

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANKLYN J. SULLEBARGER
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY
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TRANSCRIPT BY
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Kathryn Tracy: This begins an interview with Mr. Franklyn J. Sullebarger on October 13, 2000 in Westfield, New Jersey with Kathryn Tracy and ...

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: Sandra Stewart Holyoak.

KT: Let's begin by talking about your family. What was your father's name?

Franklyn J. Sullebarger: Elmer Thomas Sullebarger.

KT: Where and when was your father born?

FJS: My dad was born in 1890 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he grew up, went through school, graduated from high school and attended later, Carnegie Tech, although he didn't graduate.

KT: Why didn't he graduate?

FJS: Well, things were tough. His father was a riverboat captain on the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to St. Louis. ... It wasn't a great job, and my father really had to work to help support the family, ... so he would go to Carnegie Tech in the evening. After work, he would take a trolley car and eat a bag of peanuts, so that was dinner, and then he would go to Carnegie Tech and try to finish his college. ... He got through two years that way, which is remarkable anyway.

SSH: How large was his family?

FJS: There were three children, a brother, John, and a sister, Katherine, and my dad was the eldest of the three.

SSH: Do you know how your family came to live in the Pittsburgh area?

FJS: My family came to live in the Pittsburgh area through, I guess, my oldest relative came here in 1723. And the name was at that time Sollenberger, with an umlaut. They landed in Philadelphia, and they were Mennonites. And they went to live in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. And the Mennonites, probably, being very strict, and I got this from my father, were kind of tough to live with for a young man. So there for three generations they stayed there. And then one of their young sons obviously got mighty sick of not having zippers or whatever it was and took off. And he went to Pittsburgh and did something really ridiculous, he married an Irish girl. So they probably, the Mennonites, have never forgiven him for that. But that's how they got to Pittsburgh. And they were, of course, at that point, I guess they were still pretty German because he'd come right from Ephrata, Pennsylvania. After a couple of generations, my grandfather married a, well, lo and behold, a German girl, whose name was Albrecht. Her father was a boot maker, so they settled down in Pittsburgh. ... Then my grandfather, John, who was a

pretty tough hombre, I guess, with his being a riverboat captain, went out on the river. And the kids were really basically raised by my grandmother.

SSH: All right.

KT: Your father participated in World War I. Can you tell me if he was enlisted or drafted?

FJS: Yes, he enlisted in World War I, and he was in the navy. He was a first class petty officer, and he never went out of the country. ... His job was basically training recruits that were going in the navy. So he was training them how to be sailors and he did that, and he loved it. He loved the navy. ... So I grew up with this, you know, I grew up with this. His father was in the navy. The riverboat captain obviously was in the navy. And my great-grandfather was in the navy and he was with Farragut in the Battle of Vicksburg ... in a gunboat on the Mississippi River, Union Navy. And my other grandfather was in the Union Army, and he was in Tennessee, out in Tennessee fighting in the Battle at Lookout Mountain and some of those other battles around Nashville. I don't know whether he went with Sherman from Tennessee down to the sea. Perhaps he did, I don't know.

KT: What did your father do after the war?

FJS: After the war, my dad went to work for, I guess it was copper, CG Hussey Company. This was a copper company who had a Pittsburgh base and a copper mill. Dad was more of a sales-type of a person, so they made him a salesman, and they put him on the job of selling copper sheeting to churches, particularly, because all churches in those days had copper roofs, and they'd get this beautiful green patina on the roof. ... His job was to sell the copper sheets, and that took him to a lot of churches. And I'll continue this because he was then given, "Go to New York and see if you can sell some churches there," and he did, and he took a room, I guess, in Brooklyn and went out to see churches. At one of the churches that he called on, and successfully sold, my mother was a parishioner and was working in the office as a secretary. So it all seemed to work out very well. [laughter] And here I am.

KT: Your mother grew up in Brooklyn?

FJS: My mother grew up in Brooklyn, yes.

KT: What was your mother's name?

FJS: Her name was Lillian Jackson, Lillian Margarite Jackson, and she was Brooklyn born and bred. Her mother was kind of an interesting gal. That was my grandmother on that side. And her name, as a gal, was Lizzy Slusser, which is another German name. ... She was upwardly mobile, and she pulled the family up by the bootstraps. ... She was on all of the advisory boards. I guess she was on the Salvation Army, particularly. She got

very active in there and she did a lot of things in Brooklyn. ... Suddenly, she became Elizabeth Jackson, instead of Lizzy. But we know that she was originally Lizzy. [laughter] ... She was very, you know, very well known in Brooklyn and was a great gal. ... I knew her well. She lived with my family. We lived in her house in Brooklyn, which she had bought when she was not too long married, I guess. ... It was a terrible neighborhood by the time we moved out, but nobody wanted to even consider moving out until my grandmother died. She wanted to die there, which she did somewhere in the late '40s, I guess. She lived a good long time.

SSH: What had your maternal grandfather done?

FJS: Maternal grandfather was ... he was our family Englishman, wonderful! We don't know where he was from because his name was Jackson, and there must be hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Jacksons. But he worked for a company that made leather from hide and skins. They picked up from the slaughterhouses the hides and tanned them, and he was the bookkeeper for that company. ... He was a nice man. I never knew him. He was gone long before I came along.

KT: Can you tell us about your mother's education?

FJS: Yes, I'm very proud of that. Mom went to Girls High School in Brooklyn and Barnard College at Columbia University, where she graduated ... I think it was '19 or '21, but I can't really, I'm sorry, I have to check that one myself. But she loved Barnard and had a great time there and enjoyed it very much. ... She's the first one I think that ever graduated from college in our family. My father never made it. But my mother did.

SSH: Did she talk at all about how unique it was, at that point, in 1919 or 1922 to be a college graduate and a woman?

FJS: Oh, yes. I had that all. I think I'm very well founded in women's rights because she was very, very assertive about that. Anybody, [if] she could do it, anyone could do it.

SSH: Did she talk about the suffragette movement at all or any?

FJS: No, not really. I guess they, you know, maybe she was at the time into that, or my grandmother might have been. I really don't know. I have no background on that at all.

SSH: Did she talk about the Temperance Union, or anything affiliated with it?

FJS: She was a strict teetotaller. ... But there was never any discussion about the Temperance Union, no. Not that I can remember anyway.

SSH: So the fact that your mother went to college, did that mean that there was never a question that you would, in fact, go?

FJS: Oh, my goodness, yes. Oh, sure, and the fact that my father didn't make it also ... contributed to that. So I was college bound. ... In Brooklyn, at that time, which when I was growing, as I told you, the neighborhood was kind of down. In fact, today it's Bedford-Stuyvesant. That was really where I hailed from, and it was kind of tough to go to school there because I would have to pass through some bad neighborhoods. I went to a private school called Adelphi Academy, and I had to walk there through the "valley of death." I remembered very well, I would always go out and my mother would clean me all up. I would put on a nice clean shirt and my pants were all beautiful and my socks were up, and the first thing I did, when I got around the corner, was to pull my socks down and throw my tie over and try to look tough so that I could survive getting to school, which I never told her. But she always noticed when I came home I was a mess.

SSH: Maybe she just thought you were having a good time.

FJS: Yes, but they did, in any event, put me in private school. ... I think it was basically because the education was going to be better than I could expect to get in a Brooklyn public school.

SSH: Now, was your father still involved with the copper?

FJS: Oh, yes. My father, at this point, because he had been in the copper business, decided that he would go in business for himself, in the printing industry. ... Copper and zinc were used to produce photo engravings. ... The photo engraving process came in, it replaced wood blocks and all that type of etching stuff, and it was a great process, and he was in on the ground floor. And all the fine stuff went on copper and he had the connection with copper mill. ... They asked him to please sell their copper and he did, and he went in business for himself. ... Then he bought it from them and sold it to photo engravers in and around New York City. ... It yielded a very, very good profit and it was a good time because it was the very beginning of that photo engraving process.

SSH: Was there a religious affiliation with Adelphi?

FJS: No. ... Adelphi University is on Long Island now. ... The Adelphi Academy ... occupied the buildings that Adelphi College originally had in Brooklyn, New York. So no, it had no religious connection.

SSH: Was Adelphi a prep school type?

FJS: Yes, now they're out in Bay Ridge and have the most deplorable alumni association in the world. We never hear from them. We had a fiftieth anniversary with no notice, no anything. Terrible. Anyway, I wrote them and told them. I was unhappy.

SSH: How did you come to pick Rutgers as the place that you would go to college?

FJS: Well, I wanted to be an engineer, and my father wanted me to be an engineer. My cousin, Tom, who was an awfully nice fellow and the closest to my age, (I'm an only child of course,) and Tom was my good friend and my buddy, and he went to Rutgers. He was a swimmer and he swam for Chuck Logg, who was the swimming coach at the time. When it came time to go to college, I never even thought about going to anyplace but Rutgers. ... Tom went there, that was fine with me. I mean, that's how we picked the college in those days. This trip around New England checking, forget it. ... It's probably a good thing because I think I really would have rather gone to Dartmouth, because all my other cousins went to Dartmouth. ... I've seen Dartmouth since and I love skiing, for that reason perhaps alone, I would have probably ended up at Dartmouth. But my whole life would have changed.

SSH: [laughter] Well, tell us what year did your cousin Tom go to Rutgers?

FJS: He was the Class of '43.

SSH: And his last name?

FJS: Jackson.

SSH: Jackson. To begin discussing the war years, as a young man in '38, '39, '40, how much information were you assimilating as to what was going on in Europe?

FJS: Oh, lots. Yes, lots. I mean, we saw that all gathering. ... Let's see, when Pearl Harbor happened, of course, I was in the eighth grade. And ... I'll never forget that because everyone marched into the assembly room, and they played, on Monday, President Roosevelt's very famous speech about "... yesterday, December 7th." ... Of course, being in eighth grade that ... seemed a long, long way off, but I think we were very, very patriotic and we had been conditioned that way. ... From that point on, there was a tremendous surge of patriotism, ... which I wish we had today. But it was really something. Everybody suddenly came together and worked together and we were very interested in everything that was happening. Everyday, the news, everyone listened to the radios. There was no television, of course.

SSH: Were you listening to the radio when they announced the Pearl Harbor attack?

FJS: Oh, we were listening to the, I think, it was the football Dodgers were playing at the time. The Brooklyn Dodgers had a football team at that point, and it was during that game that ... my grandmother was a tremendous Dodger fan ... and so she carried that into the football Dodgers, which didn't exist for more than, I think, about four or five years. But during that game, we heard it interrupted. Yes, that was a great shock. But, you know, it wasn't totally unexpected because things were, I think we'd been kind of ... conditioned.

SSH: Were the discussions at home as intense as say the discussions at school in your civics classes about what was going on in Europe? Where did you hear about the movements of Hitler and things happening in Europe?

FJS: I guess, in the newspapers, dinner conversation, at school. I think we were kept informed.

SSH: Did you have cousins that went to Adelphi?

FJS: All of them, yes. Oh, there's another fellow that I forgot to mention to you that ... I really have a great bond with, and that is, my name is Franklyn Jackson Sullebarger. ... Franklyn Jackson was my mother's younger brother, and he was a great guy, apparently. ... He was a big star at Erasmus Hall High School, a great football player. ... He went into the army, and he was in the 106th Infantry Regiment, Seventh Division. He went to France in 1918, I guess early in '18, and was in command of a trench mortar platoon. He was killed on September 27, 1918, which is just, unfortunately, about seven weeks before the war Armistice, which was a darn shame. But then I came along, see, and so I got the name of Franklyn Jackson. ... He's buried in France. I visited his grave over there. ... All my life, I had this wonderful uncle to live up to. Yes, we were very interested in that. And even though we were a German family, my grandmother would have cut a German throat if anyone walked in her house, I'm sure. She was so upset with them. ... From that point on, I mean, it was just the German part of the family was just, forget it, you know, absolutely. So we had to live that down. In our school, I took German, and during the war, one thing I'd like to tell you about is that we had a wonderful German teacher, in that she really taught German beautifully. ... Her name was Pauline Tate and she was a Valkyrie. I thought she was an old lady, but she was probably thirty-two or something like that. ... She'd distinguished herself by refusing to stand and sing "God Bless America." ... If you think that it didn't take courage to do that in Brooklyn in 1941 and '42, wow! She survived the war, though. ... Nobody fired her, and she went on teaching German, and I took the next year from her, too, but she was not terribly popular.

SSH: That's an unusual story.

FJS: Yes, and kind of fun. "Aunt Polly" we called her. "Tante Polly." ... There was also, just in passing, at the time, you know, talk about the Holocaust and things like that. There were several Jewish people in our German class and she was brutal to them. ... I don't know how she got away with this. I really don't know how it happened. But she was very nasty to them and they had a terrible time. Anyway.

SSH: You were conscious ...

FJS: I was conscious of it, very conscious of it. In fact, ... I've been together with some of my old classmates, a year ago, and we talked about it. "How did she ever get away with that stuff?" And, of course, maybe we should have said, "Stop that," but we didn't.

SSH: No parents had ever complained?

FJS: Apparently not. If they did, I never heard about it. ... I don't know what happened to Polly Tate.

SSH: [Laughter] Another question I'd like to ask about that time, do you remember your family being involved in any of the war effort?

FJS: Oh, yes.

SSH: And to go back further, how did the Depression affect your father's family?

FJS: The Depression didn't really affect him because, ... in the '20s, he had gone into the copper business and he was doing very, very well in that business. ... We sailed through the Depression without missing a meal. Many of my family's friends, who were heavily invested, did quite a bit of selling of houses and moving into small apartments and things like that. ... That's my impression of the Depression. It was no direct affect, but I did see it on our friends, family friends. As far as during the war, my dad was an air-raid warden. He had a nice white helmet with a big star in the middle, or something like that. ... We all had to have a blackout in Brooklyn because the submarines would silhouette the ships leaving the harbor against the light of the city, and he would be out there every night telling everybody that. ... All of our windows were covered with the darkroom cloth or some sort of barrier cloth. ... He was very active and very tough on people that didn't blackout. That didn't have their things closed. We all learned how to put out incendiary bombs. I don't know how in the world we ever thought anybody was going to bomb Brooklyn. But we had cleaned the attic out and on the attic floor was a little layer of sand. It was in a house not an apartment. And ... up there were buckets of sand with shovels and we had all learned how to creep up on little thermite bombs and shovel sand over them. Of course, in school, we learned you hid under the desk, or, if you had time, you went down into a special area where you sat on the floor. Probably they did that in Westfield High, but I don't know. But anyway, ... my grandmother and mother were very active in selling war bonds and what they called "victory stamps," which were stamps that you could buy for a dime. The dime went to the government.

SSH: What was the impact of rationing on your family, do you remember?

FJS: Pretty good. My mother was a master bargainer, and we survived with red ration points. We saved fat, and you turned, I don't know, it was ... by the pound, but you turned the fat that you saved into red points and you could buy meat with them. We had no trouble with shoes. And one fun thing that we did was that my mother came upon a case of shad roe. We didn't really eat shad roe, but she found a whole case of shad roe somewhere and bought it, and we ate pounds of shad roe, which is wonderful. I love it now. But we ate shad roe at least once a week for almost a year, and it was delicious. But we didn't have much hamburger. We didn't have any steaks.

SSH: What about Spam?

FJS: I don't think I don't ever remember eating Spam. I don't remember that. But I remember things like, let's see, cigarettes. When I got to the point where I was, I guess, sixteen, of course, we were growing up fast because everybody was gone. Everybody was, as we started to become sixteen, fifteen and sixteen, we said, "Well, gosh, maybe we are going to get into this," and that's what we really wanted. We really wanted to be in the war. You couldn't buy cigarettes, but cigarettes were a great thing to have because you couldn't buy them, and secondly, that's 'cause we weren't old enough. ... Secondly, there were not any good cigarettes to be bought. ... There was nothing but things like obscure Spuds, Ramseys; things you've never heard of, because all the cigarettes were with the GIs. But you couldn't buy them unless you could prove that you were eighteen. And you, to prove you were eighteen, you had to have a draft card, and so it was a great little market in draft cards. ... I had a draft card from a fellow named Raymond Allen Dearlove. ... I don't know where in the world he is, or who he was, but one of my friends gave me that card. I guess when people ... [laughter] Well, that's the way it was. So with that card I could go in and I could buy a pack of cigarettes. ... We'd stand in long lines, not because I wanted to smoke, but because you couldn't get cigarettes, and then we would get them, and I remember the first time I had one, I blew out through it. ... I had to find out that you had to suck in. [laughter] ... That was fun.

SSH: What do you remember about the movies and activities like that?

FJS: Movies were, we went to, heavily, every weekend. There were wonderful movies. There were war movies. ... I loved Tyrone Power and Errol Flynn things. ... Of course, John Wayne was not on at that time. But there were lots and lots of patriotic movies, and we were there every Saturday and we went to them. ... Of course, we didn't have television to watch, which probably would account for, wouldn't work that way today, I'm sure. But the other thing I wanted to mention, before we forget Adelphi, is that being a private school in Brooklyn, and also being very near the Navy Yard in Brooklyn, we had some interesting people come in from Europe. We had in our class Hendrick Kroulios, who was from Finland. ... When Finland was invaded by Russia, he joined our class. We had a gal named Frieda Karsch, who was from the Netherlands, and she was a refugee and joined our class, and we had Derek Singer, who, I think, was from England, came over. ... So we went to school with kids who had really had to get out of wherever they were living in Europe, which is very interesting. ... We talked to them and they spoke to us of what they had seen and what they had heard about, and so we were very much in touch with that. Our headmaster at Adelphi was Harold Amos, who had been the headmaster of the American School in Tokyo. ... He had lots of things to tell us about the Japanese and about his experiences over there. ... He was also partially involved in getting me to Rutgers because ... I think his son had gone to Rutgers, and he suggested that, you know, I really think about Rutgers when it came up. He said, "Oh, great place, great place." ... He was also a member of Delta Phi fraternity, which I then ended up joining when I got to Rutgers, and I think he's one of the ones that told them I was down there and to go get me, which changed my whole life, too.

SSH: Well, before we get to Rutgers, I'd like to ask another couple questions about the refugee students at Adelphi. Were they brought over by different organizations or were their whole families able to come?

FJS: No, their families basically got out, and they were not poor depressed people. They were people who had substantial money over there. Well, another gal we had in our class was Jane MacArthur, who was General MacArthur's niece. Her father was based in the Navy Yard in Brooklyn. ... She was a cute little red headed girl, and I thought she was very nice.

SSH: Let's talk a little bit more about your education at Adelphi. We talked about the German teacher, Miss Tate. But were there other mentors, other than the headmaster, that were ...

FJS: Oh, yes.

SSH: What activities kept you busy?

FJS: In Brooklyn?

SSH: Yes.

FJS: Oh, athletics basically, that's what we did most of the time, football, basketball and baseball. Being a small school, it was very easy to get on every team. And it's easy to be a four-letter man when there are only about ... fifty boys in the class. [laughter] ... That worked out very nicely, so I did a lot of that. Boy Scouts was not a bad name back in those days, and I went to Scouts. My father was a Scoutmaster for many years, out on Long Island. And he wanted me to be a Scout and I did. I stuck it out there. I went to summer camp with the Scouts. ... In fact, when VJ Day came, I was at Scout camp, working on staff there.

SSH: Where were you?

FJS: I was at Ten Mile River Camps. It was on the Delaware River in New York State, near Narrowburg and Monticello, up in that area, and that was a very interesting experience, too. Getting away from home was a wonderful thing. Not that I disliked my parents, but it was something I needed to do and it was a good way to do it, and it maybe ... broke me in a little bit as to what my friends at college, who were the veterans, had gone through.

SSH: Now had you made it through Eagle Scout?

FJS: Yes, I was an Eagle Scout.

SSH: What was your project? What did you do to?

FJS: Oh, lordy, I can't remember, I'm sorry. I can't remember. You know, I don't really think in those days that we had Eagle projects the way we do today. Of course, I served as a Scoutmaster, as assistant Scoutmaster, here in Westfield at Franklin School. ... My sons were both Eagle Scouts, so I was very active with the Scouts. ... The Eagle project, my sons did it, and I think I can almost remember saying, "I never did anything like that," because I don't believe I did. I think you just got your merit badges, and you went to a board and everybody said, "Gee, that's wonderful. Here, you're an Eagle Scout."

SSH: Did the rationing and those aspects of the war affect your family vacations? Did you do a lot of traveling as a young man?

FJS: ... We hoarded our gas. We had an A ticket, which gave you a very, very little bit of gas. We did have a car, and we would put in five-gallon cans. My dad would fill the car, and he taught me how to siphon, and I would siphon the gas into five-gallon cans. ... Then the next month, when we could get more gas, we'd get more gas and siphon that. So when we did go up to Pennsylvania, the Poconos, we would fill the back with gasoline cans. I'm glad nothing ever happened. But we made it, yes.

SSH: Were all your family vacations at the Poconos?

FJS: The Poconos was where we went, yes. We went to Buckhill Falls at the time. We had a house up there, and it was a wonderful place to spend the summer, but I had to go work for the Scouts.

SSH: You talked about your cousins, the one cousin who had gone to Rutgers and another cousin to Dartmouth, I assume, then, you had a close extended family.

FJS: Yes, my cousins were almost, you know, substitute brothers, yes, I was very close to them. ... Two of them were in the navy and two of them were in the army, and only one really saw combat duty. And he was in New Guinea, and he was in charge of a fleet of landing boats that went across the top of New Guinea. As the troops advanced against the Japanese, he would go in with his landing boats of supplies, on the beach, so that when the troops came in the next day, the supplies would be there for them to use, which doesn't seem to me to be a very healthy kind of a job. He told wonderful stories about the Japs. They would be on the beach, and they would be flashing their flashlights and saying, "Land here, Yankee." [laughter] So there was not much secret about it, they knew what they were doing.

SSH: Now as a young man, did you write letters to your cousins?

FJS: Obviously, yes. And they wrote back from wherever they were. One of my other cousins was ... in charge of a gun crew on a freighter in the North Atlantic and I guess he

saw a few things, too. But we wrote to him, and we treasured the letters that we got back, ... very exciting when a letter came. Sometimes a lot of them would come at once ... We wrote, I think, my mother and grandmother and I, we wrote almost, you know, once a week to everybody.

SSH: Did you find amongst your classmates that their families were suffering the loss of relatives?

FJS: Yes, that's true and personally, too. Let's see, they had a program at the time. If you were seventeen years old and you had finished your junior year in high school, you could join one of the services if your parents would sign the paper. And I ... tried to take advantage of that myself, which I'll tell you in a minute. But in the class ahead of us was Jimmy Williams, who was a great athlete, wonderful guy, who took advantage of that the year before, and he came back to Adelphi after Marine boot camp, I remember him right now. He ... stood there against the railing, and he was beautiful. He had this gorgeous Marine uniform on and his little cap was on the side of his head. That was the greatest thing in the world. Everybody wanted to take his place right then. But it's a good thing they didn't because he was killed on Iwo. Really incredible, just the first, really first day of the landing he was killed. So that was a blow to us, because we had just seen him. It seemed like he had just walked out of there, and the next thing you know, he's dead. So that was that was tough, and, of course, his sister was in our class. And, yes, people lost, people lost brothers. We were aware of that.

SSH: Well, please tell us the story then about yourself as a seventeen-year-old.

FJS: Oh, yes. Well, that was a year later. ... Three of us decided that this is a great deal 'cause we can get out of going to high school. We can finish up here. So and where would we go, but the Marine Corps, of course. So we went to the Marine Corps. We took off from school. We went over to, I think it was 346 Broadway at Worth Street, which is where Marine recruiting was and we went in. The sergeant loved to see us, and we had a nice chat and we all talked about it. We talked about going to boot camp and how great it was going to be. He said, "And here are these papers. Take these papers home and you get your parents to sign right down here. And then come on back with the papers tomorrow and then we'll get things going." Well, I took them home and that night at dinner I said, "Oh, by the way," [laughter] I said, "I think I can still get into this war before it's over." Because at that point, it was pretty close to the end, it was 1945, and I was counting on getting this thing going so that when I was seventeen, they would take me at seventeen. I think I was still sixteen at that point. But my father said, "Give me those papers." And the next morning, I was terribly embarrassed because he took me by the hand, we went into the subway, we went over to the Marines, and he walked in and he said, "I want everything that this kid signed. Did he sign anything?" "No, sir. No, no, sir." "All right, then." He took me by the hand, and here I was, I was going to save the world and be a Marine, and I was taken by my hand by my father and herded back to Brooklyn. So I went to my senior year in high school.

SSH: [laughter] No questions asked.

FJS: No, but I tried.

SSH: During the summer were your activities, as a young man in high school, scouting?

FJS: Mostly Scouts, yes. Toward, toward the end I worked for my father, too ... in his company. ... I wrapped packages and did shipping and things like that ...

SSH: All right. Do you want to jump ahead then to Rutgers?

KT: Did many of the senior members of your Boy Scout troop enlist?

FJS: Yes. As a matter-of-fact, I hadn't even thought about that. Some of the Scoutmasters did enlist, yes. Two or three of the Scoutmasters and the senior patrol leader did. Yes, it was the thing to do.

KT: Did your Boy Scout troop participate in war support activities?

FJS: Brooklyn. I suppose so. I think we collected things, scrap metal, that type of thing. I remember that. Well, that's another thing, we could get into Ebbetts Field and see the Dodger games if you brought in ten pounds of scrap metal. ... We use to take advantage of that all the time. We would scrounge, we would look under fences, and sometimes take the fences, and show up at Ebbetts Field and you could give them your scrap metal and you could go up into the bleachers and watch the Dodgers, which probably was the greatest thing in the world. So I still have Brooklyn Dodger caps, which I wear to play golf. So anyway, onward.

KT: What year did you graduate from high school?

FJS: '46.

KT: And what were your goals upon graduating?

FJS: Be an engineer. And so I did. ... I chose Rutgers and they would have me, probably not because I was a genius, or anything like that. I didn't have any fabulous record in high school. I did an awful lot of fun things in high school. We were always out at movies, as I mentioned, and things like that. ... So I wasn't a student of any kind, but being at that point an Eagle Scout, I'll never forget. Luther Martin was the Director of Admissions at Rutgers, and I went in to an interview with him. And he was looking at the admission paper and said, "Oh." He said, "I see you were an Eagle Scout. I think we'll have a place for you." So they did, by golly.

SSH: There are lots of Luther Martin stories in our archives ... [laughter]

FJS: Oh, are there. Everyone mentions Luther Martin? Oh, he was great.

SSH: And the other generation, or the older crew, mentioned Dean Metzger.

FJS: Oh, Metzger, yes. It was Dean Boocock, I guess, when I was there. Dean Boocock and Howie Crosby, of course, I still see him. He's retired, or did he pass away?

SSH: He's retired, but I don't know if he passed away.

FJS: But those are wonderful names in my past there. Or Earl Reed Silvers, too, forgive me, he was, yes, at the time, he was the president.

SSH: You talked about the interview at Rutgers. Was this during the summer before?

FJS: Yes, I think that was. Yes, right.

SSH: Tell us a little bit about your first year and your fraternity experience.

FJS: Right. Well, I arrived at Rutgers ready for my college experience and the first thing ... when I came in, there was no place to live. So they said, "Well, we can put you up. We have a wonderful place over here, a little camp, and we have buses that go back and forth." ... This was the Raritan Arsenal, which is now the Raritan Industrial Park, I guess, and that was really exciting because there were the barracks and the Italian prisoners of war had just left. There were guard towers and a barbed wire enclosure, and we had it just like a barracks. We had cots and little shelves behind us where you could hang your clothes. ... It was tough because at that time with the buses and things, it took about forty-five minutes, I guess, to get from the campus to the barracks, and you had to wait for the bus to get there. So it wasn't working out terribly well as far as getting to classes and engineering. The first year, I think I had twenty-five credits. And I believe, to this day, that after the war, engineering was very popular. ... A lot of the veterans who came on the GI Bill wanted to be engineers, and I feel that Rutgers really put the screws down. Someone said, "Let's see if we can knock this class down a little bit and put the heat on these people." So ... twenty-five credits was a lot for me to carry between chemistry and engineering drawing. I think I had to take freshman English, but I had a terrible time getting through the first year. At the end of the first year, I decided, "The heck with this engineering stuff." I wanted to have a little social life. I'm afraid that was because of my experience in high school. So I became a business major, which I continued, and graduated in business administration. But that was fun. But nonetheless, back to the barracks, back to the Italian prisoner of war camp, I decided that wasn't the greatest thing in the world. I had been introduced to two fraternities, one by my cousin, who had been a Phi Gam, and the other by Harold Amos, my headmaster, who had been a Delta Phi. ... When I came out of the barracks and saw that Delta Phi house, which in previous times was, you know, the old Johnson mansion. I saw the columns, I went in and saw the dark wood paneling and the portraits on the wall, "Oh, my Lord." I said, "This is college, I have arrived. I'm in heaven." And they had a little party, and after the

party, they said they'd love to have me be at Delta Phi. I said, "That'd be great. But how does it work?" And they said, "Well, we'd like you to move into the house tomorrow." And I said, "That's it."

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

FJS: ... So I'd made some kind of good friends in the two or three days at the Arsenal, and I left them and moved into the fraternity. One of them I still see. He's in Westfield and I saw him last at our fiftieth anniversary, Harold Roberts. I don't know whether you know the Roberts or not. ... But I moved in and there was really no place for me to live there, except in a hallway on the third floor. You know the house I'm talking about?

SSH: Yes.

FJS: Well, of course now, you know what's happened. Yes. I do, too. Well ... But on the third floor, there was a hallway and they had double deckers in there. ... I moved into that hallway and I got my first roommate, who also pledged, I think, at the same time I did. ... We moved in there together, and he was a nice fellow. I liked him, but the next week was Saturday and Rutgers played Princeton, my first football game at Palmer Stadium. ... At Palmer Stadium, I was up front, as close as I could get to the field, enjoying everything, and at halftime, I rose, turned around and there was my roommate, or hall-mate, upstairs, with a very, very pretty lady. ... I thought nothing more of that until Sunday evening, when we arrived back in the hall, and I said, "Gosh, that was a lovely, lovely looking date you had." ... He said, "Ugh, that's no date, that's my sister." And of course, you'll see her in a minute. She's coming back soon from the hairdresser. [laughter] That was the end of us as roommates, because I think he thought that I was not worthy of his sister, at all, and we split up and I got a new roommate. He also felt that I didn't send my wash out often enough, or ... I didn't make my bed everyday. ... Anyway, we didn't get along terribly well. But, fortunately, his sister and I got along very, very well. [laughter] And we met her at a party, I think it was the next weekend. We were playing Lehigh, at home, and she came down with her parents because her father was a Rutgers man. ... We met in Delta Phi's living room. ... My parents were there because it was an Alumni Day or something, one of those things, parent's day, and we stood in two rows facing each other. ... I met her parents, she met my parents, and then happily, they left. ... We had a wonderful time, and from that point on, well, she was a junior in high school at the time. So that happened. There I am in Delta Phi now. ... Would you like me to talk about the people I met there? Or do you want to ask some questions?

SSH: Sure. You talked about the Raritan Arsenal and the fact that it had just been converted to dorm/barracks for Rutgers men. What do you remember as a first impression of the men that were there? I assume that there was a mix of incoming freshmen and returning veterans.

FJS: There was. ... I mean, it must have been a terrible blow to people that just got out of the service to be stuck back into a barbed wire fenced barracks. But I remember them as being mostly my age, at least the ones that I was with. I think maybe they did give the veterans a break, I hope they did. But I don't remember many veterans there. We're only talking about three days.

SSH: That's how quickly you switched?

FJS: Yes. Yes.

SSH: Okay, because I had thought maybe it was longer.

FJS: No, no. Three days.

KT: Were any of your fraternity brothers veterans?

FJS: Yes, oh my, yes. ... That was really where we met and heard what it must have been like, because we had many veteran brothers, as far as combat was concerned. We had a Guadalcanal Marine sergeant whose name was "Whisky Sour." That was his nickname. I can't tell you what his first name really was. But, Whisky Sour was a tough hombre, and he had gone through Guadalcanal with the Marines. We had a fighter pilot, Bill Cist, who flew Corsairs off of aircraft carriers in the Pacific. We had Merrill Box, who was a F-47 pilot and flying out of Italy, and he did something very unique. He flew, escorting bombers, B-24s, over the Polesti oil fields in Romania, and when he was there, he shot down two Russian planes. Why, how, he did that I never did get the answer, but they were Russians. They had the red stars on, and they shot at him and so he shot at them. ... I suspect the Russians maybe were, at the same time, coming down to support their people, and they thought maybe Merrill Box was a German. But he shot two of them down, which is interesting to have in your fraternity house. ... Bill Cist, by the way, the Corsair pilot, also lost his Reserve commission because at the next year's Princeton-Rutgers game, he brought his Corsair right in over the end of the stadium, practically landed on the football field and took off right over the other end of the stadium. ... It happened so quickly that we didn't think they'd ever catch him. But, apparently there were some Navy and Marine officers in the stadium who caught his number and he was grounded.

SSH: So he maintained his Reserve status.

FJS: ... He was flying in the Reserves after the war to keep his rating up, but he ... lost everything with that. But it was really exciting to see it. [laughter] Let's see, the other people we had ... we had Jim Wells, who was at the Battle of the Bulge, an Army major. We had Bill Meyer, who flew his thirty missions on B-17s out of England over Germany. We had any number of even younger people, like close to my age in the Class of '50. At our recent reunion, I was with Dick Best, who was really my age, and he did go into the navy, and they put him on a ship just at the time that they were moving in, to invade

Okinawa. He made that. That was his first assignment. I think he was on that ship for about two weeks, then all of a sudden the Japanese kamikazes came at him, and he suddenly said, "My God, this guy wants to shoot me," and he was flying directly into his guns, and he was shooting up and he said, "Boy, what am I doing here?" ... That was his story, and, of course, he didn't hit him, obviously. ... I don't think he hit the plane, and the plane didn't hit him. But it's kind of interesting to hear a story like that. That there was someone who was really there for basically only two weeks.

SSH: Were the veterans that returned to the fraternity house, were they given preferential treatment at all?

FJS: No, no. I think we were all, they were just brothers.

SSH: How did roommates get picked?

FJS: I don't know but when there was a vacancy and you seemed to get along with somebody, you'd live with them. I had a lot of roommates. I don't know whether they didn't get along with me or what? But I had many roommates. ... I roomed with, I guess, only one veteran, Ed Bowlby, from Bound Brook, who ... was in the navy and he was closer to my age. I think it was by age. Those guys didn't want to room with high school kids. They were big guys. One thing that we did, though, was to learn to do some things that we never would have learned now in college. They were tremendous card players, and there was always a poker game going on, or a bridge game, or something like that every afternoon, every evening. War stories, sitting around the living room telling war stories, constantly. Everybody had a war story and all sorts of funny things, which I guess come back to me every once in a while. But many, many funny things and not a whole lot of sad things. No, they didn't stress that at all.

SSH: That's kind of what we've heard from other veterans. Well, tell us about the activities that you got involved in at Rutgers.

FJS: Well, not a whole lot. I was on the dance committees, played lacrosse, not very well. I swam and I broke my leg skiing, freshman year, and that was the end of my swimming career. ... I was in Scarlet Keys, who were the "meeting and greeting" people at that time. I think you have a new name for them now. I don't know what. Someone jumped on our bus and said they were, I thought were Scarlet Keys, but they were some other name, service organization. I did that. I'd meet teams and take them to their locker rooms and see if they needed anything. I did that kind of thing. And I guess I was in the German Club. I can't really think of anything else.

SSH: Who was your favorite professor?

FJS: Well, that's kind of funny. I guess, I liked my German professor. I liked Peterson in Philosophy very much. One of the greatest professors I think Rutgers had never gave me a mark because I audited the class. ... Being an engineer and having to make up a lot

of things, I heard about this wonderful thing, an art survey course, and Professor Von Erfur taught the art survey. I really was interested in that class, and I always was interested in art. ... He was great, and I think that was the most interesting course I had there. Music appreciation with "Soup" Walter was fantastic, too. I actually had him, I couldn't sing, but he was a marvelous teacher. He really put on a wonderful course. I guess that's about it.

SSH: Okay.

KT: What were some of the big activities around campus, besides the Rutgers football games?

FJS: Well, the dances were big then. I don't know whether the dances are big now or not. The trouble with my tenure at Rutgers was that, I wish I could do it again. When I think of what cultural opportunities that were there every evening, music, lectures, just there, and all you had to do was go. ... I'd sit there and say, "What'll I do tonight? Will I play cards or will I go to the movies?" And that the opportunity was lost. It's terrible. I don't know whether the people today, whether the townies do this, or the professors do these things, or whether the students do them, but if there's any message at all, they should take opportunities like that. I go to Princeton now and audit courses. I've been doing this for about four years, and I see what they have, and I say, "My gosh, Rutgers used to have things like that, too." And it makes me sick to think what I missed. ... I hope they're doing better. Probably not.

SSH: [laughter] Well, we encourage them to really do it. [laughter] What was the political atmosphere on campus then?

FJS: Oh, yes. Well, it was the fraternity and the non-fraternity. That was the one big thing that was, and it was really quite a schism there. ... Did anyone else allude to this period of time? Yes. Well, it was bad. I think fraternities, at that point, they were very important to us. At this point, they're not so terribly important, probably. It was nice to be a Delta Phi. [tape pause] ... Okay, well, we're talking about the schism between the fraternity and non-fraternity people. ... I guess that was one of the dominant things on campus in those days because everyone was into this one way or the other. ... We thought that they hated us, and they thought that we hated them. And there was the beginning of a liberal movement, I really think, the *Targum* was the focal point. Al Aronowitz, who's a classmate of mine, was, I think, he was the president of the *Targum*, or the editor at the time, and Vince Reilly, these people were my friends, I mean, but they were not fraternity. But they were very scathing about fraternities and how snooty we were and we had little, quiet, secret meetings in the basements and things like that, and we broke all sorts of rules on weekends with beer parties and all that stuff. But anyway, the story I was going to tell you was the famous story about the *Targum* building. ... Delta Phi hosted an inter-fraternity get-together in our backyard, and at the time, there was a building in the backyard of the Johnson mansion. It was known as "the barn," and it was the barn because it was where they kept the horses when the Johnson's had

carriages. And the barn was a wonderful place to have a party, and even in my time, the Dean of Men outlawed the barn and said, "Close it up." [laughter] But at one party in the backyard, everyone had lots and lots of beer. ... It all ended up with people wanting to get rid of some of the beer, and in order to do that, they thought a wonderful place to do that would be over at the *Targum* building. ... So there was a phalanx of fraternity people and this was all the fraternities, marching down Union Street and then over to the *Targum* building, which stands where it is today, I guess, and they completely surrounded it. ... The headlines in the *Targum*, if you ever pull it out and look at it, that next day, were "Rain of Terror." ... I thought [it] was one of the greatest headlines I've ever seen, great caption, and just to top it off, two of my fraternity brothers took a stick of dynamite and put it under the back porch of the *Targum* building and actually blew the stairs off the back porch. ... That was reported in the *Targum* as a "giant firecracker." To this day, I don't know whether the Dean really knew it was a stick of dynamite. [laughter] But anyway, that's the terrible story, and I'm not terribly proud of that and I wasn't anxious to spill it, but it might be the kind of thing you'd be interested in, and you could look at that *Targum*. I'm not sure exactly whether you could find it. Have you possibly seen that? But you have heard this before?

KT: Actually, Sandra's assistant at the Archives was asking me to ask you about that incident.

FJS: Same type of thing?

KT: He was very interested in that.

FJS: Well, I was there. [laughter]

SSH: Raining. [laughter]

FJS: Yes, I was there. Anyway, I think that all simmered down. ... Vince Reilly is still a friend of mine and I saw him at the reunion. ... Al Aronowitz was there, too. I said, "Hello" to him. And Delta Phi, of course, is changed considerably. The house is closed. There were some people that got in there, apparently, they just did terrible things. ... I don't really know what they did, but they were disenfranchised by the national fraternity. They pulled the charter. ... The house still belongs to Delta Phi. We hope that we can get it cleaned up and rented for housing, or for another fraternity, or something. ... Someday maybe they'll come back to Rutgers. But there's a warm spot in my heart for them ...

SSH: They have a long history at Rutgers.

FJS: They're the oldest fraternity there. ... They're one of the original three, in the United States, that were founded in Union College in 1847.

SSH: What was your initiation like into the fraternity?

FJS: Terrible.

SSH: Can you remember?

FJS: Yes, oh, yes. Oh, they're terrible. Well, I mean we did terrible things. First of all, we worked. We polished the floor and put all the furniture back on. And then, we took it all off and polished it again. ... We did things like that over and over again. And the initiation at that time was, terrible things happened to me. They took you out and dropped you in the country without your pants. And you know, just awful things that I don't even want to think about. And paddling, ... you had to carve your own paddle, and, then, that was used by all the other brothers whenever they felt like it. ... Some never did and some did quite a bit. But I think it was a Marine, who was our pledge boss there, one of the returning Marines, and he was a typical Marine, I guess. But, anyway, we all got through that. No one quit. No one quit in my class, anyway. ... There were a lot of veterans there, in my class, joining the fraternity. I guess, we had about ... seven people of which three of them were returning veterans, and to think that they put up with this stuff is really remarkable. I think we high school boys expected it, but they did put up with it and God bless them. No blows were struck.

SSH: Your sophomore year, did you return in kind?

FJS: No, not really.

SSH: To be an initiation lesson then ...

FJS: Yes, ... of course, after I left the school, I saw terrible things happened, and I guess it goes in waves, or cycles. But, no, we didn't give it to people in kind, no.

SSH: To back up just to the freshman year then, you participated in mandatory ROTC?

FJS: Oh, yes, mandatory ROTC, greatest thing in the world, and greatly respected by the veterans. ... They never made fun of us. We wore our little uniforms and we went out and marched. ... We had M-1 rifles and we learned how to take them apart and put them back together again, and it was really very serious ... things weren't great at that point in 1947. I mean, things were still going on in the world, and I think we all saw the need to have that type of thing. ... I enjoyed it. ... The military strategy was a good class. That was just, I think, a two-credit course at the time. I don't know what it is now ...

SSH: Did you stay through it for more than the two years?

FJS: Oh, yes, oh, yes. I went into advanced and after my sophomore year, I went into the Air Force program, and it was really fun.

SSH: Was that Air Force ROTC?

FJS: Yes. When I actually graduated and went in the Air Force, we still were wearing Army uniforms. We didn't have, at that point, blue uniforms or anything like that. We had pink pants and the olive jackets and the same caps. The only difference was that you had the Air Force insignia on your collars. Yes, it was, I think, at Rutgers the beginning of it. But there was an Air Force program, and they tried very hard to have us want to fly. ... I graduated in 1950, and, of course, at that time, the things in Korea were heating up and I wanted to fly. ... I took a physical and they assigned me to a class in Texas for basic training. ... At the same time, Joanne and I were really talking about getting married, and we decided that probably it's nicer not to fly, if you have a choice, so I didn't fly. So I didn't ever, ever become a flyer. ... I ended up in intelligence school out in Denver, Colorado. ... That's what I did during the Korean War.

SSH: Did you get to ski?

FJS: No, 'cause I had no skis out there, and it was too late. It was July and I could have. We went up in the Rockies and made snowballs and had fun. ... We slept out on top of a mountain, which was fun, 14, 600 foot mountain, we slept on top of it. Oh, it was cold. I'll never forget that. But anyway, are we through with Rutgers now?

SSH: Well, let's go back again.

FJS: We're digressing now, yes.

KT: I wanted to ask you a question about Rutgers. During the World War II period, Rutgers became integrated. Can you talk about African American relations at Rutgers at that time?

FJS: The president of our class was Bucky Hatchett. The first black president of a class at Rutgers, I believe. ... I don't think there was any friction at all, honestly. Harvey Grimsley, I saw him at the reunion. ... We all got along very well. ... I guess the black guys that were there, I played with some black guys that were on the lacrosse team. I never felt any problem. ... It may be because of the numbers involved. The ones that were there were, basically, wonderful athletes and respected. ... They did great things. So I can't really comment on that at all, no negative.

KT: Were you friends with Bucky Hatchett?

FJS: Bucky Hatchet was in the ROTC with me, yes.

KT: Okay.

FJS: Yes, he was some guy. He had been in the army in Italy, I believe. Did you do Bucky Hatchett, or are you going to do Bucky Hatchett?

KT: We're trying to.

FJS: Oh, yes. Well, he's a wonderful guy. But he went all through that ... as an enlisted man. ... Then he went into ROTC and then he got his commission and then he went to Korea. But that would be a wonderful interview. So, yes, he and I were in ROTC together and we went to summer camps together, those things.

SSH: Most of the influx of African Americans to the student body, were they mostly returning veterans, coming on the GI Bill?

FJS: I think they were. I think the ones that I just alluded to were. Yes. ... I'm sorry, I mean, I wasn't very involved with that. I just wasn't.

SSH: Well, one question that we can't leave Rutgers until we ask, how long did it take you to find the Coop?

FJS: Oh, well, the Coop. Well, see, I was otherwise occupied, and I really only, I don't think I went over there more than twice in my life. Now you're going to hear Joanne. But I think I went to the Coop twice because she was at Mt. Holyoke. ... I used to drive to Mt. Holyoke at least every other weekend, from Rutgers ... and I'd spend the weekend up there and then I'd turn around and drive back. It was terrible. At that time, it took about five and a half to six hours to do that. ... The only reason I ever went to the Coop is that one time, when we were up there, Joanne had become mesmerized by some great philosopher, or something, and we had a terrible dinner. ... We decided that we really weren't for each other. ... I took her back to the dorm and I got back in the car and I drove back that night. ... I think the next day I went to the Coop and maybe, once more after that, but ... I never dated a Coop girl. Never. Sorry.

SSH: Were there women in any of the classes that you attended at Rutgers College at that time?

FJS: No, no.

SSH: All right.

KT: So you got married after you graduated from Rutgers?

FJS: I graduated, yes. Joanne was at Mt. Holyoke. We got married in June of 1951. Gosh, next year we're having, '51. Yes. That's right. 'Cause it's our fiftieth ...

Joanne Sullebarger: I had a baby in '52, and then I went back to college.

FJS: Well, I'll tell that story. That's the next story. But we were married in '51, and Joanne was at Holyoke. So, because we were married and it would be much easier, she transferred to Barnard. ... So she ... spent her junior year at Barnard, which was nice,

and, of course, then we could be together and I wouldn't have to drive up there. That summer we were married, '51, yes, and in June. ... The only stipulation that her parents said was, "Okay, be married, but for heavens sakes don't get pregnant." ... Two months later, [laughter] Joanne announced to her parents that she was pregnant. So this was tough, because she was ... commuting to Barnard, from Elizabeth, and that's a tough commute. So she needed to go someplace more convenient. So where did she go but NJC. So she transferred to NJC for her senior year and carried our daughter with her in her tummy, all that semester, ... and Beth was born in April of '52. ... When Joanne graduated from, I guess it was still NJC, she graduated from NJC ... Beth was there, which was fun, and that was really great. So that's how ... she became a Rutgers person, too.

SSH: Well, now to ask you about events after your graduation in '50, as far as Korea and the fact that you had advanced ROTC Air Force. You wound up in intelligence school in Denver, then where did you go?

FJS: Oh, that was great. ... Denver was a marvelous place to go to intelligence school, except that I had a baby and a wife back in New Jersey, so it's not much fun. That's the first time I'd been away from them. Well, we finished intelligence school. I came back. ... When we graduated out in Denver, there were alphabetical assignments, and the next fellow to me was Shipps, or just ahead of me. ... Shipps was a teacher and his family was on Cape Cod in ... Orleans. ... I was the next one, and the assignments came out, and it was Shipps who went to Korea and I went to Cape Cod. And that's exactly the Air Force way. I really felt so sorry for him. I didn't, however, say, "Why don't we go in and see if we can switch."

SSH: Not that sorry.

FJS: No, I wasn't that sorry. But I went to Cape Cod and he went to Korea ...

KT: Do you know what happened to him?

FJS: He came back, happily. Yes, 'cause ... being an intelligence officer is kind of an interesting thing to be because you brief the pilots. ... We were taught how to set up a mission and set initial points and final points and where the targets are and if you can't hit that target, what other targets are secondary targets. ... So intelligence people are basically not out there snooping around. They are sitting back, waiting for the flyers to come back. ... It's not a very dangerous thing, unless somebody drops a bomb on you. So it's not a terribly dangerous thing to do, and he came home, happily.

SSH: How long did you have serve in the military after that?

FJS: I served two years of active duty, after being trained as an intelligence officer, on Cape Cod. I reported to my first duty station and the CO said, "Ah, my new intelligence officer." He said, "You will be in charge of the mess hall and the motor pool," and right

then and there I knew I was not going to be an Intelligence Officer. Finally, I got into Group intelligence. I got into group intelligence because they had just sent somebody out of that organization, who played bridge with the Colonel and the Executive Officer. ... So it's the full Colonel, a lieutenant colonel and a Major who was the adjutant, but they needed a fourth for bridge. ... They sent down to my squadron, and somebody had met me there, and they said, "Don't you play bridge?" ... I said, "Yes, sir, I play bridge." ... So I was transferred immediately to Group, and my job was to play bridge with the colonel, with all the brass, which was just wonderful. So my service career is not like the other service careers that you're hearing about. But we stayed on Cape Cod. I played bridge. I became the Group Athletic Officer. One of the things the Group Athletic Officer does is to make sure that the officers had PT. ... I discovered that we had complete access to all the country clubs up there, to Osterville and Oyster Harbors, and so I arranged for all the officers to go play golf. ... We played golf once a week, and this is during the Korean War, when people were dying and struggling back from the Chosin reservoir and things like that.

JS: Tell how the Russians came over the ...

FJS: Oh, yes. Yes, ... we did have people who got in trouble because ... that was the "dew line" time when there was an "early warning" system across Canada, and we would have alerts. ... The base was, basically, Continental Air Command, which is a fighter base. We would get an alert that the Russians were coming over the Pole, and they did this continually. They just fly over the Pole and come down near to the "dew line," and everybody would scramble planes and they'd go up there to see what the Russians were doing. ... They never came across. But ... all they did was to keep us on our toes. ... So we did do that. I didn't do that, but, I mean, we did scramble planes outside of there regularly. ... We also scrambled planes because anyone that went out of the corridors, flying into the United States. All the European flights, basically, go over Vermont, Massachusetts, down from Nova Scotia. ... The planes usually were Air France that were out of the corridor. To this day, I think, we've flown Air France once, but it's almost like Joanne with the Japanese automobiles that she won't drive. Air France was never where they were supposed to be. ... I hope neither of you have friends there, you know, in Air France.

SSH: [laughter] That's a great story. Were you able to have your wife with you in Cape Cod?

FJS: Yes. Unfortunately, there was no place on base where we could live, so it was tough. We had a little apartment right near the beach and where Joanne could take our daughter down to swim and to walk every day. And ... she even got into a bridge group with the town ladies, which was very unusual for Cape Codders. ... They kind of took her in quickly, which doesn't happen with service wives. I mean, the Korean War was hell because you had to spend a quarter for the baby-sitting on the base, and the movies were a quarter and drinks were a quarter at the officers' club. But somebody had to do it.

SSH: Had to man the beat.

FJS: Yes.

JS: But I wasn't up there the whole time, I went back to go back to school.

KT: Did you live in Elizabeth and commute?

JS: Yes, I lived with my mother and I went ... I planned it so that I went three days a week down to Douglass. It was Douglass then, not NJC. And so I took very weird courses, so I'd only be gone Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, and then I got my degree. ... We weren't together all the time on the Cape.

FJS: No, one summer, one year really, we were. Would you say one year?

JS: I guess one year.

FJS: And when we got out or when, we all say "we" now, we got out and drove home, Joanne cried. We were having such a wonderful time being in the service. We just didn't want to get out. ... They offered us all sorts of inducements to re-up and, "If you did this, we'll do this for you," and still we got out.

JS: It was because ... all the Second Lieutenants and First Lieutenants and ... all the officers were on a par, and they were all together. It was, you know, there was no pecking order, particularly, so we had a wonderful time there.

SSH: Well, thank you for sharing. Just for the record that was Mrs. Joanne Aspinall Sullebarger ...

KT: I have a more general question about the Korean War.

FJS: Yes.

KT: The whole country had mobilized for World War II. What were the feelings of the country towards the Korean War amongst your friends, people at Rutgers, your family?

FJS: Well, I think that we took it very seriously. ... I never felt that the civilian population was as blasé as they were about Vietnam. I really felt that they were, we were, basically, supporting everything that was happening in Korea. It wasn't the same type of thing at all. At least to my way of observation ...

KT: Did the patriotism that you were speaking of before, about in World War II, was it equal to that?

FJS: Oh, probably not to that degree. No, patriotism was so terrific. I mean, I'm sorry that your generation could never share that. And of course, it started with Vietnam, downhill ...

SSH: One of the questions I wanted to ask you was about the political atmosphere. As far as Truman having to take over. Then he was elected on his own to the presidency and the problems that he had with MacArthur. What were your feelings and thoughts on that?

FJS: Well, at that time, my feelings were solidly with MacArthur. ... I completely supported MacArthur. As I've read, studied a little bit more about the Korean War, I don't have the respect that I had then for MacArthur. I don't know whether Truman was right, but I think MacArthur was wrong and he did some very, very silly things. He was very lucky, in my opinion, to do the Inchon invasion. But then the strike for the Yalu River and China was terrible. But, at that time, before ... the Chinese got involved and came down in that terrible winter, I was supporting MacArthur wholeheartedly and it didn't work out terribly well. Have you read that book, by the way, *The Marines of Autumn*?

SSH: Another question I'd like to ask is about the press coverage. You were a young man in junior high and high school during World War II, and as you said, the radio and the newspapers were what you used as your sources of information. How did you see the press involvement from the coverage of World War II, to Korea, to Vietnam?

FJS: Well, of course, you're introducing television, ... which was Vietnam, as far as I'm concerned. And I think ... in Vietnam, you were there. In World War II, you got what they wanted you to get. For security reasons, I guess, they couldn't be as frank with the population as they had to be in Vietnam. They had no choice there. And I think the Korean War was very much like World War II in that respect. But I kind of think if I had my druthers, I do it the way the government did it in World War II, not the way it evolved in Vietnam. I mean, you can't fight a war where you have everybody in the world second-guessing everything you do, and I think that's where we're at today. ... If there's an atrocity this afternoon everybody in the United States is up in arms about it the next morning. I'm sure there were atrocities in World War II and Korea that they sheltered the population from, and I don't go for censorship as such, but I think the control of information as far as military strategy is important. You can't do it the way we do now, in my opinion, and you wanted my opinion. Yes?

SSH: That's what I asked for.

FJS: Right.

SSH: What were your thoughts on Vietnam during the Kennedy years into the Johnson years?

FJS: My thoughts changed right in the middle. Initially, very much supporting our moving into Vietnam and keeping those “pinko commies,” you know, out of our hair. And they changed as the war dragged on and as ... casualties started coming in ... and it became obvious that there was no winning. I suddenly supported, “Let’s get the heck out of here.” ... I wish we had known, or that someone had had the foresight to see that before it got started. Politics aside, it was a bad thing that we ever got involved. I feel very strongly right now.

SSH: What did you think about the McCarthy era after World War II?

FJS: Well, McCarthy, we laughed at him.

SSH: I mean as a military man, at that point, and then ...

FJS: We laughed at him. Yes, he was a wacko. And I’d still think he was, yes. Dangerous man.

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

KT: This is tape two, side one. I just wanted to ask you if you ever considered a career in the Air Force?

FJS: Only when they dangled some very attractive things in front of us. I did consider staying for twenty years in the Reserves. I stayed eight all together. ... Twenty years in the Reserves would give you a very nice retirement opportunity, which is, right now, I mean, since I’ve retired, I’m perfectly happy. ... We’ve done very well without it, but it would be a very nice thing for someone who perhaps didn’t have things put by as well as we did. I think the opportunity for Reserves retirement and or careers is great. ... If I had stayed in I probably would have done very well the way it was going, even though I was not a flying officer in the Air Force. Everybody who has wings is basically just a little bit different from everyone who doesn’t have wings. But even without wings, the things that I was involved in, I think, I would have gone up and retired and probably had ended up as a Colonel. But then I would have been very young and, good heavens, about forty-three or forty-four years old, and then I could have started a career and done something else that I might want to do. So it’s not unattractive, if you can stand it. I mean, people have bad times. I had a wonderful time.

SSH: Why did you decide to not stay in the Reserves?

FJS: I guess Joanne and I made the decision together. My father had a business that needed me. Well, I think I just decided I better get out, ‘cause now I had couple of babies. I guess we had three at that point, and I said, “Oh, heck. I don’t want to get called back in.” I might have been in for some of these police actions, or little things that happened, and I’m just as glad that I wasn’t. I might not have been, but you take a chance.

SSH: Well, then to go back, you started to answer the question before, I wanted to ask what you did after you got out of the military?

FJS: Yes, well, I went to work with my dad. I worked for him for four or five years and he passed away. I kept the Company then for another twelve years, then sold it to our biggest competitor and worked for them, and that was fine.

SSH: You had talked about how your father had marched you back to the recruiting station, to the Marines, and demanded to know what had been signed. What was his reaction when you did continue in the ROTC and then, eventually, into what became known as the Korean War?

FJS: Oh, he was all for that. I mean, the military was something that really was in the family. Yes, you had to do for the country. There was no question about that. You owed the country something. He would have been terribly disappointed in me if I hadn't at least had the little career I had in the military.

SSH: [laughter] I just wondered if he had any misgivings.

FJS: Oh, no.

SSH: Because we've questioned what people's thoughts were about the Korean War. Could tell us for the record about your family and have you always lived here in Westfield?

FJS: Yes, first, when we came out of the Air Force, we spent a little time with her folks in Elizabeth. Then we moved to Scotch Plains, and we had a little house there for, I'll never forget that house, it was so nifty. ... It cost \$16,250, and we had a fight about the \$250.00. They wanted \$16,750 and we didn't want to give them \$250.00. And we almost went down the tubes for \$500.00. It was incredible, so different from today. But anyway, we moved into Scotch Plains. We moved out of there to Shadowlawn Drive on the other side of Westfield for a while. That's where our family really grew, everybody was on hand by that time, and we lived there until, I guess we've been in this house for, it's funny it's hard to give even estimates. I think, we've been here for twenty-five years, in this house, and this house was built by the Alden family for their daughter. This was her honeymoon house. We're the only two families that ever owned it. In 1923, it was built.

SSH: And what about your children's education, did anyone go to Rutgers?

FJS: My daughter. You peeked. [laughter] Yes, my daughter, Beth, spent a year at Holyoke, and then she transferred to Rutgers and graduated from Rutgers. Following graduation, Beth took a really great job with the United Nations as the coordinator of UN Day in the USA. A year later, she announced that she was quitting to go for a Masters

degree in Historical Preservation at Columbia University School of Architecture. Following graduation, she worked for several restoration architects and then accepted a job as Executive Director of the Cincinnati Historic Preservation Association. She is still there today. ... My oldest boy is Dartmouth and he's a physician and a cardiologist now in Florida. My number two son ... had an interesting career, because he was an engineer at Lehigh, mechanical engineer, and [he] went to work as a mechanical engineer for a couple of companies and suddenly quit. Said he was going to get his MBA and he was going to get it in London because you could go in one year and get an MBA, at London City College. And he did. ... He packed up and he took his wife with him and went to London and they spent a year there. She got a shop job selling ties first and then tea. ... He went to London City College and graduated with highest honors and that changed his whole life because then he came back, went to work for an electronics company and taught himself to be an electronic engineer, which he is today. ... He now is the ... vice president of marketing of a company ... they were bought by Lucent. His last company was bought by Lucent, and he did very, very well with that. Lucent gave them one point five billion, and he was the Vice-President of Marketing. He stayed with Lucent for three weeks, quit and he's with Equipe Technology, up in Massachusetts in the Route 495 technical belt, and he hopes they will go public with the company next fall. I don't know. It's marvelous. I mean, if anything happens to me in my old age, to have my kids, ... I know that I'll always be taken care of.

SSH: I wanted to ask you, now that you celebrated your fiftieth reunion at Rutgers, to look back over your life and career. What do you consider the most pivotal moment for you?

FJS: The most ...

SSH: Pivotal moment, what do you remember?

FJS: Oh, God. You should give me a couple of days to think about that. In my career?

SSH: It could be ...

FJS: Yes, 'cause in my career, it would be when I decided to sell the company to the competitor and get out of it ... which was a good thing to do. I can't think of the other big pivotal things that, but I'm sorry I'm going to beg off of that question.

SSH: That's fine. Do you have any advice? You mentioned several times, speaking to Kate and this generation at Rutgers, how you're sorry that they never experienced the patriotism that you ...

FJS: Oh, yes.

SSH: Are there any other issues that you would like to see addressed?

FJS: Well, I certainly, did also allude to the cultural opportunities outside of just going to a class, and I don't know how you can reach people and get them to do that. Maybe everybody goes to those things now. I don't know. But you're only there for four years and the opportunities are out of this world, and to not take advantage of everything that's offered by Rutgers I think is a crime. The patriotism, I think we have to have more popular wars. I don't know how else you're going to do it. I can't believe that anything short of a war would galvanize the American people, and it would have to be a very popular war, and I don't know whether you can have a popular war today. I'm studying war at Princeton, by the way, the "Western Way of War" right now, which is a very interesting course. It's not history, it's sociology, but you ought to go over and audit it.

SSH: Sounds like it. [laughter]

FJS: Yes. [laughter]

SSH: Kate, do you have any other questions?

KT: Yes, I wanted to ask you about your political involvement in Westfield.

FJS: Yes.

KT: Can you talk about that?

FJS: Sure. Born and brought up a Republican. My father was a Republican. My father, let's see, I remember Landon and Knox. Landon and Knox running against, I guess, Roosevelt and that was my first political button. ... I don't think anybody ever voted for anybody who wasn't a Republican in my family, until I came along, and, yes, I'm a member of the Republican Party. I was a Councilman in Westfield in the Republican Party. But Westfield was really great at that point. It's changed a little now, but at that point there were three Democrats on Council, and the Democrats were just great. I voted with them half the time, and they voted with us half the time. And it was, "Let's make Westfield a super town to live in," and nobody aspired to become a freeholder, or a member of the legislature, or anything like that. These were just people that wanted to help Westfield, and I had the privilege of being in that period of time. Now, everybody has an agenda. And now, we're having an election here as you may know. You going to vote?

KT: Yes.

FJS: Good. But when we have this election, it's an opportunity to say who has really got the best thing for Westfield in mind. ... It may involve the parking situation at this time. I think that's the biggest issue. ... In this ward, the Democratic candidate, I really felt until right now, has the best slant on what is the best thing for Westfield. So I may even vote Democratic. But that was the way we ran the council, when I was on it, back in the '70s.

KT: How many terms did you serve?

FJS: I had two terms.

KT: Okay. They were two-year terms?

FJS: Two-year terms. Yes.

KT: Okay.

FJS: And that was enough.

SSH: That brings up the question what did your family think of Franklin Roosevelt and his policies?

FJS: [laughter] No, see, I was very much under the influence of my family at that point. I've read, you know, several books on Franklin D. now, and I respect him for a lot of things I didn't respect him for at that point. ... I think he was kind of slick and I think there were some things he may have done that we're just beginning to find out now. But it's tough to be a president. It's tough to be a President when your country's going to war. ... I really feel sorry for these fellows who are debating today. They're both going to be in a tough position. One of them is going to really, really be in a tough job.

SSH: Any further questions?

KT: Yes, I wanted to ask you about your wife, this is backtracking awhile. After you were discharged and you were in the Reserves, did your wife work?

FJS: Joanne, yes, she did wonderful work right here. ... She was an interior designer. She went to the New York School of Interior Design and went to work. First job was for GAF, up in Wayne. She got the project of doing their world headquarters. ... She did the president's offices and things like that, and she did it pretty nicely at a low cost, which worked out very well, because then she got the Chemical Bank, the Horizon Bank before that, in New Jersey. ... She did about seventy offices of the Horizon Bank and went in and decorated furniture, wall covering, art, did a great job with that. And before that, she was a fashion model and that was a great career. She worked for most ... of the clothing people in New Jersey. She did Lord & Taylor, Saks, Altman's and Stern's, and she was a runway model. Grew into being a fashion commentator and she pulled clothes and did the narration. So she's always had something. But they've always been things that are name based, so that you can really put a lot of time in at home with the children.

KT: Yes.

FJS: And it's been great for her. She sort of retired, maybe, ten years ago.

SSH: All right. I thank you very much for taking time out of your day and we look forward to talking to you soon.

FJS: Well good. See, we did well. Yes, two hours.

SSH: Very good. [laughter]

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

Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy 2/16/01

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 3/1/01

Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy 3/30/01

Reviewed by Franklyn Sullebarger 7/01