled out their handkerchiefs and waved them and he reminded me of that. He said, "Do you remember that?" I said, "Yes," and I can't remember his name, but I think he was the head cheerleader, yes. [laughter]

SH: I was just curious if you had run into any Rutgers men.

CB: ... In London, somebody organized a dinner, one time, of all Rutgers people in the area. Some were in the Air Force. There were about a dozen of us who got together for dinner one night, in London.

SH: Really?

CB: Yes.

SH: Did anyone take a photograph?

CB: No, I don't think [so]; I don't have a picture of that, but, yes, one time, we all got together.

SH: I would love to know the names of some of those, to see if they have already done their oral history.

CB: I can't remember any of the names now.

SH: After the war, when you came back to Rutgers and you were all, as you said, much more serious students, did anyone talk about their war experiences?

CB: Yes, yes. My next-door neighbor, on the other side of the "Ice Man," the "Ice Man" was over here, the other guy was an Air Force pilot. He wasn't in the same class. ... He was in the freshman class and he had been a pilot, flying the Hump, [the Himalayas], they called it, in Malaysia, flying supplies over the Hump into India, and so forth, and he used to talk about that. Some of us would tell war stories from time to time. Gibson, the "Ice Man," he had been a Navy pilot and he would talk about landing on an aircraft carrier at sea and what a hairy thing that is, you know.

SH: I wondered if the talk mostly centered around humorous incidents or did people really talk about some of the trauma that they had been involved with?

CB: No, I can't remember any humorous ones. It was mostly traumatic stuff, yes.

SH: I was just curious to see how it was recalled then.

CB: ... I had one friend who was; I don't think he's living anymore, Randall Conklin. ... Have you run into that name? He was a Coast Guard sailor and he would tell me about his Coast Guard experiences, and he had the job of driving troops [into landing zones]. He was a coxswain on a landing craft and he would steer the landing craft into these battle zones and unload the troops, and he was given a pistol and he was told to shoot anybody who wouldn't get out of the boat. He says, "I couldn't shoot anybody." [laughter] Nobody stayed in the boat, you know, but that he had the gun to do that with him. ... He would tell me stories and he was on his Coast Guard troopship for awhile and they spent nine months at sea, one time, without touching foot on land, and you can imagine their state of being when they finally got to land and [after] being cooped [up] on a ship for nine months. ... The land they hit was Hawaii; can you imagine? He said they went crazy, crazy. [laughter]

SH: I can only imagine. When you finished your film school, you were sent back to Fort Monmouth, or to ...

CB: Pictorial Center.

SH: How long were you there before you were sent elsewhere?

CB: I was there four years, and then, the Vietnam War came along. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: We talked about the apolitical, but, now, we are talking about Vietnam. In the Army, when did you first realize that Vietnam was now going to be the next hot spot for you? There are lots of other hot spots that go along through this. There was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Was there anything that you were aware of that you had to do as part of the ...

CB: What was that? Let's see, I have to stop [and] think of the dates now.

SH: Mid-1962.

CB: Yes. Things had heated up in Vietnam. This country was not there in force. ... We supplied advisors, again, to the different South Vietnamese divisions, regiments, and so on, and so forth, but there weren't any of our divisions over there, yet, and it became obvious that it was heating up, just like when the Korean War started. ... I had been at the Pictorial Center about four years, and enjoying it thoroughly, and I got pneumonia again. This was in September of '61 and it was viral pneumonia. ... There was a military hospital in Long Island, was a Navy one, [St. Albans]. So, I turned myself in there. I suddenly couldn't eat and was feeling terribly rotten, went down there, and they had me there for ten weeks and I was in bed for two weeks before I could get up and it was really serious stuff. ... I eventually recovered, but it was very, very slow. ... In the meantime, ... I had been promoted to major and I had been nominated to go to the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, ... which was a three months' course. If you go there without a family, it's for three months. If you wanted to take your family, it's six months. So, I was scheduled for the three months' course, for some reason.

... This was going to come up right after Christmas, January 1st, and, meanwhile, I'd come down with pneumonia. ... I was in the hospital so long. ... Finally, after ten weeks, they let me go, but I was very weak and I had dragged myself around all during December and the Christmas vacation, and, before I left the hospital, I'd told these Navy doctors I was scheduled to do this and I asked them, I said, "Do you think I'm strong enough to go?" and I realized, they didn't know what I was talking about, being Navy doctors, you know. They have similar things in the Navy, but they call it something else, and they said, "Sure, you'll be all right." Well, I wasn't, and I kept telling myself, "I can make it, I can make it." So, I went, and I shouldn't have. In fact, the commanding officer of the Pictorial Center, who had been a classmate of mine, he was of senior rank, but a classmate of mine at the advanced course, he asked me, "Do you think you're well enough to go?" and I said, "Sure, I can make it." Well, I collapsed the day after I got there and they put me in a hospital out there for a week. Then it was a very, very concentrated course. I mean, you worked, no fooling around, day and night, studying and everything, and long classes during the day. ... It was a very important school and, I mean, you couldn't be a full colonel or a general unless you went out there. ... They put me in the hospital, back in the hospital there, for a week and I got out and went to class, and [was] still feeling pretty bad. ... At the end of a week, when I came back, I wanted to climb the walls, I wanted to cry; I didn't know why. Well, this doctor I went to had been giving me very, very potent pills, which build up, falsely build up, your strength. ... There was a medical doctor who was a student in the class. ... He was just there as a student. He came in one night, ... said he'd heard about me and he asked, "What are they giving you?" and I told him. ... He said, "What?" He said, "I wouldn't prescribe that," and then, they were giving me sleeping pills at night, to calm down. So, I was going up in the daytime and down at night, and that's why I wanted to cry. ... After a week of that, the following Monday, I went back to that doctor and I said, "I can't take it any longer." ... He tore up the records, which he shouldn't have done, but, right in front of me, he ripped them up and he says, "Well, these don't matter now," and they kept me for awhile. ... Then, they released me, without prejudice, and sent me back to duty. ... [I] came home and went back to duty at the Pictorial Center, and they knew what was going on and they gave me a nothing-type job, just for awhile, you know. ... Then, this Vietnam thing started to heat up and they wanted film coverage, motion picture coverage, [of] what was going on in Vietnam. ... The Colonel asked me, "Do you think [you] could go?" or he sent an emissary to ask me. ... I sat and thought about it for awhile and I said, "I don't think I can make it." So, they said they understood. So, anyway, a couple more months went by and they sent a temporary team over and brought it back. Then, they figured that they wanted a good-sized unit over there to cover what was going on in Vietnam, and not only Vietnam; the mission was, whatever the US Army was doing in the Pacific Theater, and that includes Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Okinawa, Japan, everything. ... Nobody wanted the assignment. It was for what they called the Department of the Army Special Photo Unit, and answerable only to the Pentagon. Nobody in Hawaii could control them, and I was feeling better and I said, "Hey, how about me?" [laughter] Funny thing is that, in those days, the Army, once a year, put out a list of foreign assignments and you were allowed to pick the ones you wanted, you know, and, of course, number one, whatever your first choice would be. I thought, "I want Hawaii, and I'll put it number eighteen," and that's what I got. [laughter]

SH: You are kidding.

CB: I'm not kidding. [laughter] So, anyway, I mean, I had heard about Hawaii, never been there, I heard about it. So, I said, "Hey, how about me?" ... The answer came back, "Yes, you got it." [laughter] So, we formed this outfit with thirty-six, four officers and the rest were enlisted men, photographers, and so forth, and we went to Hawaii and started operations, and I rented a house. Have you been to Hawaii?

SH: Yes, just once.

CB: We rented a house in Kailua. ... We were based at Fort Shafter and Kailua's on the opposite side of the island, and I thought, "This is fantastic. This is the work I love to do and I'm living in Hawaii." [laughter] I thought, "Wow." The first night, we arrived in Honolulu. ...

SH: Was your family still here?

CB: No, I brought the family with me.

SH: You brought them with you at the same time.

CB: Yes, and we stayed in a motel until we rented some quarters. ... I went out and walked around town. I thought, "Wow," ... came back and told my wife, said, "This is for me," and she told that, later on, to the Colonel, [who] came visiting. [laughter] I got a great kick out of that. Anyway, it was, well, the most wonderful years of my life. I was answerable only to the Pentagon. ... People in Hawaii couldn't tell me what to do. ... We had to cover Vietnam, of course. That was a given, but, if I wanted to send a team to the Philippines, or if I wanted to go to the Philippines, we would do that, or Okinawa, or whatever. ...

SH: Were you in charge of selecting the locations where you filmed?

CB: Yes.

SH: Were these films classified?

CB: No, no, not classified. They were documentation of what's going on. So, initially, there were no American divisions there. It was the advisory work, the Special Forces, what they were [doing].

SH: You were filming that.

CB: We were filming that, yes. ... The Army Research Agency had an ongoing thing in Thailand. They were doing medical research in Thailand and we documented that, and research elsewhere. ...

SH: How did you pick the spots that you went to and what you filmed?

CB: I got most of my intelligence out of the newspapers; seriously.

SH: Really?

CB: My boss, ... he was back in the Pentagon, he gave me *carte blanche* [to] do whatever I wanted to do, "Just send a film." ... We did, and they said, back there in the Pictorial Center, "We've never seen anything like this before." ...

SH: Did the CIA suggest spots?

CB: In fact, they did use us. We didn't know they were CIA, ...

SH: Really?

CB: Yes, intelligence people would contact us. In fact, I was called back to the Pentagon one time, for a meeting, and we sent a team to one place, in civilian clothes, and we did other type work. ...

SH: Were the film crews usually in uniform? Was this the only time they were in civilian clothes?

CB: That was the only time, yes.

SH: You were told to put them in civilian clothes.

CB: Yes, yes, and it was fascinating, because the stories were unique. ...

SH: You talked about the medical research in Thailand. What else did you film?

CB: There was one that they organized, that actually took place on the "Big Island" in Hawaii. They had a plan. Some of these ideas were so far out, but they were just trying them anyway. They worried about troops accessing the jungle area from the air, okay. So, they ... organized an experiment on the "Big Island," in some part which has a dense tree population. ... They designed a net to spread, by helicopter, over the tops of these trees, so, in other words, to make a landing platform on [the] tops of the trees. ... Then, they would drop troops, by helicopter, on there and see if that would be feasible, and then, they could shimmy down to the ground, you see. [laughter] ... So, I sent a lieutenant out there with a half dozen men for about a week or so and they filmed this operation. ... They decided, "Forget it. ... We know it'd be nice, but it won't work," but that's the type of thing we were doing.

SH: The logistics of sending a film crew to these different spots, with all sorts of transportation and equipment needs, seems daunting.

CB: Well, that's right. We had an officer with each team, and you'd usually have about five or six photographers, still photographers, motion picture photographers, and the officer would make all these arrangements, for transportation or advisors, a story line, or whatever.

SH: You had no worries about getting what you needed to make this happen.

CB: Well, we were turned down sometimes.

SH: Were you?

CB: Yes. I mean, if I had an idea I thought was pretty good, ... I would ask the powers-that-be, "Could we do this?" They'd [say], "No, you can't do that," and I wanted to go in a country, one time, to send a team in, and we didn't have [the clearance] and they said, "No, no, we can't do that." ... They did a lot of medical research on fish in Thailand, because fish are scavengers and they would carry all kinds of disease, and then, the people would eat the fish and get the disease, and they were doing medical research on combating that. ... So, it was a variety of subjects. ...

SH: It sounds fascinating.

CB: It was fascinating, and the men would get sixteen dollars a day, *per diem*, per day.

SH: They must have loved that.

CB: Oh, they loved it, they loved that, and I would get them promotions, decorations. ... I met one of them years later and he said, "You know, when I was assigned to that detachment, I thought it was a dream." [laughter]

SH: You must have captured so many fascinating things on film. Does this type of film still exist?

CB: Does the film still exist? No, unfortunately, ... I've heard that a lot of it was accidentally destroyed, through mishandling. First of all, I wanted to say that the Signal Corps tolerates the photographic mission, but it's not its favorite field, you know. So, they put up with us, see, and they've let the mission slide quite a bit, especially these days. You have to remember that, in those days, we didn't have the television coverage that you have today.

SH: They called Vietnam the first war that was televised.

CB: Yes, yes. So, what I'm getting up to is that, I've been told, I mean, I've been away from it now twenty years or so, that we sent them untold amounts of footage, which was gathered up and, after it was used for this and that, and so forth, I mean, [it was not taken care of]. They were supposed to, in my day there, ... save all the negatives, and they had a fantastic system. If I went in there saying I was putting together a film about, oh, say, Belgium, for example, and I wanted scenes of Belgian churches, "What have you got?" and they would produce it, like that, you know. Well, that's gone. That's gone now, and I understand that, unfortunately, a lot of it was left out, ... exposed to the elements and stockpiled, you know, and you can't treat film that way. So, a great deal of it has been lost.

SH: The archiving of this type of material is very important.

CB: Yes.

SH: Did you keep anything personally for yourself or was all the film sent away?

CB: No, I didn't keep anything personally.

SH: Did you ever edit the film down to make the finished product?

CB: No, that's an entirely different field of production. We were strictly in the camerawork.

SH: Right.

CB: When I was in Japan, in this signal battalion, I was a company commander, and then, I was the battalion adjutant and, later on, I was a photo officer for awhile, and, there, we did have an editing capability. There, we could do that, but, in Hawaii, we didn't have that.

SH: What were you filming when you were stationed in Japan?

CB: I made one story, at the request of the Red Cross, about Red Cross work, helping families. ... We wrote and shot and edited a film about the Red Cross, and we would cover some news events. I remember one news event about a Navy cruiser. It was important for something, bringing remains back from someplace, something like that, or parades. ... It wasn't a big thing in Japan, but, in Hawaii, it was everything.

SH: How did being in Hawaii, living in paradise, as they say, and having to report essentially only to the Pentagon, affect your career?

CB: No, that didn't affect my career. Well, in a way, it did. At the end of the three years, I knew my tour would be up.

SH: You were three years in Hawaii.

CB: Yes, and I was brought back. ... I told my boss, who was in the Pentagon, I said, "I'd like to go back to the Pictorial Center in New York." ... He said, "No, you're coming back here, to the Pentagon," and so, I was made chief of the worldwide operation, Department of the Army Special Photo Office. ... We still had the big detachment in the Pacific and we had one in Panama, for South America, and there was one in New York, which covered Central America; Europe resisted one. They had their own photo company, which had been there for years. The commanding general says, "We don't need them." [laughter] So, we didn't go to Europe.

SH: Really?

CB: Commanding generals can do that. [laughter] So, I had that job for a year, in the Pentagon. In the meantime, the family had grown and, in Hawaii, ... economically, we got along fine. Kids went to school barefoot. You didn't buy shoes in Hawaii, and the living was pretty good there, but, when we came back here, ... the economy here in Washington, ... eventually, I told my wife, I said, "I can't hack it anymore here." So, I retired from the Army. I knew, if I got

promoted, I would get some important communications job, and I was not a communicator, really. I mean, I was a photo man and I didn't want to get involved in that. ... Furthermore, we didn't have enough money. So, I retired and got a job in the Civil Service, making films for what is now FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency].

SH: Really? [laughter]

CB: Yes, but we weren't as bad as they are today, believe me. [laughter]

SH: You are a brave man for admitting that. You continued to make films.

CB: I continued, yes, and they gave me *carte blanche* for a while. I mean, they denied me money, sometimes, once in awhile, but, [as] I said, for example, there was a big fire up in the Boston area, and it was so big. I had to make a film about it. The title of the film was *Conflagration*. A conflagration is a fire out of control, winds, and so forth, and there was a big one in the storage area of one of the suburbs in Boston. ... I just walked into the right person one day and I said, "We need a film on that kind of thing," and he said, "Okay, go." [laughter] So, I did. ... We didn't have any film facilities of our own, but we used the Department of Agriculture. They had a studio and film crews, and I had a great relationship, working relationship, over there. So, I got an Agriculture crew, we went up to Boston and made this film.

SH: Who were you working for? I understand it is the Civil Service, but what department?

CB: It was the Department of Defense. At that time, all that kind of stuff ... came under the Department of Defense. Today, FEMA is separate; it wasn't called FEMA then.

SH: Okay, that is what I wanted to make clear.

CB: Yes. It was called Defense Civil Preparedness Agency. ... What happened was, they took five different government agencies in the emergency preparedness business, it wasn't all Defense, and they put them all together, and that's what created FEMA.

SH: It was not called that while you were still working for them.

CB: They changed the name while I was still working there.

SH: What other interesting projects did you work on?

CB: There, at FEMA?

SH: Yes.

CB: There was a project on a plane crash. We were requested to make this by some official down in Florida. ... It was an Eastern Air Lines plane, [Flight 401, a Lockheed L-1011], and it had crashed in a swamp in Florida, [the] great, big swamp they have [in the Florida Everglades]. ... There were a lot of people injured onboard and the problem was with the distribution of

patients. They rescued them from the swamp by helicopter and ambulance, but they delivered them all to the same hospital and they overloaded this one hospital, which is stupid. I mean, ... there were about five hospitals in the area. They should have distributed the patients, and that can happen all over the place. So, we made a film about that. The plane had actually flown into the ground ... at nighttime, certain combinations of phenomena where the pilot can get confused and he thinks he's up here and he's really down here, and he flew it into the ground, accidentally. ... That was an interesting film to work on, and we did another film, oh, on a missile shoot at Cape Canaveral. ... We got some of the actual footage and embellished it, and so forth, and it was that kind of thing.

SH: I was wondering if you went out with any of the different departments and filmed operations. You talked about the missile shoot in Canaveral, but did you ever go onboard any kind of military vessels?

CB: No.

SH: Did your family mostly grow up here, in this area?

CB: Yes, they went through grade schools in this area.

SH: You have had a very interesting life and career, and there are still many areas that I would like to go back to, but what would you like to record that I have not asked, whether it be a memory or a work experience?

CB: Well, that requires some thought.

[TAPE PAUSED]

CB: Okay, all right.

SH: One question that I asked you off tape was about your mother having worked in the button factory during World War II; what did she go on to do?

CB: She went back to work for Henri Bendel's, in New York, and they would send her down to Florida, during the wintertime. ...

SH: To do what?

CB: To make dresses for these very wealthy people.

SH: Oh, my word.

CB: And she was really, really expert at it, and, for example, the Duchess of Windsor was supposed to be one of her customers, that caliber customer, at Henri Bendel. That was a very renowned firm, and she worked up in Lake Placid, some of the places up there. ... When I was working in the Pentagon, she would sit around the table with these other ladies, all doing the

same thing, and they would talk, you know, ... while they're sewing, and they were just talking away and all kinds of things, and, one day, one of them said, "Esther, have you heard? They've sold the Pentagon?" She says, "No." So, she wrote me a letter. She said, "Claude, I hope you're not out of a job." [laughter] I had to explain to her, "It wasn't sold in that sense. You couldn't sell the Pentagon," but she thought her poor son was out of a job because somebody sold the Pentagon. [laughter]

SH: That is terrific. Did any of your wife's family get to visit often?

CB: No, they never came over. ... The British are that way, I think. I mean, in their history, people have gone out to India, or various far parts of the world, and never come back or anything, you know. ... Her brother was a seaman in the Royal Navy during the war and he was on one of the aircraft carriers that was sunk. ... He was also out in Australia and he met an Australian girl out there and married and stayed there, never came back to England. ... This is the way the British are, and so, her family never came over here, never showed any desire to. ... My mother had left England at the age of three and she went back to England when she was in her eighties, first time. Now, wouldn't you think that somebody would want to contact somebody else? I mean, she had an extensive family over there, brothers and sisters.

SH: You met her sister.

CB: Yes, but she got together with this sister that I met during the war, and the two of them toured France, but that's the only time she ever saw anybody else from her family. I went to visit her brother, my uncle, during the war. ...

SH: Did you?

CB: Yes. ...

SH: Where was he?

CB: He was in someplace in Essex, I forget the name of the town, but that's the way they are.

SH: Did you take your children over to meet their family in England?

CB: No, no. ... Her Australian sister-in-law did come over here, and a couple of cousins came over recently and met some of my children, but that's the only instance of that. That's just the way they are.

SH: Is there anything else that we should put on the tape before I thank you for a wonderful interview?

CB: I honestly can't think of anything else.

SH: All right. Thank you so much; this will conclude our interview.

CB: Okay.

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

Reviewed by Brian Dib 3/4/09

Reviewed by Joseph Hou 3/4/09

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 5/5/09

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 5/7/09

Reviewed by Claude V. Bache 6/3/09