

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH RAYMOND A. WATERS, JR.
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY
JOHN NEIMAN
AND
SANDRA STEWART HOLYOAK

HAWORTH, NEW JERSEY
OCTOBER 27, 1999

TRANSCRIPT BY
JOHN NEIMAN

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview with Mr. Raymond A. Waters in Haworth, New Jersey on October 27, 1999 with Sandra Stewart Holyoak and John Neiman. Mr. Waters, we would like to thank you for taking time today to do this interview. I'd like to begin by asking you tell us when and where you were born.

Raymond A. Waters, Jr.: I was born in the Orange Memorial Hospital in Orange, New Jersey in 1921.

SH: Can you tell me your father's name and about him, please?

RW: My father's name was Raymond A. Waters and he was a vice president of First National Citibank, which is now Citicorp.

SH: Where was he born? Do you remember when?

RW: He was born in 1900 in New York City.

SH: Had his family lived in New York City?

RW: No, actually they had come from Boston, as I understand it, and moved to New York City.

SH: Did the family immigrate into Boston from, I think you had said on your survey, somewhere in the British Isles?

RW: Somewhere in the British Isles. According to an aunt, who has passed on for many, many years, my grandfather, Waters, was found on a doctor's step in Canada. The feeling was that his parents, or his mother, had probably come from the Isles because that was during the potato famine when people were very poor. The doctor brought up, as I understand it, my grandfather and gave him his name. Now, my mother's side, why, her folks had been here since the American Revolution and qualified in the Daughters of the American Revolution and so forth and so forth. Served in the Civil War and served in all our other armed conflicts. My mother's maiden name was Wilson. So we have two, from both my dad, which is kind of unknown, and my mother, which is very well known.

SH: Now, your mother's full name was?

RW: Gladys Farrow Wilson, F-A-R-R-O-W. Gladys Farrow Wilson.

SH: And where was she brought up?

RW: Rhode Island. Actually, her mother was born in Bath, Maine, and she was born in Providence, Rhode Island. Her father was an architect and was building the Rhode Island Navy Yard, up there in Providence.

SH: Can you tell us how they met?

RW: No, my grandfather was only alive for a couple of years when I was a youngster, and I can hardly remember him. I don't know the reason for their meeting, but, as I say, my grandmother came from Bath, Maine, where they were whalers. Her whole family was whalers.

SH: How many siblings did your mother have, her brothers and sisters?

RW: I never really met any. I have to assume she was an only child. She had four children, but I don't recall anything on brothers or sisters.

SH: And your father since he was adopted, were there others into the family?

RW: My father had a sister, Aunt Florence.

SH: And did she continue to live in Canada?

RW: No, she was a dental hygienist for the City of New York. She lived in Parchester, as a matter-of-fact, one of those apartments in Parchester.

SH: You said that your mother had four children ...

RW: Wait a minute, now. Can we go back and erase something?

SH: Surely.

RW: I have it all wrong. My mother had a sister and two brothers. I don't know why I think of Uncle Tom and the other uncle, but, no, my mother had two children, myself and my sister, Barbara, who was Douglass '42.

SH: Now, was your sister older or younger than you?

RW: One year younger. I don't know why I got the other mixed up. But my sister was one year younger.

SH: As a kid growing up, were you part of your mother's extended family?

RW: Yes, grandma had always lived with us because in those days there wasn't really a social security type blanket, so we always had Gigi, all the kids called her that. Gigi, had her room in the house, and she was always with us.

SH: Where did your family first live then?

RW: We lived in the East Orange area until my dad and some of the other uncles bought houses in Cranford. They bought development houses in Cranford, three of them, I think.

There were three houses on the same block and we moved to Cranford when I was seven or eight years old, I guess.

SH: So you had started school in the Oranges before you went to Cranford?

RW: Yes, I went to first grade, I think. We lived on Park Avenue, and I spent a few months in first grade there on Park Avenue until we moved to Cranford.

SH: Was your father already working for the bank?

RW: Citibank, yes, yes. His dad died young and he had to go out and get work when he was very young, and I think he started to work for First National Citibank when he was about sixteen or seventeen.

SH: Now, did your father have any brothers or sisters?

RW: One sister, Aunt Florence.

SH: Okay, I forgot, I'm sorry. Did your father talk at all about World War I?

RW: No, he was too young. He was born in 1900. He was in, and I have pictures someplace. He was in the Reserves. The guys that met and whatever the Reserves did in World War I, but he didn't see any active duty.

SH: Then your grandfather would have been too old.

RW: Yeah, yeah.

SH: Did your family, as you grew up in the Oranges and then your move to Cranford, talk at all about the Depression?

RW: Yes, we had some of the members of the family that were hit very hard and were out of work for long periods of time. In those days, families helped families because there wasn't the social structure that there is today. I remember, one Thanksgiving, Uncle Elwood, who was married to my mother's sister, walking all the way from the Oranges to Cranford for Thanksgiving because he didn't have enough money for carfare. I remember the men digging into their pockets for nickels and dimes and coming up with carfare so he could take the bus home. Some of them had a pretty tough time. My dad worked for Citibank and I think he went either five or six years without a salary increase, but he had his job. Yes, life was tough then.

SH: Had your father gone to university or college?

RW: He went the entire time at night at NYU. He got his college degree going to NYU.

SH: And your mother, did she go onto college?

RW: No, she never did. She was a housewife, strictly a housewife.

SH: How involved was your family in church activities?

RW: Very, very much. In Cranford, we were members of the First Presbyterian Church, and when my folks, years ago, moved into this area, Dad and Mother were active in the First Presbyterian Church in Tenafly. Mother, I think, taught Sunday school for quite a while, and Dad was active in the men's bible class, so they were always active in church activities.

SH: Now, did you move to Haworth first and then they came here?

RW: No, it's a long story, but, at one point, my wife, my first wife, and I owned a house in Cedar Grove. We sold the house and rented an apartment in Bergenfield. A place called Foster Village. My parents had bought a house in Crestkill, on Knickerbocker Avenue. Then later on, while I was on active duty with Air Force, my first wife bought a house in Haworth, it would be about '52, I guess, on the other side of town in Haworth from where I now live. Eventually Harriet, my present wife, and I got married. So we've been married twenty-two years. So I have been in this house for twenty-two years.

SH: I was just curious when the extended family had left those three houses that were on the same block.

RW: They all were foreclosed. The people, the relatives, my dad included, lost them all. Financially, they just couldn't do it. Houses were foreclosed, and we had to move. As I said, we had some tough times.

SH: Now this was because of the Depression?

RW: Yes, yes, yes. They couldn't make the payments.

SH: So were there any other repercussions that you remember?

RW: Uncle Gardner stayed. Uncle Gardner stayed and weathered out the Depression. He had a good job with the New York Telephone Company, so he was able to stay in Cranford. He passed on, from Cranford. That was his last address.

SH: Then after Cranford, where did you go to school? Where did your education continue? How old were you?

RW: Well, I graduated from Cranford High, Class of '39.

SH: So you were able to stay there until you graduated from high school?

RW: Right, and then I went to Rutgers in the Fall of '39.

JN: What kind of neighborhood was Cranford when you were growing up?

RW: Rural, very rural. A lot of fields and empty spaces, empty lots that houses had been started and they weren't able to finish them because of the Depression. It was a small town then. I don't know what it is now.

JN: Mostly, still a small town.

RW: Probably a middle-class town, I guess.

JN: Why did you choose Rutgers?

RW: Well, my sister had gone a year ahead of me, and she got a state scholarship to Rutgers. It was actually called NJC then, New Jersey College for Woman, and I had hoped to get a state scholarship. I ended up with a Dean's scholarship. After one year, my dad said, "You are going to have to get a job and go to work 'cause I can't afford to keep you both there, even if your sister has the state scholarship." So I got a job. I went to work. I went to Columbia at night. And I graduated from Columbia, finally, after the war of course.

SH: When you working in New York, what company were you working for?

RW: Oh, it was only one, JP Morgan, Twenty-three Wall Street.

SH: What did you start out doing?

RW: Pageboy. Out of high school, I was a pageboy. I was JP Morgan's pageboy. When he wanted his pencils sharpened, I sharpened them. When he wanted this or that, that's where I started. I started out as a pageboy and [I was] promoted to the mailroom, and I ran around in the City of New York as a mailroom boy. Then after World War II, I got in the securities department and I worked my way up the line. I couldn't have started any lower. I was getting sixty dollars a month, sixty dollars a month.

RW: We've read a lot of things about JP Morgan. Can you tell us some of the stories that you remember as a pageboy?

RW: I remember my first Christmas there. I started there, I went to Rutgers's '39 and '40, so I started June of '40 and so it would be, I guess, December of '40. When I was outside Mr. Morgan's private office and he came out and said he wanted to wish me a Merry Christmas, I put my hand out, and I figured I'd get a couple of dollars anyway. When he shook hands with me and I took my hand back, there wasn't anything there. There was nothing there. So that showed me that there was no such thing as a free ride. I enjoyed my years working for JP Morgan. I had a variety of operating jobs. I was always in the operating end of it, making things work right and so forth, and I moved around from various jobs. Almost always in the security business, stocks, bonds and that

type of thing. I was never in client relations and I would like to have done better. Towards the end of the line, I could see the handwriting on the wall, and when I was sixty-two, I was offered a buyout. I got a couple years salary if I took early retirement, so I took early retirement.

JN: Can I go back to Rutgers? Your experiences at Rutgers, even though you were only there for a year, how was it at the time?

RW: Well, I had really a lot of fun. Actually, I pledged a fraternity call Theta Chi. When the time came to be initiated, I didn't have the money so I had to remain a pledge. But I made some very good friends. As the *Scarlet Letter* would tell you, I played soccer, which in those days was sort of an unusual sport. And I was on the debating team, which I enjoyed very much. Rutgers was quite small in those days. As far as memories, I remember eating in the cafeteria. I'm sure Rutgers has one today. In those days, '39 and '40, you could get four vegetables, bread, butter, and a glass of milk for twenty cents, and that's what we ate. We ate that many, many, many meals. I haven't liked vegetables since. There were a lot of guys on a strict budget. Some of my friends were from the Ag School. They had a pretty good deal from the Ag School. My roommate, I think, was majoring in chicken farming or something like that.

JN: Do you remember his name?

RW: Bill, Class of '43, Bill Suter. Suter, I couldn't pronounce it right. We had a reunion in '43, in '93, and he left a message on my machine and I was out on the West Coast. He said that he was an insurance man. He ended up in insurance, not chicken farming. Then we had another roommate named Charles Campbell. Charlie left after a year at Rutgers and went to Annapolis and graduated as an ensign, and he got himself killed when his destroyer was blown up. So, that's Charlie Campbell, Class of '43. They have had some memorials for him over the years. A guy named Kusick, Bob Kusick; he played with us on the soccer team. He got himself killed during the war, too. I think the Class of '43 had quite a few people killed.

JN: You said you played soccer and track. Did you play that in Cranford High School, also?

RW: No, no, I didn't. Unfortunately, when I went to Cranford High School, most of the time was a split session. They were building a high school and you'd start at one o'clock in the afternoon and get through at six o'clock at night and that type of thing. I was never able to really participate, but I was always a debater. I won a couple of awards for debating at Cranford High. I was never able to play any sports.

JN: You were an Eagle Scout, also.

RW: Yes, yes, that's true. I was in a troop in Cranford, Troop Seventy-Nine. And there were three of us [who] became Eagles at the same time 'cause we were vying for the chance to go to Washington, DC for the first Boy Scout Jamboree that they ever had. All

three of us got it at the same time, so the men, even if it was the Depression, the men of the troop got their wallets together and sent all three of us to Washington, DC.

JN: How was that?

RW: Very nice, that was probably '36, I guess, probably around '36, 'cause I was born in '21 and that would make me fifteen. That would have probably been about right, fifteen. That was the incentive to become an Eagle Scout, to go to Washington.

SH: Do you remember what your project was?

RW: Well, no, in those days, it wasn't quite as involved as you have it today. You just had to get the twenty-one merit badges, whatever it was. Today, they have projects, and, fortunately for me, it wasn't true in those days.

SH: Did you have any kind of job after school, or before school? With the split session, it would have been really hard.

RW: I had some lawns and yards that I took care of mostly in the neighborhood. When the church sexton went on vacation, I took his place. None of it amounted to any money. Nobody really has any idea how tight things were in the '30s. For instance, I remember one yard I had and I was working away, and, all of a sudden, an old car pulled up. And an Italian looking gentleman got out and accused me of taking bread off his table 'cause he said he needed the job more than I needed it. I remember the WPA in those days, the Work Projects Administration, being quartered right near where we lived in Cranford and talking to the men every morning before I went to school, the people from the WPA. I don't think we'll ever have another Depression because there are too many safeguards. In those days, if families didn't take care of families, why, life would have been pretty tough. I'm not complaining because we had a lot of fun. For instance, the fathers were home almost all of the time because they had no place to go, so with the Scouts, we always had male leadership. We always had fathers in the church, so that was a plus. I did a lot of Scouting and a lot of church work when I was a youngster. I don't recall missing any meals. Life was a lot of fun, so there is no complaints. I'm not complaining, but people just don't realize how bad it was in the '30s.

SH: That's why we're asking for information ...

RW: It was bad.

SH: ... to tell people like John and myself.

RW: For instance, the man next door to us was an engineer with Bell Telephone. He was put on no-pay status and Mr. Tweed would be out there almost every day. He had a contraption with wicker through it, and he would dig up the dirt and throw it there, against the screen. He screened out all of the dirt to get rid of the rocks. That's all he did 'cause he had nothing else to do. Then when the war accelerated, he was one of the guys

who was out all over the country putting up the FM stations and so forth. He had a heck of a good job. For a couple of years, he was hurting.

SH: Did you go to any church camps or Boy Scout camps away from Cranford?

RW: Yeah, I was a counselor out of Blairstown, Camp Mohican, which in those days was Essex County Camp.

SH: It's near where I live.

RW: Camp Mohican, well, then it was in Sussex County. You come from there?

SH: I come from Blairstown.

RW: Oh, what, today?

SH: Yes.

RW: Well, sure, I'd go away in the summer for a month and I'd be a counselor. I had some very happy memories, very, very nice camp.

SH: How long were you a counselor there?

RW: Oh, just a month. In the summer for, maybe, two summers 'cause we all took turns. There wasn't enough for one guy permanently. It was two months, I guess, summer camp. I had a month and somebody else had a month.

SH: What church activities were you involved in?

RW: I was president of Christian Endeavor in the Presbyterian Church and a bible study group called "The Dugout's," in the church. Yeah, Christian Endeavor was Sunday night, and the bible study was during the church service.

SH: What was the discussion around your table with your extended family when they dealt with politics and FDR's New Deal?

RW: While I was going to college?

SH: No, as a young man in high school, and then you can tell us about college, too.

RW: I had an arrangement with the *New York Times* when I was, I guess, a senior in high school. They delivered a copy of the *New York Times* everyday and I read that and tried to keep up in what was going on. I don't remember, I remember being asked to join an organization called America First. I shied away from it, which is lucky that I did, because later on in life, when I was being investigated for my security clearance in the Air Force, I found out that America First was a Communist organization. If I had signed

up for it, one of my friends wanted me to sign up for it, and I said, “I don’t sign up for anything.” I think that would have possibly have hurt my career because guys that were members of that were listed as members of the Communist Party. I remember that, and, other than that, I always voted both, I guess it’s what, twenty-one. Is that what the voting [age] was, twenty-one? Well, twenty-one, I went in the military, but I know that overseas, or wherever I was, I always made sure I had an absentee ballot and I voted. I don’t recall being particularly active in politics.

SH: Your father and mother, were they involved in politics?

RW: Yes, my dad was one of the ... I don’t know what you call it, district leg guys that walked around ringing doorbells or something. He had contributed. I don’t recall my mother doing it, but my dad took an interest in the local politics and did some ward (healing?), or whatever it’s called, ringing doorbells, I guess.

SH: Which party?

RW: Oh, Republican.

SH: What did they think of Franklin Delano Roosevelt?

RW: My Aunt Florence hated him. My father, I don’t recall saying anything derogatory, but Aunt Florence didn’t like him at all.

JN: Where were you when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

RW: That’s sort of interesting. I was upstairs in my house in Cranford doing my homework. I was going to night school and my dad was downstairs with the radio on, and he said, “Son, I think you better come down and listen to the radio.” So I went downstairs to listen to the radio, and he said, “You better do something or you’re gonna get drafted.” I said, “Well, you know,” so I tried to get in the Navy Air Corps, but they didn’t want me. So I ended up in Newark in the Post Office enlisting in the Army Air Corps. They wanted me. But I remember that quite well. It was late Sunday afternoon, and I was doing my homework.

SH: You had said that you had the newspaper delivered to your home, and you had already left Rutgers, or even maybe while you were at Rutgers. One of the questions we ask is how aware were you of what was going on in Europe?

RW: I don’t think I was too much aware of what was going on. I only knew what I read in the papers, and, of course, we didn’t have television in those days. When we turned the radio on, we usually turned on music or something like that. I don’t really think I was too much up on what was going on in Europe in 1939, ‘38 and ‘39.

SH: This would have been before you graduated from high school. I just wondered if there was any discussion in your high school classes at all.

RW: No, I don't recall any. I think we were all sort of naive. Most of us were interested in the draft because a number of my friends got low draft numbers. For instance, I took the aviation cadet exam and I passed it and then I went in the service. The day that I went in, which was August 10, 1942, how about that? How about that, August 10, 1942. A group of people from my hometown were drafted and went the same day. I went in my father's car, and he drove me to Newark and I got out and I went in and that was it. The guys that were drafted, why, they went in a bus to wherever they went, Trenton, I guess, the camp down there.

SH: Fort Dix.

RW: Dix, yeah, yeah, I went to Dix.

JN: Did you always want to fly?

RW: When I was growing up, I was a member of the Junior Birdmen of America, whatever it is. We use to make planes, or try to make planes, and attend meetings and try to keep up-to-date. I was always interested in aviation.

JN: How was your basic training experience?

RW: Well, I went to Nashville, Tennessee for pre-flight. Then I went to primary pilot training in Lafayette, Louisiana and washed out 'cause I couldn't land, because I had a depth perception problem. So then I went back to Nashville, and I was reclassified as a navigator trainee, and I went to Monroe, Louisiana for six months, where I had my navigation training and graduated as a second lieutenant with my wings on July 3, 1943. So I actually didn't have what is referred to today as basic training. I was in a camp outside of Mitchell Field for about six weeks or something like that. I went from Mitchell Field down on Nashville for the cadet classification center.

SH: How was it for a young man, such as yourself, who had been involved in Boy Scouts and the church, to go to the South from New Jersey?

RW: Kind of tough, kind of tough. I was kind of surprised to see some of the things I saw, "For Whites Only" and stuff like that. I remember being at some railroad station and waiting to go on one of my first [passes] when I was in flying school in Monroe. I remember, we had a weekend pass or something and I got on a bus to go into town, and I saw that all of the empty seats were in the back of the bus. In the back of the bus, no, I saw that the other way around. The blacks had to go to the back of the bus. Oh, yeah, so I went to the back of the bus. And I remember a couple of white gentlemen standing up and saying that wasn't my place, that I had to come and stand in the front of the bus with them, that the seats in the back of the bus were for the black people. I didn't know we had a problem until then, particularly, bathrooms. And you wanted to go to the bathroom, but you can't go because it says, "For Blacks Only" or something like that. It was quite a surprise to me. I was sort of naive from the North. I had in Cranford

growing up, I had some of my good high school friends were colored guys. I always got along well with them and didn't know there was a problem until I went down to the South. I was down in Tennessee and Louisiana, particularly, so surprised.

SH: What other things do you remember about the South?

RW: I remember that the food was different. They have, what is it, grits, chitlins, hamhocks, greens and stuff like that. The food is quite a bit different, and you had to be very careful when you were out. If you were out eating, or at a counter, you had to be sure it wasn't too highly spiced. When I was in Monroe, Louisiana, there was a college nearby. This is Lafayette and there was a college nearby, Northeast, something, Louisiana College, and the girls used to have dances for us. I found out that the girls were very pretty. The Louisiana girls are very pretty, Cajun, a lot of them are French Cajun and they were very nice. What else did I find out in the South? I don't believe then it was as industrialized as the North. They had a lot of farming and so forth. I remember, in Lafayette several of us went to the polling booths for some reason, just to see how they handled the polling. And we found out that there were local people coming, and they were getting some money and a pint of whisky, and then they were voting. So that was sort of a surprise to me. That's the way they handled it in Louisiana.

SH: Well, tell us about your training and some of the stories that go along with that, as far as your pre-aviation training and then as you became a navigator.

RW: Well, as I said, I went to Monroe, Louisiana for flight school and I had already washed out of pilot school because I couldn't land the airplanes. So I was determined to make a good bid for it and I did. I worked hard. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the type of work. My dad and mother were concerned that I was very careless and I made a lot of mistakes. They didn't see how I could survive in a navigation school because if you make a mistake and you're off course a couple of degrees and a couple of hours, you are a couple hundred miles off course. So they didn't see how I could do it, so I devised a system where every time I added a column of figures, multiplied or subtracted, I'd do it twice from another angle. If I added it first from top to the bottom, then I would add it from the bottom up. At first, it slowed me down and made me late and difficult. But as the months and the years go by, and today I still do it, I have very, very few, if any, errors. I have a good system for working with figures, and I enjoy working with figures. One of my jobs in the bank later on in life was working with figures and I enjoyed working with figures. Other than that, I really didn't experience any problems in navigation school. We had the usual hazing and physical stuff. You know, you would run a couple of miles everyday and this and that. But when graduation time came, we were given an opportunity to select assignments in various branches of the service. I flew in and out of Rosecrans Field in Missouri a couple of times, and they had B-25s. That was about the time Colonel Doolittle bombed Tokyo, so I wanted to fly B-25s, so I applied for Rosecrans Field, St. Joseph, Missouri, and I got it. Some of the guys that applied to Troop Carrier and got Troop Carrier, they ended up getting shot down invading Italy. Some of the guys that applied for other things ended up in B-17 or B-24 school in heavy bombardment. I ended, as it turned out, in the Air Transport Command. My job was to

ferry planes around the world, to different parts of the world, over the North Atlantic, the Middle Atlantic, the South Atlantic, wherever. There weren't really any people shooting at us, so, purely by luck, I made for me what was the right assignment. The B-25s that I saw at Rosecrans field didn't belong to anything I had to do with. So they sent me to Reno, Nevada to stay at the air force base to get training in flying C-46s over the Hump, over the Himalayas. That's where I met my first wife. She worked in air corps supply, and she had a car, and one thing led to another and there you were. I went from there over to Chhapra, over to India.

SH: Before we talk about your trips over the Hump, could you tell us about when you got your wings? Did your parents come for that?

RW: No, that was difficult during World War II. It was difficult to travel, very difficult to travel. So one of my buddies and I, he pinned my wings on me and I pinned my wings on him. Then we had to get home and I had to take a series of trains from Monroe. You have no idea how bad travel was during the war. I mean, you will never have to go through that, I'm sure. Travel was very difficult and I sat on some bags for quite a while and took a couple of days to get back up home. We had a delay en route, so we had a few days, and my sister was getting married. I was happy to be able to get home to Cranford. I guess from Cranford, I took a train out to St. Joe, Missouri, which is where Rosecrans Field is.

SH: So how long were you at Rosecrans before you went to Nevada then?

RW: Oh, about a month, month and a half. Went to Nevada and we got crewed up and qualified in the airplanes and so forth.

SH: Did the same crew fly together then, for the most part?

RW: Well, you know, that's sort of an interesting thing. I trained with the crew and I qualified with the crew. Then we were all transferred to the Second Ferry Group in Wilmington, Delaware. The co-pilot had just gotten married, and he said, "I'm gonna be a couple of days late getting to Wilmington, Delaware, New Castle Army Air base." He said, "So I'll be a couple of days late." So when we got to New Castle, the pilot and I, they were desperate for crews, so they took me off and put me with another crew that needed a navigator and off I went. The guy that didn't show up in time, and he got there, a second lieutenant, (Schmidt?), and they gave him another navigator, a friend of mine from New York State. We started flying, and we had to go to the Assam Valley in India. When we got down in Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, the other crew caught up with us. The pilots, guys by the names of (Misonheimer?) and Schmidt, they said, "We would like to have you back in our crew again ... 'cause we trained together and we want to fly together." I said, "No, I like the crew I'm with now, and I don't want to go through the red tape." A month or two later, I lost track of the pilot of my first crew and heard eventually the plane was found in British Guiana with only two bodies in the plane, and the other three guys, they didn't find them. That was where I was supposed to be. That kind of shook me up, so I had sort of a policy with myself that I would never, never,

never change, once I was committed to fly someplace or do something. A couple of more times, I had other things happen. A guy said, "Hey, you take my flight, and I'll take your flight." I did switch and later on heard that his plane had crashed. I had a couple of friends whose planes blew up who wanted me to switch with them. I had a policy that no switch. I'm very superstitious, particularly after that first one in British Guiana.

SH: After Puerto Rico, where did you go then?

RW: Well, we use to fly the chain. We use to go to Acheson Field, Georgetown. Well, actually, we went to Trinity, Trinidad first. These were planes with a limited range, they were transport planes and we would go down to Puerto Rico and then we would go to Trinidad and then Georgetown, British Guiana down to a place called Natal, Brazil. From there we would go to Ascension Island, which is an island in the middle of the Pacific, and then on over to Africa and across India through Karachi. It took quite a while.

SH: How much time did you have each time you landed before you could go flying again? Wasn't there a downtime?

RW: When we got back 'cause we came back deadheaded, we came back as passengers. It depended how busy they were. When you got back, you had to check in with the chief navigator. If they were busy, you would go out right away.

SH: When you flew, were you flying new aircraft?

RW: Yes, brand new. Many, many times you went to the factory and picked them up. We would go to Hunter Field. Hunter Field is Savannah, Georgia, and they had a plane called B-26, which was a two-engine fighter-bomber. We picked new ones up there, or we would go to Fort Wayne, Indiana and pick up transport planes and we would ferry them from the factory overseas. Sometimes we would go someplace where they had them waiting for us. Somebody else delivered them.

SH: So how many would fly in your unit? How many planes would you fly at one time to deliver?

RW: We were always on our own. It was an individual plane. Yeah, you had to go on your own. We had a pilot, co-pilot, radio operator, crew chief and navigator, five-man crew. As it turned out, they decided they didn't need navigators flying the rest of the missions, so when we got there, they just turned us around, turned the navigators around and sent us back to get more. The crews would fly the Hump and I had some sad experiences with wives and so forth wanting to know what happened to their husbands 'cause they got a report that their husbands' planes had crashed in the Himalayas and what did I know about it. I didn't know anything about it. I just knew I was on my way back.

SH: Did you have a home base?

RW: Yes, I was out of New Castle Army Air base in Wilmington, Delaware at the first part. Then I got transferred down to Nashville, Tennessee to Berry Field. I forget the number of that ferrying group. They were all ferrying squads, so I had the two. Then towards the end of the war, I got transferred out to Hamilton Field, California. We did the same thing out in the Pacific, and, eventually, I got moved out in the Pacific and I was assigned all of the way out to Shanghai. That was, I guess, my last assignment, Shanghai, China.

SH: When you were doing all of your flying back and forth, did you run into any of your friends from Rutgers or high school?

RW: Yeah, I saw guys names on manifests. When you fly, you fill out a manifest. Some names I thought I knew, but I don't think I ever actually ran into anybody. There was a guy by the name of Dick Risanta, who was in my class, and I saw his name on a manifest, but I never did run into him. So I would have to say, no, I didn't run into any of Rutgers people.

SH: Because of the limited fuel capacity, when you would land, you were just there long enough to refuel and then you would just take right off.

RW: Overnight, you would fly a leg, particularly, when I was flying the Pacific run, you would fly from San Francisco to Honolulu and then from Honolulu to Midway, or from Honolulu to one of the other islands and so forth. You would stay overnight, you always stayed overnight.

SH: Were you staying on bases, or did you have a chance to go in and see what it was like?

RW: Oh, yeah, we spent a lot of time in those. But we were also very travel minded. We'd spend some time in a pretty horrible city, some of them. I remember, we were down at Calcutta, which is a filthy, terrible place. They have people in cages and everything. We did a lot of sight-seeing.

SH: Were you given any precautions or anything?

RW: Oh, yeah.

SH: What did they tell you?

RW: "Watch your step and never travel alone. Be sure and have your .45 with you. Don't touch the girls, they are dirty." They gave us all sorts of things. I don't know whether everybody behaved or not.

JN: How was your experience with the other soldiers that you were with on your crews?

RW: Oh, we had some good relationships, and some of them I kept in contact for quite a while. We had some instances where the guys didn't behave too well and we had some harsh things. I met some nice guys and every trip was different, of course. I had to get use to a different crew and they had to get use to me because I was the guy that came back. I'd say generally, relationships were good. I remember once being in Pearl Harbor, and there was something wrong with our radio operator. So all of a sudden, the Navy lent us a radio operator, and I remember he said that, "You guys in the Army Air Force really treat the enlisted men great. The Navy guys lorded all over us and they gave us a hard time, but I really enjoyed this flight with you guys." That was a long time ago.

SH: Was that the only interaction you had between other services?

RW: We were all part of the Army Air Corps, so I don't recall any interaction. We flew to our own bases and stayed pretty much, I know that crews use to stay together. We would eat our meals together and stay together as military crews.

SH: Officers and the enlisted?

RW: Oh, yeah, we did. But the Navy guys, I was told they didn't do it like that. I had some nice friends that I met and some of them I kept in touch with. Unfortunately, I lost touch with most everybody now.

SH: Can you tell us a little bit about what it was like, or some of the adventures that you all went on, or that you encountered when you were flying or on the ground?

RW: Well, we always tried to see the sites. For instance, while we were in Agra, India, we naturally went to the Taj Mahal. I got pictures of me at the Taj Mahal. When we were in Tokyo, we got pictures of the moats and so forth in the emperor's palace. Whatever the star attraction was. Sometimes when we were, for instance, flying up in Greenland and Iceland and so forth, it wasn't much in the way of attractions to go see. But if there was something in Puerto Rico, I remember the beaches were very nice. Accra, Africa had very nice beaches and you'd get out to the beaches and go swimming. Of course, it was World War II and everybody worked a seven-day week, and everybody was on duty all the time.

SH: How did the natives treat American GIs such as yourself?

RW: You would think that they are all right, but I remember one incident in Karachi, India talking to some natives, and, I don't know, we were buying star sapphires, or trying to buy star sapphires. They were saying that this is what we want for them, and we said that's too expensive and we can't afford that. I remember the guy quite distinctly saying, "You Americans are all wealthy. You have houses full of gold, so we are gonna charge you whatever we want to charge you because you can afford it." I remember being kind of shocked at that attitude a long time ago. I don't know whether we bought any star sapphires or not. We were trying to swap, I guess, it was pens. We had some pens, and we were trying to swap pens for sapphires.

SH: When you were doing all your ferrying back and forth, how aware were you of what was going on in the different theatres of operation?

RW: Not that good. We got a magazine called *Stars and Stripes*, if I recall. *Stars and Stripes*, whether it was accurate or not, would print the military news of the day. I don't think I had a big awareness. I don't remember now after all these years if I followed. I was mostly interested in me, and I don't know, when I was in the Pacific, if I followed what was going in the European or visa versa. You were kind of conscious of it because there were the headlines in the papers.

SH: What were your parents doing back here on the homefront, so to speak, and your sister? She was married to a military man.

RW: Barbara worked as the publicity guy for General Motors in Linden. She graduated in '42 from NJC and she got a job with General Motors, working for General Motors. My father worked for Citibank and he was not in the war and my mother was a housewife.

SH: Did they get involved in any of the gathering of food or supplies?

RW: I guess they did because I heard them talk about waiting in lines and so forth. I guess that's what they were doing.

SH: The rationing and things.

RW: Yeah, the rationing, yeah.

SH: How effieciently did your mail come back and forth? Was it good being in the ferry service?

RW: Yeah, it was kind of lousy. For a while there, I guess, it was APO, what was that Army Post Office number?

SH: You were telling us about your mail.

RW: It was difficult, but it, if the mail was bad, getting cleaning done and we would have clean laundry but that was a problem with the mail. Bring the mail, too, you know, "I'll meet you in Karachi and you bring my mail." It was a problem.

SH: Was your wife still in Nevada?

RW: My first wife was from Reno, Nevada. She worked for air corp supply, where I went for a pair of glasses. She had a car. She had her parent's car 'cause she lived in Reno, which is about fifteen miles from the base. I was invited to dinner and so forth and

so forth. The relationship was established there, and we didn't get married right away, but we got married about a year or so later.

SH: Did she come out to the East Coast then where you were stationed?

RW: Yes, I'm trying to think. Actually, I guess we never did establish that because they sent me overseas, a permanent change of stations, so she stayed up in Reno. She had an uncle in Oakland, California. She had an uncle in California, in Oakland, California, and she eventually came down to stay with her uncle in California. When I got discharged, that's where I got discharged, in Oakland, California, actually, Camp Beale Air Force Base.

SH: When you were permanently stationed overseas, what was your base then?

RW: I was permanently stationed in Shanghai, China. I was permanently stationed in Tokyo in Japan, an air force base in Japan. I had been stationed in Manila, permanently stationed in Manila.

SH: This was after the war, then?

RW: The war was winding down.

SH: What was it like in Manila, was that your first ...

RW: Yeah, Manila was sort of an interesting place. When we went in, the US Navy had been shelling it, and there were holes in buildings the size of this room. There weren't any regular, this was right at the end of the war, there weren't any bridges or anything. There was wooden planks or something like that to get into the city. The city was very beat up. Many, many of the people were living outside the city in corrugated iron houses. They provided shelter for themselves by getting metal, I don't know, cans or things like that and flattening it out and making shelters. It was pretty, pretty rough for everybody. Obviously, there had been a tremendous fight there in Manila. We were using Clark Field, which in those days that was the field right north of Manila.

SH: What was the closest that you came to an active battlefield or site?

RW: I really didn't. Flying up from North Africa to England on a number of occasions, we saw German fighters out over the Channel. But they avoided us and we avoided them. Either they didn't see us, or they didn't want to see us. Of course, when we were in England, that was the buzz bomb problem. Bombs are blowing up, those buzz bombs are blowing up all over the place. So that's closest I came to active combat.

SH: How long were you there before you went on? Or were you delivering to England?

RW: Yeah, we were delivering planes to England, and ferry crews were given a category two priority, but we still had to wait for planes to take us back to the United States. The

navigator returned, and the rest of the crew went in the combat from there. The A-20s and the B-26s and some of the others, they went immediately into the Ninth Air Corps, into combat. What we use to do is we would land in southern England and take a train up to London and spend the day in London. Then we took a train up to Glasgow, where there is a base up there, called Prestwick, and we'd go back to the United States from Prestwick. We were always on the run.

SH: Didn't have much time to sightsee in England?

RW: Oh, yeah, sure. I remember going to Ayreshire, Scotland, which is Bobby Burn's home, and also the place where Kilmarnoch, where Johnny Walker Red Scotch is brewed. Yes, we went Kilmarnoch, sure. Then we had dates. Yeah, the British gals were great. We were young, twenty-one, twenty-two year old guys, so we were almost all of us interested in the girls. They were very pretty, very pretty girls, pink complexions and very attractive.

SH: Did you take advantage of any USO shows?

RW: Sure, wherever I could I went to the USO, sure. I don't recall seeing anybody like Bob Hope or anything. I had sort of an interesting experience. I was in, oh, Africa someplace, I guess, we would know it as Arabia. Aden, Arabia, I guess, and we were asked on that trip to fly a USO group around. I remember some of the people in the USO group flying around in the area, very interesting. Some of them were very interesting people, but I don't recall any front liners. But we all went when we could.

SH: Did you have any other dignitaries fly with you on occasion?

RW: This is in World War II, but after World War II, I was in the New York Air National Guard. After he got out of office, we ferried Harry Truman a couple of places. That's the best I can do. Plus while I was in the service, I think we were going into Shanghai, China from Tokyo, I guess it was. There was a nurse aboard, who was a full colonel, which in those days was a tremendous amount of rank for a nurse. When we got to Shanghai, lo and behold, there was a staff car with four stars on it, which meant there was a four star general there. He had come down to greet her 'cause she was one of his. I remember the reunion and so forth and how surprised we were that a four star general would come down and meet a colonel. She was something else. I guess, she was head of the army nurse corps. I think in those days they didn't have any female generals in the nurse corps, army nurse corps. She was a nice lady.

SH: Do you remember the general's name?

RW: No, it was so long ago. Whoever was in charge, in China, back in those days. They had four stars. It could have been, who would it have been, Stilwell, you think? I don't know, whoever had four stars.

SH: That's the only one I know in China with that rank. That's what I was going to ask next. How long were you in Manila? The war was winding down, where did you go from Manila?

RW: Well, I went from Manila to Guam, or was it Guam to Manila? I don't know. I was in Guam a short time, Andersen Field in Guam. But then all the crews were transferred to Shanghai. For a few months, we flew from Shanghai to Manila to Iwo Jima to Tokyo to Shanghai to Manila to Iwo Jima. You just ran a loop until we got permanently assigned to Tokyo, moved the whole operation over to Tokyo.

SH: So would you be considered part of the occupation forces?

RW: Yes, yes, yes.

SH: What were your duties then?

RW: Just flying, that's all, I guess if I had stayed. It is sort of an interesting story. I didn't know what my future or career was going to be in the air force. I remember, I went in to see the billeting officer in Tokyo when we were there. I had only recently been married, and I said, "I would like to bring my wife over." He said, "Well, how long have you been in the theatre?" I said, "Well, I've been out here about six months or whatever it is." "No, no," he said, "Lieutenant, how long have you been in Japan." I said, "Only about two weeks." He said, "It will take you about a year, a year and a half to get your wife over." I wasn't very happy with that. I said, "I don't think I'm gonna put up with that." So that night we had our usual party, and I sat down to somebody's typewriter and typed out a letter to the commanding officer saying that I have been overseas enough and I want to go home and see my wife and I wanted a discharge. I put it in the colonel's box and went back to my place and went to sleep. The next afternoon, the sergeant woke me up and said, "I got your orders to go home, for discharge, Lieutenant," and that was it. That was it. If the guy had said, "Well, maybe six months to a year," I might have said, "Well, all right six months to a year goes fast." But he said, "A year, to a year and half, and maybe more Lieutenant," and I said, "Phhf." So I came back home to California, and I got discharged in California. Later on, through a friend of mine, I was able to join the New York State Air Guard, and that's the last part of my career, in New York State, during World War II, why that was the end.

SH: When you were discharged, what year was that, in California?

RW: Probably '46, I guess, it was '46, the end of '46. I went in at '42, so this would be the end '46. I think the discharge was effective January '47, I think it was terminal leave.

SH: Did you have to go through the point system like the other people did? I mean, how did they figure it out with you having flown all over the world?

RW: Yeah, well, you are supposed to accumulate. What you are suppose to do is have your log accumulate time. If you spent so much time in a certain area, why you got battle

stars. I had a few battle stars, but some of the guys went for it real big. Some of the guys, for ferrying airplanes, had five and six battlestars and they never saw a battle in their life. It all counted towards discharge. By the time I was ready to get out, there was no problem.

SH: When you got out, in California, you had written this letter ...

RW: Yeah, I said I wanted out.

SH: Did you have any idea what you wanted to do?

RW: I wanted to get back to JP Morgan. I had worked for them before the war. I had an unexpectedly pregnant wife, so I wanted to get back and find someplace to live.

SH: Had you come back to JP Morgan at all?

RW: Oh, yeah, sure.

SH: During your service?

RW: Oh, yeah, they use to send packages, letters and all sorts of things. Oh, yeah, they were very nice.

SH: Then you came back to this area?

RW: I came back to Cranford. I lived with my parents for a while until we bought a house in Cedar Grove and we moved to Cedar Grove.

SH: So your first child was born here in New Jersey?

RW: Yes, he was born, both boys were born in the Summit, Overlook Hospital. Dale, the oldest guy, is fifty-two, and Royce, the youngest guy, is forty-eight. They were both born in Overlook Hospital in Summit.

SH: Do you have other children?

RW: A daughter, who was born in Englewood. She was born in Englewood, and Dallas is thirty-eight. She is a special education teacher in Reno. Dallas is thirty-eight, and she is named after her mother.

SH: Do your two boys live around here?

RW: One lives in Sacramento and the other outside of Sacramento, in Davis, which is a college town. He is a nurse and his wife is a nurse. The oldest boy is a landscaper and his wife works for the newspaper in Sacramento.

SH: Do you get out to visit often?

RW: We were out there last summer. We spent sometime with them and it's too bad it's not closer, but it's not. You gotta go and rent a car and make arrangements and so forth.

SH: When you came back to New Jersey and went back to work for JP Morgan, were you a train commuter from Cranford to the city? Is that how you made your way in?

RW: Initially, I commuted by train, but when we moved to Cedar Grove, I had to commute by bus and train. I had to take a bus from where we lived near the Pompton Turnpike near the Meadowbrook. I had to take a bus from there to Montclair and take a train into New York City. Cranford was a train all the way.

SH: The one question I wanted to ask, too, was did you use your GI Bill benefits at all?

RW: Oh, I went to Columbia when I came back for four years, and I got my Bachelor of Science at Columbia, Class of '51, I think. I bought a house, and, yes, I did use my GI Bill.

SH: Was your degree in finance or business?

RW: Bachelor of Science, in Economics. I majored in econ, economics. That's the old standby, economics. A guy by the name of (Warner?), Dr. Warner, was the department head.

SH: One of the questions that we wanted to ask, too, before we end the interview, is did you have a favorite professor at Rutgers?

RW: At Rutgers, it was Burns, history. Yeah, there was a gentleman by the name of (Chamberlain?). He became a dean at Columbia, and I had him in Constitutional Law, I think it was. I guess it was Larry Chamberlain, and there are others, too, but I remember him in particular.

SH: What is your most vivid memory of World War II?

RW: Well, that's kind of tough. My vivid memory, I was involved in the celebration when the war ended, I was in a place called Dakar, French West Africa. That was sort of a wild party and vivid. But, I guess, speaking from my own personal point of view, when I graduated from navigation school and was made a second lieutenant and a rated navigator, that was one of the highlights for me, personally, 'cause I had achieved a goal, having flunked out of pilot training. It was a goal that I wanted to accomplish, and I would think that was one of my highlights.

SH: Then let's talk about your career that spanned the boom of the '50s until your retirement in '62.

RW: I went in the New York State Air Guard still as a navigator. We had the B-25s there.

JN: What made you choose to go with the National Guard?

RW: Money, we got paid very well. They have a program called Additional Flying Training Periods, where you can get up to twenty-six additional days pay a year by going out and flying weekends and nights. I was bringing up a family and the money looked good. Plus, I wanted to qualify for a pension, which I did. I get about one thousand two hundred, one thousand three hundred dollars a month as a pension from the Air Guard, so it helps.

SH: You said you went over to Germany with the Air National Guard.

RW: Yeah, we got recalled when they had the Berlin Wall. The unit I was in was the 152nd Tac Control Group, which consisted of units on the East Coast. About three thousand of us went over to Germany in '61, I guess it was. I ended up and I was stationed in Mannheim, Germany. Our group went to Mannheim, and I lived in Heidelberg. I was a major then, so life wasn't too bad. We stayed overseas for about a year until Kennedy brought us back.

JN: What did you do in your capacity overseas?

RW: I was the intelligence officer. So I had to move around to the different units.

JN: You were telling us about your duties in Germany as an intelligent officer.

RW: I was to see that the other units had an intelligence program. My initial job was to brief the colonel everyday on what was going on in the world. I remember I was briefing him on what was going on in Vietnam, and he was an irascible gentleman. He said, "Where did you get that word, have you been reading the *New York Times* again?" I said, "No, colonel, that's what going on in Vietnam." He said, "That's a bunch of rubbish." He and I didn't exactly hit it off too well. I spent eleven months in Heidelberg until President Kennedy brought us back. We came back to Andrews Air Force Base, where we had a heroes welcome, I guess, I don't know. Secretary of the Air Force and people like that met us. That was the Berlin thing. I don't mean the airlift, the Berlin Wall.

SH: When they put the wall up?

RW: Yes, yes. President Kennedy went over there and said whatever he said to the Germans. We had what we call offensive air. My unit's primary function was close air support. That's when you have the fighter-bombers and you bring them in. We had units stationed through western Germany and the radar units and the fighters were back in France. I don't know if you know that, but the units were over there for almost a year. I enjoyed it, and I did a lot of traveling.

SH: How did the Germans treat you then?

RW: Then, they treated us very well. We had some close friends in the German custom service and other German people, and we went on trips with them around the area. They treated us very well. I understand that's not true today, but back in '61, it was very good.

SH: This would have been '61?

RW: '51, I think it was '61, wasn't it, or was it '61? Yeah, I guess maybe '61 'cause, yeah, it must be '61 'cause this is '99, so I guess that's about right, '61, yeah.

SH: When you stayed in the Reserves, were you fearful you would wind up going to Vietnam?

RW: Yeah, we were told by an Air Force two star general, who we had in the unit I was with was over in Roslyn, Long Island. We had this two star general in for a dining, that's a formal hosted dinner and all of that stuff. He said, this was during the Vietnamese War, and he said he was trying to get us back on active duty. We had a whole bunch of guys resign their commissions 'cause they weren't too happy about that. Whatever the politics were in Washington, other units were called to active duty. A unit up in Niagara was called and sent to Vietnam and served their time. We were not called. Since then, why the remaining units have been called up a couple of times for various things. For instance, they sent people to this latest thing over in Yugoslavia and so forth. I retired and I had one call up. It didn't help the job. I know my boss wasn't very happy.

SH: That's why I wanted to go back to the ...

RW: Legally, I had to have a job.

JN: Do you think that hurt you?

RW: Yes, I was told it would hurt me. I was told it would hurt me, and I was told I better make up my mind what I was going to do. My vice president had shut the door and locked it and nobody could get in. He said, "I might as well tell you, right now, you missed raises, you missed promotions. If I can't count on you, why," he says, "I can't promote you." Oh, yeah, that's a sacrifice. Whatever they tell you. Legally, I have a job. Technically, you better watch your step. So as soon as I had my time in, I put my retirement in, and it was only then that they made me an officer. I was told that my promotion was being held up. Don't quote me on that. I'm sure JPM will say, "Absolutely not true." Any organization would say it's not true.

SH: But the Korean conflict began before ...

RW: I had nothing to do with that. Actually, during the Korean War, I was in the Reserves but inactive Reserves. I remember I got a telegram requesting me to apply for active duty, which I burned up in the kitchen in the presence of my wife. We sold the

house about that time and moved a couple of times. They never caught up with me. They invited me to volunteer, yeah. I was going to Columbia at night then. I couldn't give that up.

JN: Why did you go back to Columbia University and not Rutgers?

RW: I could commute to Columbia from downtown. It's a bit of a commute. Rutgers would have been logistically impossible. How could have I done it? I took four nights, I took four majors four nights a week, twelve points for four years. I was able to do it. Rutgers, I don't know whether I could have done that. Plus, I was accepted at Columbia for the program.

JN: You have alumni status at both places?

RW: Yes, I belong. The reason why I have alumni status at Rutgers is because of my brother-in-law, Colonel Kramer. He got me, I don't think I'm eligible for alumni status, but as the alumni guy down in New Brunswick, Vince got me somehow, he got me in. That's why I'm a member of the Rutgers alumni as well as the Columbia alumni.

JN: Are you active in any groups right now?

RW: I'm chaplain in the American Legion Post, local American Legion Post. What other units would there be, I wonder.

SH: Did you ever join the VFW?

RW: No, just the American Legion. I guess we don't have in this town a VFW, but we have a Legion Post and I'm quite active in that. I'm just trying to think what other ones. Oh, I belong to organizations. The Reserve Officers Organization and a couple of others. What other ones do you think there would be? My old units have reunions, 152nd Tac Control Group. I didn't go to the last one 'cause I'm having problems walking, but I usually go to them. They usually meet someplace over in White Plains or someplace over there.

SH: You said that you started at Columbia and you got your degree in economics and you stayed in the finance world with JP Morgan. You saw a tremendous change in the American economy.

RW: Oh, yes.

SH: What are some of your memories of that?

RW: Well, I helped with a lot of new issues. They call them initial public offerings today, IPOs, and I spent a couple of years running the back office of the bond department, volume in the amount of money. At the end of the line, one of my last jobs was in charge of a couple hundred people in the government bond department. We were

running on the machine that the Fed, five or six billion dollars worth of activities a day, and you could see things picking up, picking up, picking up and picking up. The scope of the activities, the New York Stock Exchange, when I first started, was just a nickel and dime type thing. Now, they are tremendous, their volume. They run a billion shares a day, and, of course, it's all done by computer. We use to do everything by hand. Those of us who were qualified had to spend a good part of the afternoon signing stock certificates, physically signing stock certificates, and somebody would come along and signature guarantee them. They came up with computers to do everything today. You don't have physical certificates. You have the DTC. They have an organization on Water Street that takes care of everything by computer. That's pretty much what everybody is into today is computerization. You don't actually get treasury notes or bonds or anything like that. They are all book entry. Book entry means that you are given a credit for having so much on the books with the treasury department. You don't physically get it. I remember having crews of twenty, thirty people spending all day just counting securities. Physically handling securities. So it's all done by computer now, and I guess that's good for the people that are running the computers, anyway.

SH: Had there been any scary moments for you on Wall Street?

RW: Any scary moments. Well, it was never my money, of course. It was somebody else's money, and we certainly had our problems where we didn't prove. At the end of the day, we had, everything was electronic, and, as the officer in charge, I couldn't go home until everything was in proof. If everything was in proof, there were certain codes that you hit and so forth. I spent a lot of nights waiting for the system to come in. The last couple years I worked in a bank, I went home by cab almost every night. From downtown Wall Street to here is about thirty-five, forty minutes at eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock at night. So I guess they were scary times. I didn't know whether I was gonna get home or not. Oh, there have been a lot of changes. I'm sure if I went back now, I've been retired fifteen years, I'm sure if I went back now, I wouldn't. Morgan has built a billion plus new bank in downtown, Wall Street. I'm sure everything has changed down there.

SH: How did you meet Mrs. Harriet Waters?

RW: Well, I lived here and her daughter and my youngest son went to grammar school and high school together. She was always active in the Republican Club and Harriet's first husband was president of the Republican Club, and I also was president of the Republican Club. When her husband passed away, I guess I met her at a meeting at the Republican Club and we started dating. We started going out, and eventually, we got married.

SH: Have you stayed active in politics? Did you ever run for office?

RW: Just county committee. Harriet has been very, very active. Very active, she's not so much active because then in this town, the Republican Club, and, I guess, the Democrats are sort of not as active as they use to be. For instance, in the election coming

up next week, there are two vacancies for council. The Democrats have put up one, and the Republicans have put up one. It's the opposition. So there is no opposition. My wife finds a lot of her time is spent on her church. She is very active in the local Congregational Church. She puts her time in there. The politics, not at the moment, but maybe it will come back. But it's very quiet now.

SH: So what do you do to entertain yourself now in your retirement? What are your passions and interests?

RW: Well, when my legs were in better shape, we always went on a couple of trips a year and went out to the West Coast. Harriet's daughter and family have moved east to a place called Warren, Warren, New Jersey, and Roger works for J&J now. So we've been going down there, but we haven't really done anything. As I said, I just came out of the hospital. I was in New York for about ten days. And I don't think we probably can take any trips, but I'm very active in the Masons. I'm treasurer of the local Masonic Lodge in Tenafly and spend a lot of time doing that type of thing.

SH: Do you have any other questions John?

JN: I think I used all my questions I wrote down.

SH: Well, we thank you very much for taking time to do the interview and we will be talking to you soon.

RW: Oh, you don't need anything out of the *Scarlet Letter*, I guess.

SH: Well, we want you to show it to us. This concludes the interview.

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

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 1/24/01
Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy 1/27/01
Edited by Raymond A. Waters, Jr. 3/1/01
Edited by Kathryn Tracy 3/15/01