

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD F. BAUMER

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Brigadier General Edward Ferdinand Baumer on August 16, 2007, in Coronado, California, with Shaun Illingworth. General Baumer, thank you very much for having me here today.

Edward Baumer: Very glad to be here.

SI: I should also mention that this interview was made possible in part by a grant from the Rutgers Alumni Association.

EB: Oh, good.

SI: They gave us a grant to help with the cost of this trip.

EB: Very glad to know that.

SI: To begin, for the record, could you tell me where and when you were born?

EB: I was born on December 5, 1913, ninety-three years ago, and I was born, where? in Irvington, New Jersey, a suburb of Newark. ...

SI: I want to ask you a little bit about your family background.

EB: All right.

SI: What were your parents' names?

EB: My parents' names were Augusta; wait until I think of her maiden name. ... I've forgot it. I'll think of it.

SI: You wrote here Wagemann.

EB: Wagemann, Wagemann, W-A-G-E-M-A-N-N. She was German, born in Germany and came over here as a small child, met my father, Ferdinand, Fred Baumer, who was American, and they married in New Jersey. ... Then, I was born, after they were living in this particular three-story thing [home]. I had some interesting experiences as a young child. [laughter]

SI: All right, we will get to those in a second.

EB: All right, okay, whenever you want to do it.

SI: What about your father's family? Where were they from?

EB: I don't know too much about that. I know that he came from a fairly middle-class family, but his father also had had a patent or so on what later became a rubber of some kind, but it never panned out. So, he never got any money for it, but he was fairly well-to-do. My father grew up without education, really, in the seed business in New Jersey. ... Finally, later, after working for

the man who had the oldest seed company in New Jersey, he actually bought the Eaton, E-A-T-O-N, Seed Company, and the reason I'm using that name is because, later on, I'll tell you about my luck of getting some money, or I would've never gone to Rutgers. ...

SI: Do you know how he got involved in that business?

EB: I don't remember that. I don't know that. I don't know. Well, I know he worked in it, but I don't know beyond that. I don't know.

SI: Do you know where in Germany your mother's family was from, where she was born?

EB: Yes, she was born in Hanau. It's a suburb of Hanau-am-Main, M-A-I-N, because there are two Hanaus there, Hanau-am-Main, and it's up north of Frankfurt, and a major city, Hanau. ... A poor family, let's see, I'm trying to think now; no, it actually [was] her mother's father [who] was a beer, what do they call it?

SI: A brewer?

EB: Brewer. He was a brewer, in Germany, yes. ... She came from a very modest family means, modest means. That's about all [I know]. I can't tell you a lot more. She had sisters, one of whom was a widow and lived with us for a while, and that will lead, later, to a story when I was about a year or two old. ... Well, it's something that happened then. When you want to know that, tell me.

SI: Did you ever hear the story of how your parents met?

EB: No, no, I don't know that, don't know that.

SI: You just know it was in New Jersey.

EB: Yes, in New Jersey. I don't know. I don't know that. I don't know if there's anybody alive who knows that now, either. [laughter]

SI: They met and married, and then, settled in Irvington.

EB: Irvington, right, but, then, it was all white. Now, it's all black. [laughter] ...

SI: What do you remember about the neighborhood that you grew up in, or the building that you grew up in?

EB: I only remember after I was, like, five or seven or eight years old and, I remember, we lived in an apartment ... in Newark and I went to primary school there, and then, Southside High School in Newark. I went there. I became a swimmer and I was a swimmer there. I was lucky to be able to swim well. I had the school record for two or three years there, in breaststroke and short, fifty, hundred-yard freestyle, and I can't remember a lot. I don't think I had a lot of buddies, because I was helping [out my family] at the time, my time of 1929 and '30, the bad

time. My father also lost his business, and then, I had to help in deliveries. ... I remember going out in the snow ... on a bicycle and delivering flowers from my mother's flower shop and that sort of stuff. I remember hard times, too, yes.

SI: Before we get into the Depression, do you remember anything about Prohibition-era Newark?

EB: I don't remember a lot about that. We weren't a drinking family much, so, that was that.

SI: You do not remember if there were speakeasies around the area?

EB: No, I don't remember that. No, I don't remember that, no.

SI: As a child, did your social activities center around the neighborhood or school or church?

EB: Well, neighborhood and family, really, family more than anything, I guess, but I didn't have any [buddies]. Well, in high school, I had one buddy in swimming. I knew him pretty well, but, other than that, I didn't have any other close connections. ... I always had to work and bring in money, so, I was limited in time to go and have a good time. There wasn't anything for me to think that I didn't have to work. I had to work. [laughter]

SI: When you were very young, did you have to do chores around the house?

EB: Oh, I did that, yes, I did that, yes, right around the house, yes.

SI: What about little jobs, like a paper route?

EB: Yes, I did a paper route, did a paper route, yes. I don't remember a lot of things about that, way back. I remember more about when I was in college.

SI: Okay. It sounds like you had to help out your father a lot.

EB: Oh, I did, yes, yes, and my mother, because my mother was the principal source of income after he lost the seed business and couldn't recover it, through insurance ... and things like that. So, we were hard up. So, I remember that.

SI: Your mother had a florist shop.

EB: She had a flower shop, yes, and seemed to make enough to get us by, and that's about it. ... She was a hard worker, as my father was, too, and I was, too. I guess all three of us were. I was a lone child, so, I didn't have any brothers or sisters to worry about. ...

SI: Did you have an extended family in the area?

EB: No. Well, we did have [some]. See, my father had a brother who was, eventually, fire chief in Irvington and I used to go visiting there. He had a little farm, sort of, up in northern Irvington

and I'd visit there on occasion. ... Automobiles were coming on there and I, for the first time, saw a Model T Ford, I remember that, but there's a lot I just don't remember very well.

SI: What about the living environment in general? You mentioned that automobiles were not very common.

EB: Yes. No, they weren't common at all, no. I had a bicycle. I had to bike around all the time.

SI: Did everyone have electricity and indoor plumbing?

EB: Just coming on, yes, just coming, electricity, just coming to the point where we thought it was something. [laughter] I don't remember that well, but the family did [have it], I know.

SI: You mentioned a story earlier concerning your aunt.

EB: Oh, yes. What happened [was], we were on the third floor of this three-story building in Irvington and my aunt was living with us. ... She was doing the wash and taking it down and hanging it up on the, didn't have a drier then, you'd hang it out on a clothesline, out in the yard, and I was ... in a highchair in the kitchen, on four wheels. ... I pushed myself away from something or other, over to the window, where she was, and she waved to me and I waved to her, and I leaned out and I fell over, from the third floor. Now, this was really something. I landed with my head on the ground, on the grass, and my body on the cement pavement. If I had landed anywhere differently, I wouldn't be here today. So, it was one of those very, very lucky things for me, at a very early age. [laughter] I wasn't even one year old. I didn't even have a broken bone, amazingly. The doctor said it was a real miracle. [laughter] So, that was the first thing. I've had other miracles, too, happen. [laughter] I'll tell you some other things as we go along, yes.

SI: That is remarkable.

EB: Yes. Not many people know about that, because I haven't talked about it. [laughter]

SI: That is good. Your parents were obviously very busy with their businesses.

EB: Very busy.

SI: Were they involved in the community in any other way?

EB: No, not really, no, no, they weren't. ... Neither one went to high school, so, you know, they were [self-educated]. They wanted me, very much, to go to college, but, at the time, it didn't look as though I was going to get the money until just almost before I was ready to go and wanted to go. ... Then, finally, the widow of the man who sold the business to my father, Alida B. Eaton, E-A-T-O-N, I thought of her as my grandmother, she wasn't a real grandmother, she gave me a thousand dollars. If I didn't have that thousand dollars, I never [would have gone], and I had a scholarship for swimming and I had a couple other jobs that I did. I washed dishes in the fraternity house. ... But I had enough to get by that way. ... Without that thousand dollars, I

never would have entered Rutgers. So, I've been always grateful to her for having started me on that, and I've tried to help other people, too.

SI: On your survey, it says that your father lost the business in 1930, just before you would have entered.

EB: Yes.

SI: It must have been a very trying time.

EB: Very trying time. It was a tough time, '30 to '34, boy, believe me. Very few people had good jobs and, well, it was a very difficult period of time, '30 to '34, and I had to really struggle hard to stay in there. First of all, one of the reasons I got into the military [was], I got a dollar a day for the ROTC. ... Thirty dollars a month, I got that check and that was really good money, and then, let's see, I had a job in the college print shop, which later led to something very interesting, in World War II. I invented something that was made by that company, Addressograph-Multigraph, where I worked as a freshman and through the years there, several years, in the college print shop. ... I used to make plates for the things, ... for printing and so forth, but I was pretty lucky, I guess, to be able to get that job, and then, later, to have that thing happen, where I devised something. When we come to World War II, I'll tell you about that, okay. ...

SI: Why did you choose Rutgers in New Brunswick?

EB: ... George Kramer was a buddy of mine in high school and he was a leader, a real leader, and he later became president of our class. George Kramer, he's dead now, for some time, but I was in his fraternity house, Alpha Sigma Phi. ... Well, he and another fellow, N. Ellsworth Wheaton, [who] was Class of '33, but Kramer was Class of '34, as I was, and those two, I guess, were more involved [than anyone else] in getting me to come to Rutgers, and then, also, to pledge in the fraternity, ... I'd say that.

SI: What do you remember about your first days at Rutgers, coming on campus as a freshman?

EB: Well, I don't remember a lot about it. I was so damn busy. [laughter] I was trying to get settled in the jobs I had and I did stay very busy, because I'd go from one to the other, fast, and then, I washed dishes at the fraternity house, five days a week. So, I earned my meals for that and that was good.

SI: Were you rushed by the fraternity right away?

EB: No, not right away. I was in the, what do they call it? the dorm, a new dorm, a very nice one. I was very lucky and I think I shared a room with George Kramer, if I remember, and it was through that scholarship and the jobs that I was able to be there at all, the first year, and the other years, too, but I kept busy. ... I got into a lot of things and I ... made time to do these things, like, I was in two of the [English honor societies]. I liked English literature and I eventually made the two honorary English societies, Peithossophian and Philosophian, and I was very

pleased about that, that I was entered in those two. ... That's been helpful to me, because I've been editor and publisher of different things now, and so, I think that helped me, probably from those early days.

SI: How much of an academic leap was going to Rutgers for you? Did you feel like high school prepared you well?

EB: It must have, because I, otherwise, wouldn't have made it, I guess. I think South Side was a good school, high school, and I did my homework well. I didn't shirk attendance or doing homework. So, I think I did what the teacher asked me to do and I got through. I didn't make any big hits of excellence in grades, because I was so darn busy with running from one thing to another that I didn't have time to study enough. ...

SI: In high school or at Rutgers?

EB: Well, I'm talking about at Rutgers, really, and so, I don't know. It's all blurry, of course, now, anyhow.

SI: Would you have to go to work before and after class? Can you talk about what a typical day would be like?

EB: Oh, I got up early, like this morning; I got up at five o'clock. I had to do work, so, I got up at five o'clock and I did work. [laughter] Oh, I enjoyed college life very much. I envied the guys in my fraternity house. I used to remember seeing; there was a big table out there for the mail and I knew the guys who were always going to get a check every week from their parents. ... I never got a check from my parents and I used to envy them. Later on, I thought, "Gee, I was lucky to have my jobs and [to have] learned a lot of things through this, since I had to do it for myself." So, that was probably lucky, that I was that way, but I don't know. I enjoyed all the classes I had, even, like, I had, ... not geography; what did we call it? There's an old building there, too, studied the planets and all that sort of stuff.

SI: Astronomy or geology?

EB: Yes, geology. Geology, I enjoyed that very much. I didn't particularly care for math. I liked English very much. History, I liked, and civic work. I liked that, too, but, no, no particular [interests], other than that.

SI: Going back to your freshman year, do you remember any of the Rutgers traditions, like hazing new students?

EB: Oh, I remember that, yes, of course. It didn't bother me. I just took it [laughter] as it came, and that's all. I didn't try to fight it. It was tradition. I was very proud of the fact that ... Rutgers was [founded in] 1766 and one of the oldest colleges, and I was very proud of that, of going to Rutgers.

SI: Do you remember some of the things you had to do as a freshman?

EB: I don't remember; oh, paddling and that sort of stuff, yes, you know. I remember that.

SI: You were on the swim team all four years.

EB: Yes, all four years, and I had a scholarship for that, too, yes. It wasn't a lot, a couple hundred dollars a year or so, but it helped all the way. ...

SI: What were your particular events?

EB: Oh, I was good in the short, fifty-yard freestyle and a-hundred-yard freestyle, and then, eventually, got into breaststroke. I did that, actually, in high school. I started swimming breaststroke and I won. The first time I went out to swim in the breaststroke, I broke the school record for it. So, I guess I had done pretty well in the breaststroke, but, then, I swam there [at Rutgers], ... but, then, in about the second year, maybe it was the third year, they thought I'd do better in water polo. So, I was put on the water polo team and, eventually, did very well, in my junior, senior year, and I was selected as All-American Water Polo in 1934, my senior year. So, that was a great honor. I was very happy about that.

SI: You just switched from the swim team to water polo.

EB: To water polo, yes, and then, I did more water polo than swimming, yes.

SI: You still continued to swim.

EB: Oh, still continued, yes, because I wanted the scholarship. See, I didn't get the scholarship for water polo, I got it for swimming. [laughter]

SI: Who was the coach of swimming and water polo?

EB: Well, then, it was Reilly, Jim Reilly. He's dead now, I'm sure. ... I've been down there since, a couple of times, since they have the new pool and I was very proud to see that. ... They had better things than Princeton and some others. Now, Princeton and Harvard ... have gotten their own thing, as good or better than Rutgers, I guess, but Rutgers really ... outpaced them all with that facility there, over across the [Raritan] River there.

SI: The Werblin Center.

EB: Yes.

SI: What did you think of Coach Reilly? I have heard about him from other interviewees.

EB: Well, he was a tough guy, but he didn't know how to swim himself. [laughter] ... He had a son who was a very good swimmer and he was a good coach, I think, a very good coach. I enjoyed him and enjoyed being on his team.

SI: Do any of the meets, either in water polo or swimming, stand out in your mind as being memorable?

EB: I remember, one time, in order to beat Yale, who was a traditional rival in water polo, swimming, as a forward, I was a forward; oh, I have to tell you this. We were different then than now. Now, you have seven men on a team. You also have the seventh man as the goalie, but, in our time, one of the three backs had to also serve as goalie. So, there's just six men. We had a ball that was like a soccer ball, except the soccer ball's solid. Our ball was only two-thirds inflated. So, you gripped it with your fingers and you tossed it. You didn't take it like that, the way you do with a soccer ball, or kick or anything like that. ... The scoring was a little different when we played. But I'd say the outstanding thing, that you asked me about, that I can remember, once, we wanted to beat Yale and we were very close, neck-and-neck. ... You had to go in with the ball ahead of you. So, we had to time it, so that the back or the goalie who threw the ball, and you had to throw the whole distance of the pool and you had to know ... where he's throwing it, ... I had to come in and up after the ball's dropped, and then, grab the ball and touch the goal. ... I made the three-point goal and we won. So, I remember that very well. That probably helped to make me All-American. So, that was a good thing. I remember that quite well. That's about all.

SI: Who were some of the other rivals, besides Yale?

EB: Oh, City College. ... They had a coach who condoned putting Vaseline on them. That was illegal, because you ... couldn't grab a guy, you see, and we used to [apply] tape on top of the pants and on the bottom, so [that] they couldn't grab underneath and hold you, but they would put the Vaseline on and that was absolutely illegal. ... We fixed their wagon. [laughter] We beat them anyhow, but, boy, it was a dirty [trick]. I remember that, because ... none of the schools were doing that. We never played West Point. We played Navy each year and we played others. I think we played Dartmouth, I think we played, oh, can't think of it; oh, always Lehigh and Lafayette. They were always traditional rivals. ...

SI: Did you play Princeton?

EB: Princeton, yes, sure, Princeton, of course, yes, we did. I had a good teammate who was a diver. ... It was in my freshman year. We went to Princeton to play and he tried to dive off of the high board and broke his neck and died and that was a real bad day for us. I always remember that. Augie Heinzman, he was, but I don't remember much more about them, individually, than that.

SI: Initially, you were in the dorm.

EB: Yes. No, then, I lived in the fraternity house, from sophomore year on, sophomore, junior and senior, because I had to be there to wash the dishes. I had to get up early to do the dishes and do other chores. So, I did that, but I lived right there, shared a room with two other guys.

SI: How important was it to be part of a fraternity in your day?

EB: I think very important. ... There was a lot of anti-fraternity attitude there, and still, today, there is, too. I know, but I think the fraternity did a lot of good, helped a lot of guys, and I had good friends there that helped me and I enjoyed it. I thought it was a very good experience that I hadn't had before. I didn't have brothers or anything like that at home, you see, so, it was a substitute for a family.

SI: When you say anti-fraternity feeling, do you mean from other students or the administration?

EB: No, I mean, not necessarily the administration, but I think there are, today even, I'm sure there are, a lot of them that don't join fraternities because they think they're bad or something or other. I just have that idea, I don't know, and I think that's wrong.

SI: Did they have the Scarlet Barbs back in your day?

EB: They have what?

SI: The Scarlet Barbs.

EB: Scarlet Barb?

SI: Short for "Barbarians."

EB: *Targum*? Oh, no.

SI: There was a group in the 1930s, probably in the later 1930s, called the Scarlet Barbarians, Scarlet Barbs.

EB: Oh, I didn't know that.

SI: They were like a fraternity of non-fraternity people.

EB: Oh, I didn't know that.

SI: They were a non-fraternity fraternity.

EB: Oh, non-fraternity, I see.

SI: They called themselves "Barbarians," as opposed to the "Greeks."

EB: I see, okay.

SI: What about politics on campus?

EB: What class were you, by the way?

SI: 2001.

EB: 2001, okay. ...

SI: What about politics on campus? Were they discussed at all?

EB: All the time. [laughter] I made Student Council and Cap and Skull. Cap and Skull was a big thing that I was very proud of, because Cap and Skull had a tremendous history, and they tap twelve guys for scholarship. How I got that, [I do not know], because I had "Cs," pretty much, but I had good [activities involvement]. Well, I've got a better thing I can show you about that, because it was the hundredth anniversary of it and, wait a minute, I think I have it here or I have it in another [file]. Here's a picture I wanted to show you, too. ... That's a picture of me ... a year or two ago ... with [Dorothy] "Dodo" Cheney. Well, she isn't on that picture, but Chris Evert is well-known all over the world, of course, as a great [tennis player], and then, Diane Mulloy, married name Mazzone, is the daughter of Gardner Mulloy, who was probably the leading tennis player in his era. Here's another one of the things I was going to give you there. ...

SI: For the record, I am looking at a photograph of General Baumer with Chris Evert and Diane Mazzone, who is the daughter of Gardner Mulloy. I am also looking at an article from the Rutgers School of Law in Newark alumni magazine titled, "Defying the Age Stereotype." It is a profile of your tennis career.

EB: I'll save these for later on, when we get to tennis. This is about tennis. Wait until I get you one other thing, though. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Can we talk about some of your other activities at Rutgers?

EB: *Targum*, I was sports editor of the *Targum*. I enjoyed that, writing.

SI: How did you get involved with that?

EB: Well, first of all, I don't know how I had the time, because I was squeezing it in between a lot of other things, swimming, water polo, and so forth. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the writing, the sports part, and I just liked it. [laughter]

SI: The *Targum* was a weekly paper then.

EB: Yes, yes, a weekly thing, so, a busy thing.

SI: I have looked through some of the old *Targums*. The sports part seems to be what most people focused on.

EB: Sports, yes, right. Well, that's what I was involved in, sports, and I enjoyed that very much.

SI: Sports was very popular on the campus.

EB: Sure, right, and I liked football and, you know, all that sort of stuff. ...

SI: Did you have to go to a lot of the games?

EB: Yes, I got to a lot of the games, fortunately, yes. Oh, I was a cheerleader. I forgot about that. I was head cheerleader, in my senior year, yes. So, I had a white sweater with a big "R" and did all the jazz, all the things that went with cheerleading.

SI: Was it just leading calls? Was there any kind of gymnastics involved with it?

EB: Well, there were some minor gymnastics, not a lot, but we had a pretty good team. I think there were six of us, or something like that, and I was very proud that I had that white [sweater]. Usually, the letters for the other sports all had black sweaters and red letters, but this is the only one that had a white sweater with a red "R," and I was very proud of it.

SI: That was when the games were played on Nielson Field.

EB: Yes, that's right, and I would be down there. That's how I got to the game free, too. That was another big thing. I couldn't afford to go and pay. [laughter]

SI: Can you describe what a game at Nielson Field was like? It is hard to imagine now, because there is a parking deck and other buildings there.

EB: Yes. Well, it was open, wide open, very small stands. I'm sure we didn't have more than a few thousand people, because, ... in our Class of '34, I think we only had two hundred and some enter, something like that, and only a hundred and some finished. They didn't make it through, mostly for financial reasons.

SI: Would you say that most of your classmates had to work their way through, like you did?

EB: No, no. In my fraternity house, I'd say there were maybe, probably, twenty-five or thirty living in the house and, [as] I've said, they all had some support from their family, except one or two others like myself. I knew who they were, of course, and I envied them, but, ... after a while, it didn't bother me. I just did what I had to do. It just didn't bother me. ... They didn't treat me as an inferior or anything like that. They admired me for working, I think, so, that was good.

SI: What was being in a fraternity like back then? Were there a lot of parties, social events?

EB: I had a girl, at sixteen-and-a-half or seventeen, and ... I didn't have much time to date her. She lived in Newark and, once in a while, I'd invite her down to parties, to the dances and things like that. As a sophomore, I was selected as chairman of the sophomore hop. That was the big dance for the class that year, the second year. Ozzie Nelson, who was then [a famous band leader and recording star], he was Class of '27 and I was Class of '34, of course, and he had never

been back to the campus. ... In 1929 and '30, ... after he was out, he'd taken off, playing with his band all over, and he had Harriet Hilliard as his song gal and married her and they were a very attractive couple. ... He had never been back to the campus. So, somebody said, "Why don't you go up and [get him to play here]?" He played at the Glen Island Casino in Long Island and I took Elizabeth, later my wife, along and we went up there and convinced him to come down and he played there [at Rutgers]. He didn't cut the fee too much, because we had to raise a lot of money to bring him down there, [laughter] but it was fun and I enjoyed that very much.

SI: He played Big Band style music.

EB: Big Band style music, yes, really, and later became [a TV star], you know, the Ozzie Nelson TV show [*The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*], and I, later, had the interesting thing; ... I forgot about this. My daughter, I have the one daughter, later in life, after she got out of college, she didn't go to Rutgers, but ... she had a job in [the] San Francisco area with ... a TV commentator, Jim Day, in San Francisco. ... She worked for him and did all the producing. ... He had some of the most prominent names that he interviewed and she would arrange for them to come and do this and that. ... Many years later, Ozzie was playing in wherever I was, in LA or someplace else, and we were invited up to sit ... in the listener's box there ... when he was interviewed on the Jim Day Show. It wasn't for music, it was [that] he was interviewed and his [wife], Harriet, was there and I had met her and she invited us to sit in the box, and so, that was fun. ... I learned there something that I'll tell you, later in life, was important to me. He was a great milk addict, and I was, too. ... To this day, I've never had a cup of coffee.

SI: Really?

EB: That's strange, isn't it? because most people have a lot of coffee.

SI: Particularly in the military.

EB: Yes, that's right, in the military, that's right. ... Oh, he was doing a book, Ozzie was, and he came in with a book, it's just out in print, and he scribbled something in [it] and we shook hands. ... He said, "To my milk drinking friend," and so forth, and so on, and I still have that some place, but that was Ozzie. Oh, the interesting thing is, now, today, I play in a group of tennis addicts, usually age fifty on up, you know, and I'm the oldest one in the group, and one of them is a guy, Dick, Dick Bensfield, who was the manager for Ozzie Nelson and his group, and so, we had a lot to talk about there. So, that was a Rutgers connection. ...

SI: It sounds like a lot of your social activities centered around the fraternity, dances there, parties there.

EB: Yes, right.

SI: Did you do anything social outside of the fraternity setting?

EB: Didn't have time to, no, didn't have time to.

SI: You had the job at the print shop all four years.

EB: Yes, I did, and, ... fortunately, I went up in the military [ROTC] and I became the cadet colonel. I got the Distinguished Soldier Award and that entitled me to a choice of one of three things. I was young when I went in, at sixteen-and-a-half, so, I was twenty-and-a-half when I was graduated. ... The three choices I had were, after graduation, to go into the regular Army, I would have been admitted as a second lieutenant, or go to West Point, ... without examination, I could be admitted, and the third was to go in as a Reserve officer. I chose the Reserve officer thing, and it's good, because, later on, I probably never would have made the one-star [brigadier general's rank] if I had been in the others. I don't know, maybe I would, but maybe I wouldn't.

SI: Why did you choose the Reserves?

EB: Well, because, then, I could do the law school, too. I could do the law school and, also, I could go on active duty. It was very important to me to be able to go on active duty ... every summer, for two weeks, where I'd get pay. In addition, Prudential was a very generous company. They let me have one week's pay on two weeks' military duty. At the same time, I was getting paid two weeks' military [pay], as a second lieutenant and a first lieutenant. ... Then, the World War II broke [out] and I went in and, finally; well, that's another story, when I started working for General Bradley. Okay, go ahead, I'll wait until we get to that. [laughter] ...

SI: You started out as an English and Latin major.

EB: Yes, yes.

SI: How did you decide to get into those majors?

EB: Oh, the choice of ... English as a major, I liked English, always liked the idea of spelling and things like that. I was usually the best speller in the class and I liked the English language. I just liked the history of it. I studied a lot of it and I liked that, and I liked the Latin because Latin had such a great part to play in other languages and other things. ... I don't know why. History was another thing that I liked.

SI: Do any of your classes or professors stand out in your memory?

EB: I'm trying to remember now. There were a couple of them, very good ones. ... They're dead now, of course, but they were all very, very good. They encouraged me, I know, and, if not, I wouldn't have, I don't think, done a lot of things, either in college or later on in life, really, without their encouragement. So, that's that.

SI: When did you get the idea in your head that you wanted to go to law school?

EB: I guess it started even when I was in undergraduate work and I had seen other people [go through it]. I had friends and so on, lawyers, but, when I went to Prudential, I went there with the idea of getting into the law department and, at that time, in New Jersey, they only had the clerkships you needed to be able to get in the bar, to take the bar and become a lawyer, in a

couple companies, [Public Service] Gas and Electric Company in Newark, Prudential, and maybe one other, and they only had two spots for those, or one or two spots like that, and I got one of those. That brought me into the [company]. I was first ... not in the law department; I was in the claims department for the first year, and then, I applied and I was transferred to the law department, and then, I got the law clerkship. ... That was very important, because, without that, I couldn't take the bar. ... I took the bar at the end and passed that. ... I didn't tell you this. I had to wait [for my Reserve commission]. All my other classmates were getting their commissions in June, when we graduated. I couldn't get one, because I was only ... twenty-and-a-half. You had to be twenty-one. So, I had to wait until December 5th of my year of graduation to get my commission. So, I was glad to finally get it, [laughter] so that I could go on active duty and get some pay.

SI: How did you become aware of the job at Prudential? How did you get involved in that?

EB: I can't remember. I really don't remember now. [laughter] Oh, the gal I married was a legal secretary at Prudential, so, I think that helped me to decide to try to get in there as a legal startup. [laughter] That was it.

SI: Okay. It must have been difficult, in 1934, to go out and look for a job.

EB: Oh, jobs were very, very difficult to get. In-between '30 to '34, and even a little after that, you just couldn't get a job. I remember making money stretch really a lot in that period of time.

SI: How would you do that?

EB: Well, didn't eat as much. [laughter] That was easy. Oh, I always seemed to be hungry, I don't know. [laughter]

SI: Did you live at home when you were working and going to school?

EB: I lived at home. We were in a very tiny place. I had a big police dog; poor thing, when I think of it. We had to keep him out, mostly, on the fire escape, because there wasn't enough room in the apartment for him. ... Well, I think it's amazing that my wife married me, because I was still very young, not earning much money, although; oh, one big, very important thing. When I passed the bar in 1937. ... I finished law school in '37. Oh, I took the bar in the fall of '37. ... Prudential was so great, the minute I passed that and I got the notice of that, they doubled my salary. ... Oh, I started at seventy-five dollars a month, a month, not a week, and free lunches at Prudential, and I was, by that time, getting a hundred and twenty-five [dollars]. So, then, they made it to two hundred-and-fifty [dollars]. That was really [fantastic]. Well, I thought I was the richest guy in the world, two hundred-and-fifty dollars a month. [laughter] ...

SI: Were you mostly working in an office?

EB: Oh, I was mostly in an office, although, after I passed the bar, I was given an opportunity to be in the courts, and so forth, in different categories for the law department, but it was strictly commercial, corporate law as such.

SI: Did you specialize in that at Rutgers Law School-Newark?

EB: No. It was that I had all different phases of law I had to pass at law school, yes.

SI: There was no specialization.

EB: No specialization, no.

SI: Does anything stand out about your time at Rutgers Law School-Newark?

EB: I know I liked it. I always thought, "If I had a father or uncle as a lawyer, I would be working hard for him and getting a lot more training than maybe I did at Prudential," but I did all right at Prudential. Oh, later, I was the law librarian at ... Prudential, and that was a very good thing that happened to me. At first, when I was designated law librarian, I thought, "Oh, my God, with all those books, what am I going to do?" Well, I learned something, in a hurry. It's amazing how you find out things. I learned that most lawyers don't know how to use law books. They don't know how to use [*Corpus*] *Juris Secundum* and some others, how to find things. ... As law librarian, I soon learned a lot of things that other lawyers didn't know. That helped me throughout my whole law career and in other ways, to find things. So, that was kind of a lucky break.

SI: Prudential had its own law library.

EB: Yes, very much so, very much so.

SI: How big was the legal staff?

EB: Oh, they had a big staff. See, they were a big company and one of the biggest, you know, and I can't remember how many lawyers there were, but, well, there must have been fifty to a hundred lawyers, something like that, I don't know, a lot of lawyers.

SI: Were you the law librarian before World War II?

EB: It was before, yes, because, then, I ... left Rutgers [Prudential?], I was called to duty, in ... '39 or '40, and it was there that I met General [Omar] Bradley, because I was ordered to the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. I decided, at that point, I wasn't going to get much richer and my wife and I, then my wife-to-be, we decided to get married. ... We went to ... the Bahamas for a week, or something like that, and enjoyed that very much, came back, and I was called to Benning and the Infantry School as the adjutant. That was a good job, an important job, and that's where my law background, my love of English, a lot of things, kind of came all together, that it helped me to get that job, I think. ... Out of that, I came to meet [Omar Bradley]. I forget who was the commandant at the time, but a lieutenant colonel was sent down to head up the school. He was Omar Bradley. He was a lieutenant colonel, never got to be a full colonel. They made him a brigadier general. He skipped, one of the very few. I never heard of anybody

skipping a grade. But he was a West Pointer and really, really had the stuff, ended up as a five-star general, you know. [laughter] So, he had it.

SI: You were called back into the Army before Pearl Harbor.

EB: Yes.

SI: What did you know about what was happening in the world and the nation at that time? Were you following the news out of Europe?

EB: Oh, very much so. Yes, everybody was. We knew we were in it and we knew we had to win it and I felt very lucky to have had the training I had. ... Later on in life, when I had children, I tried to tell them, "Look, don't just be enlisted in [the military]. If you go in as an officer, it'll be a lot better. You can serve your country better if you do," and each of them went into ROTC as a result of it. One of them is still alive, Dick Baumer. He went to Pomona College and Claremont College. ... Later, he went into the military for ten years, regular Army, and then, later, came to join me in the business I had. ... He retired only a year or two ago as a full colonel, "bird colonel," and he's living now in the LA area. They had one son, Christopher, who is now married and has a child, one of my five great-grandchildren. They have one of them. So, that's that. I have something I can show you, which you may not need; let me get it for you. It's the roster of the Baumer Family. Let me get it for you, okay?

[TAPE PAUSED]

EB: All right, okay.

SI: What were your impressions of the Rutgers ROTC and the training you received?

EB: I thought it was excellent. One of the men that helped me to plan my life was Colonel Arvid P. Croonquist. He was our PMS&T, professor of military science and tactics, and he was a great guy. He was the one who helped select me as cadet colonel, I guess, and I got along very well with him and, later in life, I got to know his family well, after I was married. We'd go to visit them and things like that. So, I enjoyed that very, very much and he was a leader. He was not a West Pointer. He came from ... Washington State and was a colonel and he was particularly pleased when I was selected as a brigadier general. He was still alive at that time, so, he was glad of that. ...

SI: You stayed in contact with him.

EB: Well, he's dead now, but I did stay in touch with him until he died, yes. He was a real leader and a wonderful guy, and I enjoyed him and his family very much, one of the few real friends I had through my life, I'd say.

SI: What about the training itself? Was it just standard infantry officer training then?

EB: Yes, it was standard, nothing unusual about it. I remember, ... we went to Plattsburgh Barracks in New York on six weeks' training in the summertime and that was good, a lot of different experiences in that, but I enjoyed military life very much. ... I came very close to thinking, well, I wanted to make it a career, but, then, the law thing kind of beat it out, sort of, so, I figured I'd do the law then.

SI: When you were in the Reserves, from 1934 to World War II ...

EB: Yes.

SI: When you would go on your two weeks of active duty ...

EB: Yes, two weeks' duty? I was called to Fort Dix, Camp Dix, now Fort Dix, I guess, and other assignments. I had some very interesting assignments even after World War II. I want to tell you one of those, when we get to that, after World War II. But this was after World War II, that involved this General Williston [B.] Palmer, four-star general. ...

SI: You can say it now.

EB: All right, okay. Well, what happened is that, after World War II, as a Reservist, I was still in. ... I was a lieutenant colonel when I got out of World War II, and I was promoted to full colonel, and then, I was in there for a few years. At that point, General Palmer had been Vice Chief of Staff, and then, was made ... commander of all US forces in Europe in [the] post-war, you know, build up. He had a castle outside of Paris and he liked me from when I served under him in the US, and so, he arranged to send for me. ... I thought it would be for two weeks and he said, "No," he said, "I'm going to have you for four weeks," and I said, "But, General, I hear the law and everything says I can only go, as a Reservist, for two weeks." He said, "I'll fix that," [laughter] and he did. So, for about three years, I did this and I did some very interesting things for him, because he was the kind of a guy; first of all, he was a bachelor and, as a bachelor, he'd always said, if the Army wanted him to be married, they would have issued him a wife. [laughter] He was a tough, old bird. [laughter] He was a West Pointer. He had me do; well, first of all, ... he had a lot of generals and admirals and, you know, all the forces were reporting to him, in Europe, in Paris there, I mean, the one-stars, two-stars, three-stars. I don't know whether the four-stars [reported to him], too, but he was a four-star [general] at the time. But he always liked to have something outside the channels, regular channels of communication, channels of command. He always followed the channels of command, what these generals and admirals were telling him, but he wanted to get [independent information], if he had a certain thing he ... wanted to know about. ... I'll tell you one incident, just one alone, but he used to send me up to the Army in Germany and the Navy in the Mediterranean. I'll tell you about that incident, which was a very striking one. He wanted to know something about the submarines that the Sixth Fleet was using in the Mediterranean, our Sixth Fleet. We were still in the war with Japan. ... We'd beaten Germany, but it was in that period and I was; well, that's another story, too, involves Paris. I'll tell you about that. Now ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

EB: All right, he wanted to know more about ... how they stacked the silos for the missiles that the submarines carried. So, I was told to go down to the port of debarkation for this particular point, which was Marseilles. ... I got aboard the chopper there and we got up to twenty thousand feet and, all of a sudden, I didn't know what I was to do. ... Finally, the orders came through, through to the captain of the ship, of the chopper, that I was to go down in the submarine. I'd never been down in a submarine before. Here we are, twenty thousand feet up and I looked out. I didn't see anything down there and this guy smiled and he said, this captain, he said, "You'll soon see a periscope come up and you'll see that and we'll follow it for a while. In the meantime, we'll get down [to a] lower level, because you're going to go down on a rope ladder and go aboard the submarine." Well, fortunately, I was nimble at that time [laughter] and I did get on this thing, and then, [with] the wind and stuff, when you're on a rope ladder, you're moving, way, swings like that, you know. You're really swinging like in the circus, and I got down on the thing and almost [made it], and then, they had a couple of guys on the deck of the submarine that came up and surfaced, to grab me, so [that] I didn't go in the drink. ... They grabbed me, and then, they got me down below. So, I was with them for three or four days. I usually went out for about a week on those trips and that was a very interesting trip, because, then, I had a chance to see everything aboard the sub, including the missiles and how they stacked them, how they fired them and that sort of stuff, and I gave a report to General Palmer. ... It was part of his job to have dinners. He always had this big dinner party, almost every night, and he'd have an ambassador, he'd have a president of a country, he'd have all these very top people and maybe fifteen, twenty people for dinner. ... I'd come in, tired as the devil, because I'd been working hard on the trip, and I was really exhausted, but he said, "Baumer, come on in here and tell them what you've been doing." First thing I had to do was try to quickly remember what was it that I had done that was secret or top classified, and that's what I had to, in my own mind, declassify these things that I can talk about. So, I did. I talked about some things that would be interesting to them and so forth, and that was a very interesting thing. ... By the way, I worked for him then and ... his exec, [who] I knew very well, told me that he had recommended me for one-star, brigadier general. I didn't get it for another two or three years, but, then, there were one hundred-and-twenty-five to one hundred-and-fifty colonels, all bidding, all being selected, or hoping to be selected, for that one slot, and I got it. How did I get it? I was the only one that had a four-star general pushing for it [laughter] and I was there in the right place at the right time!

[Editor's Note: General Palmer served as Director of Logistics, European Command, following World War II. From 1957 to 1959, he served as Deputy Commander in Chief, European Command. From 1959 to his retirement in 1962, he served as Director of Military Assistance. General Baumer's recollection is probably from one of the later periods in General Palmer's career.]

SI: That is great.

EB: So, that was a lucky thing. ... I've been lucky in my life and that was one of the lucky things, I guess.

SI: You got your star in 1962.

EB: I don't remember now. [laughter]

SI: The early 1960s?

EB: Well, I think something like that, yes, probably, yes.

SI: You were doing these investigations for General Palmer.

EB: Yes, I was, yes, and I was ... very involved in public relations. I was then, later in life, in the advertising business, with McCann-Erickson. ... In my Reserve capacity, ... I knew all the top PR people in New York and I put together a committee that was very helpful to General Palmer before he went over to Europe, and that was one of the things he liked that I had done. ... I'd gotten the Legion of Merit for that and other decorations. ...

SI: What did the committee do?

EB: Well, the committee was studying a lot of things that the Army was doing outside of the chains of command. ... I've got, in the cellar of this building, a lot of stuff that I've almost forgotten about. One was, ... I wrote the history of G-1. I was in G-1, Personnel Division of the War Department, General Staff, and that's a very critical thing. It's about that thick, and I hate like the devil thinking it's buried down there in something. I've got to go find it now and not have it thrown out. ... I've got so many jobs, balls in the air, and I'm trying to catch them before they fall, because there are a lot of other things that they're trying to get me to do now, too, and one of them is, I'm trying to find [a replacement]. On the card I gave you, there's three jobs there. Now, who in the hell usually has three jobs, chairman, CEO, and president? ... I didn't want the jobs, except nobody [else would do it]. Out of the three guys on my board, who were the critical guys, who would have been good for this, they all had successful businesses and they couldn't do it; they said, they just could not leave their businesses. So, I've been doing it and I haven't been getting paid a penny, and that's another thing. But I'm trying to find, now, somebody who is in the, you know the *Forbes* Magazine, *Forbes*? Well, Steve Forbes is the head of it. I've never met him. I'm hoping to meet him, maybe, on this trip, where I'm going to New York now, and I'm hoping, he does a list of, each year, annual millionaires and billionaires and where they're located. I know, I have the copies of them, there are more millionaires and billionaires in the State of California than in any other state or country in the world. ... So, there are a lot of prospects right here, but there are also a lot of them in the New York area, in business, and the guy I'm looking for right now is probably fifty or sixty years old. He's worth millions. He's made his money. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: We were talking about Super Senior Sports.

EB: Oh, yes, yes. ... We call him a "Mr. Wonderful." I'm trying to find a "Mr. Wonderful" now and I'm hoping I can find him, because there are guys, believe it or not, with millions of dollars, who they've got them sitting some place or other, and they're just tired of playing golf or tennis and that sort of stuff. He's got to love tennis, of course, and, right now, what we're trying to do, we raise money, with great difficulty, from New York corporations and other sources. ... We

have, all over the world, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of tennis players, women fifty and over, men sixty and over, who are eligible to compete, but don't have the money. ... So, what we want to do is have this guy come in, take a million out of his many millions, set this thing up properly, with his own people and more people, because I'm working without a secretary here and everything else and I'm going crazy, [laughter] trying to keep the thing going. Right now, they're asking me ... if I'd be interested in being a cultural attaché from the United States to China, for this year and next year, for the Olympics, particularly. They liked my military background and they liked my tennis background and the two things together would be something that might be of interest. ... I have to go to the Los Angeles office of China [the Chinese consulate] to talk more about this, but I haven't had time to get up there. I've got to go there and do it. It's just another thing. ...

SI: That is pretty remarkable.

EB: Yes, I hope it comes. If it comes, I'll be able to do a lot of good for the US, through tennis and the military, too, I think.

SI: I want to step back and talk about your pre-war military career.

EB: Yes.

SI: What kind of assignments would you get when you were called back for your two weeks' ...

EB: Tour. Yes, let's see; you might be a company commander, battalion commander. I don't know, but ... it's a fuzzy, fuzzy thing right now. I can't even remember what they were, but the two weeks went by very fast, of course.

SI: You would be in charge of an infantry unit during those times.

EB: Yes. ... There are all kinds of jobs they had for you, you know. ... Well, I'd be guessing. I don't want to guess. ... I don't remember.

SI: What did you think of the pre-war Army? Some men have described it as a "country club" type atmosphere. Did you get that sense?

EB: In some cases, yes, but there are a lot of good people. I think the Army is one of the wonderful things that we have in this country, because you've got people of all ages, of all ethnic groups, whites, blacks and stuff, for the first time, all poured in together and all with the idea of helping our country, and I think that's a great thing and is something I'm very proud of, of having served in the Army.

SI: Before you were called back for World War II, did you expect that you might be called back, given the crisis that was looming?

EB: No. In later years, my wife always kidded me, she said, "If they ever thought they'd call you back, we'd be in bad trouble." [laughter] She used to kid about that, but, actually, I have a

lot of good friends who were [called back]. I have one particular guy who worked for me for a while, in my business. He was a young man, didn't have a chance to go to college and he got in the regular Army, worked his way up to become colonel, and then, they sent him to college, on the Army. The Army paid for it and he got his degree ... up in LA, the one on the coast there. What is it? I can't think of the name of it right now, but he got his degree, and then, they gave him a command. He worked his way up. He was finally on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as G-7, and I was very proud of him, because he became a two-star general, Major General George Close, and I was happy for him for that. ... I had some good chances to pick some good people and see that they moved in a way to benefit the country from what they could give. So, I was very happy about that.

SI: When you were called back in 1940, were you sent directly to the Infantry School or were there any stops in-between?

EB: In '40, did you say? ...

SI: Yes, when you started working for Omar Bradley.

EB: Well, I was at Fort Benning, Georgia, then. ... That was good, because it was the biggest school in the country, and biggest of all the Army, and we had great difficulties. ... For instance, the young girls that we'd hire as secretaries, they were right out of the high schools in Georgia and their training was not that good. So, they would make mistakes and they'd have to correct them. So, even simple things like locator cards were incorrect. Locator cards are very important. You have to have five or seven of them, whatever it is. Finally, what happened [was], I got the idea of, you know, everybody has a dog tag. You know the dog tag?

SI: Yes.

EB: All right. You have two dog tags. They were originally designed with only one thing in mind. One of them was to identify the body of a guy killed. The other was to be sent with his personal effects to his family, or widow. ... So, everybody reporting to duty at Benning, for the Infantry School class, [got a set]. They had different classes and officer candidate class is just one of them, and I was in that category, where I was helping. I was a "gopher" for a major. ... He was a tough son of a gun. He was a West Pointer, ... but he and I got along fine. ... I remember, we had a tornado come through there. I remember seeing an iron, what would have been a sofa, flying through the air. That's what a tornado can do, you know, and seeing cars taken and thrown through the air, and that sort of stuff. ... I wasn't hurt in the tornado, but I remember that, because the South and the Midwest are full of tornadoes, tornadoes all the time. ... Now, let's see now, I'm trying to go back to Benning itself. ... See, we had rifle ranges and we had all kinds of things, tank operations. ... We got everything, in the officer training there, and then, later on, as I was a graduate, I had to help train [men] in different aspects of it, and it could be anything from throwing hand grenades to, you know, anything that's part of an infantry officer's life.

SI: Do you remember the name of the major you served under?

EB: ... Oh, yes, Ham Meyer, Harold Meyer, Class of '24, I think, ... at West Point. He was a very interesting guy. Later in life, well, he had married a wonderful lady who came from a wealthy family, who inherited land in Wyoming. ... Later on, this was much later in life, I was living in California and he was living in Northern California, they struck oil. What happened [was], the rest of the family pooh-pooled the idea that he was given this barren land and [said], "So, what's that going to do?" Well, they struck oil on it. [laughter] It was worth millions. So, he and his family, I never profited from it, but I did do one thing for him. As a lawyer, he knew I at least knew people to go to, ... to have him advised properly about this, when they inherited the land. ... I did that and, through that, they stood to [profit]. You know, Esso, all the big oil companies were coming to see him. They wanted to buy it, ... the rights and so forth, and, well, he was just a great guy. We were good friends and that was one family, like the Croonquists, again, through the military, that I was very dear with and just wonderful. So, that's it.

SI: You were on his staff at Fort Benning.

EB: I was adjutant of this [Infantry School].

SI: You were adjutant. Part of your duties entailed taking these new cadets through the courses.

EB: Yes, through the courses, that's right. I didn't do a lot of direct training, because I was the adjutant. My job was to see that everything was done properly. ...

SI: How effective do you think that training was for these officers who would later lead men on the battlefields of World War II?

EB: I thought it was well done, very well done. I think it helped ... us to win the war and I think it was not a shabby thing. I think it was a very needed thing. The training was good.

SI: What did you think of the men that were being trained?

EB: The men were great and they came from all walks of life, rich, poor, white, black, and that's another thing I liked, the idea it was such a melting pot of American youth.

SI: Did they have African-American candidates then?

EB: ... Yes, sure they did, yes, and didn't treat them very well, you know, but it started to get better, you know, started to get better.

SI: Were there any negative attitudes towards using African-American officers?

EB: No, because we were right opposite Alabama, where Tuskegee was, Tuskegee Institute. Tuskegee turned out the black guy that found out how you could take peanut oil from peanuts, and that was a great invention.

SI: George Washington Carver.

EB: And so, that and a lot of other things [affected attitudes]. Well, I learned a lot down in the South, because I'd never experienced life in the South before. ... I remember, we went up, one day or for a weekend, to Atlanta from Columbus, which is about a hundred-mile trip, and we saw *Gone with the Wind*. The original showing of that was in Atlanta, *Gone with the Wind*, and I'll never forget that, of course. It was a great picture and a great thing. The Army was very good to me and ... I learned a lot from the Army. I learned an awful lot.

SI: Can you elaborate more on the story about the dog tags and the locator cards?

EB: Oh, yes. Oh, I never finished that. What happened [was], ... the young girls that were typing and they were making errors. It was taking forever to get five locator cards for each one [soldier] going through. We'd line them [the soldiers] up and ... they'd come to the desk, and then, they'd give the information. ... They'd [the secretaries would] type them [the cards] and check them. Finally, I got the idea for a little stand, because that's all it was, a stand with two hunks of metal and ... a big, black band. It's like a charger plate in department stores, you know, now, and what would happen [was], ... they'd take their dog tag and insert [it] on one side and we'd put the other side in with the class number and the date and a lot of other things, all that you need for a locator card, and you put it in there and you go, "Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom," five of them out. ... You knew it was accurate, because it was taken right from those, and nobody was going to make any errors in it or anything like that. So, the Adjutant General's Department got hold of this and they sent two generals down to see what was being done and, finally, they said, "We're going to do that in all the schools now," and they gave me credit for that. I got the Legion of Merit for that, along with a guy by the name of; he just died. He was the first warrant officer in the Army to get the Legion of Merit, and I recommended him for it, for the work he had done for us in developing it. ... Then, the most important part of this was not just that, but, then, later, the guy who was the president of IBM had his home in a town where we finally lived in, too, later on, when I was in the ad agency business. ... That was New Canaan, Connecticut. He had this big estate. I just had a small home there, but he had a big estate. ... When he was in World War II, he was a friend of FDR and he never stayed in a hotel when he went to Washington. He stayed in the White House. So, as you'd imagine, he was very close to the President. ... What happened is, he had these IBM machine records units, which became very important, but you had to have vans, all air-conditioned, in order for that to work. My thing was in a box. You could throw it in a dirty trench and it'd still work, and it was a gadget that made dog tags and made plates and we called it a master plate. The master plate was thirty of the most important ... bits of information on a soldier, and you needed all that. You needed it for a laundry list, you needed it for a payroll, ... and you could do it all with this thing by punching different buttons, and so forth, and so on. ... I got another Legion of Merit for that thing. [laughter] Finally, I was called up to duty, special duty, to the Adjutant General's Department in Washington, from where I was serving in Benning. ... So, I never got to hear a rifle shot [laughter] in World War II, and it was awful, I mean that; here, I knew all these things, but I wasn't ... sent to use that training, because I was doing these other things. So, that's the way it ended up. ...

SI: The devices that you invented, did they replace the machine records units or did they complement them?

EB: No, no, they complemented them, yes.

SI: Okay. I have interviewed several people who worked in the machine records units. It seems fascinating.

EB: Right, yes, sure. ... It could do many more things, obviously. ... MRUs could do all [sorts of] things that this other couldn't, but this was fine for initial [information gathering] and that sort of stuff, you know.

SI: How long were you at Fort Benning before you were transferred to the Adjutant General's Department?

EB: I'm trying to think here. ... I think it must have been in the '40s. Let's see; if I looked it up in the records, I could tell you that, but I just don't know right now.

SI: Was it during World War II?

EB: No, it was after World War II, after, yes.

SI: You were at Fort Benning for the duration of the war.

EB: I was, yes. ... Well, the war was still going on when I was transferred up to Washington, yes. I don't know, it's about that time, and I know this: I was sent over, I think it was by General Palmer. I can't remember now, either. It's so foggy now.

SI: That is okay. Take your time.

EB: I just can't seem to remember this, but I was sent over to Paris. Oh, I remember; we were about to win in Europe. We knew that was coming. It was about that point [that] I was sent from G-1 in Washington, General Staff, to Paris, to help speed up redeployment, getting all the troops that we needed, who were skilled, in Europe to move, to then go on and beat the Japs in Japan, and I was sent to; I don't know what the hell's the name of it. I was there only recently, first time in all these years I went back, and I went back to the same hotel, which had been taken over by the Army after World War II, or in World War II. ... I'll tell you the name of it.

[TAPE PAUSED]

EB: It's a wonderful hotel and I went back there.

SI: It was the Plaza Athénée.

EB: Plaza Athénée Hotel in Paris, yes. It's a wonderful hotel and I went back there this last year and I stayed there for about four days. I'd gone over by ship, from Miami, on a smaller ship, took some time to go over, and then, made some stops in Portugal and Spain, and so forth, and so on. ... Finally, [I] got into Marseilles and we took; you've heard of the fast train in Japan, that I know of? It goes two hundred-and-some miles an hour. This was the fast train from Marseilles

to Paris, that went three hundred-and-twenty miles an hour, fastest thing I've ever been in. It was a great experience and somebody said, "We'll take pictures of the cows out there," but, by the time you wanted to get the picture, it was gone, [laughter] but that was a great experience. Paris itself was very nice to go back to, too, but, anyhow, that's neither here nor there. All right, now, ... let's go back to wherever you are now. [laughter]

SI: Can you talk a bit more about your Fort Benning experience?

EB: Yes, all right.

SI: You were there when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

EB: ... No. I had finished a year and I was back in New Jersey, after one year. They only had the authority to call me for one year, at that time. You could only call up the Reserves for one year and there were four officers called from New Jersey and I was one of them, and I got back to the law department of Prudential. They were glad to see me, and then, [Pearl Harbor was attacked]. ... I was up in New Jersey and, within forty-eight hours, ... I got a telegram [notifying me to report] right back to Benning and I had to leave everything, and my wife, and got down to there, and then, I got into the thing with all the dog tags, all that sort of stuff, after that, yes.

SI: For your first year, were you just training troops?

EB: Yes, training troops and so forth, and then, the other was on ... the master plate and things like that.

SI: Were you the adjutant both times?

EB: No, no. I wasn't the adjutant the second time. I was commanding a special unit there. That's all.

SI: Okay.

EB: ... By the way, at that time, it was hard to get promotions. I was a first lieutenant forever, I think. Finally, they made me a captain and a major, all in one year, because I was in a major's job as a first lieutenant, and so, that happened, I forget what year it was, but it was during the war, of course, yes.

SI: Was this unit that you commanded just focused on personnel records?

EB: Yes, things like that, yes.

SI: I would like to tie these two things together. You mentioned that your work in the print shop back in your Rutgers days ...

EB: Yes, right.

SI: ... helped you come up with that idea.

EB: That's right, yes.

SI: How did that happen?

EB: I don't know. I was very familiar, obviously, with the equipment and I knew what it could do and that's how the idea of the master plate came out, I guess, and it was through that original work I did at Rutgers, at the print shop.

SI: Can you elaborate more about the plates? Was it in code or plain text?

EB: ... It's a steel plate and it had thirty items of information. It had your name, date of birth, religion ...

SI: Blood type?

EB: ... Blood type. It had all the things that were needed for a laundry list, for a payroll, all these things you could make with this plate, and it was really great for that reason. So, they approved it. These generals came down and approved the thing and, boom, they got out and all the schools had to use it then. That's when I was ordered up to Washington, to serve the G-1 in the Personnel Division.

SI: When you were in G-1, were you in charge of making sure that this was implemented in all the schools?

EB: No. The most important thing I did then; you know the name Frank Capra?

SI: Yes.

EB: All right, he was a great producer of films. ... I was called into General [George C.] Marshall's office ... as we were coming to the close of the war. We hadn't dropped the bomb yet. You know, of course, I didn't know about the bomb, but they gave me the assignment of doing something [on film], that they wanted to have the American people understand what this [World War II] was all about and why we had to do what we had to do. So, a film was tentatively called, and it was later called, *The Returning Soldier*. Now, we never had anything like this for Vietnam or Korea and should have had it. It's too bad, because the American public never did understand what we were trying to do there. ... Even now, look at what we're doing now in Iraq [The War in Iraq (2003-present date)]; there's nothing going on to try to stop that. I have a great feeling that this is needed to be done and finished now, but a lot of people think differently. ... Oh, I have to tell you this, because it was an interesting thing. I was assigned, it was called the Special Projects Division of the War Department, General Staff, and I was head of this and I had a lot of people reporting to me about doing this film. Frank Capra was the director, so, I got to know him pretty well. Don't let me forget to tell you something that happened that tied me in with Frank Capra many years later, as I go through this. ... Well, we

got the film made. By the way, I've got a print of that film somewhere down in the basement. [laughter] I hope to God the damn thing is still alive and kicking and not rotted or so, *The Returning Soldier*. It was a good picture. Frank Capra directed it. He was a wonderful guy to work with and I was a technical adviser on the film. My name is on the thing as a technical adviser. I was then a colonel, I guess. ... Well, that was one of the things I did in the General Staff at the end. Then, I also wrote the history of G-1, Personnel Division, because they ... wanted to get the regulars out in new assignments where they could get promoted fast. They weren't too worried about Reservists like myself. So, I had to struggle [laughter] and write the history and stayed there to do it. So, I was in from way before the war until way after the war. I was in for six, seven years, something like that. I was held in. ... I was glad to get it done, but I was still on leave from Prudential, so, I didn't lose my job as such. So, it was all right.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit more about what went into producing this film?

EB: Well, I had to go up to Long Island, where they were shooting a lot of it. ... It was a good film. I think the public liked it very much. It had great public acceptance and that was what the President wanted and what General Marshall wanted, too, and we achieved it with the film. So, I was happy. I think I got an award for that. ...

SI: How did the relationship between you and Frank Capra work? Did you or Frank Capra control the production?

EB: No. He asked me a lot of questions about the Army that helped shape his answers. He was running the thing, not I. He was running it, but he would ask me, "Do you think it would be better this way or that way?" and I would tell him, and that's where a technical adviser can come in, because he was not in the service as such, but he knew a lot [about people]. He certainly was an understanding [person], a wonderful person about human relations and things like that. He knew that. So, he'd made a wonderful film, wonderful film.

SI: I have seen his *Why We Fight* films.

EB: Yes.

SI: Was the movie similar in style to those films?

EB: Like that, *Why We Fight*, yes, why we fought, really, and [the film's message was], "Here are these troops coming home now; welcome them with open arms, because they've done a wonderful thing." Now, that has not been done with any of the wars since then. I don't know why not, because they should have done something like that. That's what the President [George W. Bush] ought to do now. ...

SI: Were there actors in the film?

EB: Oh, yes. ... They were not well-known actors. No, they were unknowns. We had a lot of people that were in the service, like Jimmy Stewart, [who] became a brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve. I just saw a film of his, just recently, where he is a commander of a [bomber],

Strategic Air Command, ... and that's good. ...

SI: In addition to the movie and writing the history of G-1, were there other duties that you did when you were at G-1?

EB: No. Pretty much, that took [up] my time, yes, and the history of G-1, boy, that took a lot of time. God, I had to talk to a lot of people and it took a lot of time to get all this [material], just as you're getting now, see.

SI: How did you put the history together? What was your process?

EB: Well, it took about a year, I guess, to do it. I can't remember now, but I had to do it in parts. ... I got to type well. I type fast and that was good. So, that was good, but I was very glad to finish it and get out of there. ... I went in before [Pearl Harbor], you know, like 1940, and I didn't get out until '46, or I don't know, something like that, and long after a lot of others got out, long after, but I was glad to do what I had to do.

SI: Was it just the wartime history of G-1 or the entire history?

EB: No, it was *The Returning Soldier*, about World War II, why it was, why we fight, why we fought it, and then, how the public should react to these soldiers coming back. ... They had different situations and that sort of stuff, you know. There was another good film; Fredric March was a good guy in it. It was about the time of seeing that Jimmy Stewart film, that I saw it on the TV here.

SI: Was the film called *The Best Years of Our Lives*?

EB: Yes, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, that was it, yes, and it was more like that, but I think people enjoyed seeing that, because it was a good film.

SI: When you were writing the history of G-1, was it just what G-1 had done during World War II or was it more expansive than that?

EB: No, it was World War II, *The Returning Soldier*.

SI: Are there any stories from the war that you would like to share that we did not cover yet?

EB: Probably dozens of them that I can't even think of right now. [laughter] If I think of some, I'll tell you.

SI: What was Frank Capra like, personally?

EB: Capra, oh, he was a wonderful guy, ... a wonderful human being. He had a very interesting life growing up, I guess, and he got to know a lot of different people and that helped to make him what he was, a wonderful director. He just understood human nature and human beings and

what made them tick and he could sense somebody who was trying to bluff him or things like that. You didn't try to pull anything over on him. [laughter]

SI: What kind of things would he ask you about during the producing of the movie?

EB: I'll be damned if I can think of it right now, but we did have different sessions. ... What he'd do [was], he'd run some; what do they call it there?

SI: Dailies?

EB: ... Dailies, and then, he'd say, "Well, now, [what] do you think of that? Is that right, that way? Is there anything wrong with it or anything like that?" He wanted to be sure that it would not be laughed at or that people would think it wasn't right. He wanted it to be actual and honest. He was a very honest person and he wanted his film to be honest. That's all. So, he was easy to work for, easy, because he was not trying to pull the wool over anybody's eyes. He's not trying to make it look like it wasn't. So, that was good.

SI: You mentioned that you got this assignment after being called into General Marshall's office. What was it like to work with General Marshall?

EB: You didn't have much time with him, I'll tell you that. He was a very busy guy, but, well, I'm trying to remember now. ... Oh, I remember this; the script for *The Returning Soldier* was then finally tested in his office. In other words, we showed this thing, and about the same time, the bomb was dropped and only General Marshall, in that room, knew about it, and so, he was very, very pleased to know that the war was going to be over. ... That ended the conversation and ... we finished seeing the film and it was okayed to show, because we knew the soldiers were going to be returning. Before that, we didn't know, until the bomb was dropped, but I was in his office at the time it was dropped.

SI: Somebody came in and informed him of the news.

EB: Yes, that's right, yes, just like that, a very exciting thing.

SI: What was your initial reaction to that news?

EB: Oh, I was just stunned, as everybody else was, but it was a wonderful thing that we did. A lot of people said, "Oh, how could they kill millions of people?" Well, if we hadn't done that, the war would have gone on and on and on and it would have killed a lot more American troops. ... I thought it was a wonderful thing that happened.

SI: Did General Marshall say, "This means..."

EB: He was a very taciturn [man], if that's the right word, very, very tight. He didn't show his emotions very much, but he certainly showed great pleasure at hearing that it was successful.

SI: Did he say something like, "This means that the boys are going home?"

EB: The war will be over, yes, no question about it. So, we all just felt great about leaving the meeting and knowing that this was going to be surely shown and ... starting right away, because it was designed for that purpose, before the war was even over, in order to show it right away.

...

SI: Frank Capra was in the room, too.

EB: He was in the room then. Yes, he was in the room then. Oh, I have to tell you this; I attended, ... this goes [back] now a few years ago, the annual meeting of the US Tennis Association, [which] is held in different places each year. There are a lot of volunteers, big staff and that sort of stuff. It's headquartered in White Plains, New York, the USTA, and I was invited to attend the annual meeting of the USTA about, oh, I think it was only a year or so ago. It was down in the desert, at Palm Springs. ... I got down there and, when they assigned me a room, I had to wait a while, I finally got "The Frank Capra Room." He used to go down there, apparently, and he was dead by then, I think, but he used to do a lot of work there and he loved the idea of ... the quietness and so forth. ... I thought it was wonderful that I was able to be in that room, named after him, so many years later, for another reason, with tennis in mind. ...

SI: Very remarkable.

EB: Yes. [laughter]

SI: When you were at Fort Benning, did you have any interaction with then Lieutenant Colonel Omar Bradley?

EB: He was there so short a time as a lieutenant colonel. He was then immediately made brigadier general. ... I always knew him as General Bradley.

SI: Was General Bradley still in charge of the school for a while after being promoted?

EB: Oh, yes, he was there, and then, he was given the assignment to go to Europe and head up the Twelfth Army Group.

SI: Did you have any personal interaction with him?

EB: One day, he came into G-1, after I was transferred up there, looking for me, and that caused a stir around, I'll tell you that. ... I remember this; he had a little notebook. It was so small, he could put it [in his pocket], you know, one of these little, spiral-bound things, ... just a little, little thing like that. ... He came in, seeing me, and he said, "Baumer," he said, "I remember the work you did at Benning." He said, "I'm now head of the Twelfth Army Group. We're going to have a big part in the invasion of Europe and I'd like to have you with me. ... Would you like to go?" I said, "Would I like to go? Wow." So, I said, "I'd like to leave this and get out of this outfit." The politics was starting to set in, in there, [the Pentagon], as it does in anything, you know, oh, my God. Anyhow, so, he put my name down and he left. He was only with me five minutes, probably, and I went home that night to tell my wife. ... She said, "Oh, so, you're going

to finally get your wish to get into action?" I said, "Yes, I am. ... He's got to do something about it," you know. Well, apparently, he put it in, and I remember the name of the son of a bitch, General James Ulio, U-L-I-O, [who] was the Adjutant General at the time, and he apparently turned it down, because I was doing such important work in connection with the master plate, and this and that and that. ... I wasn't told about this at all, of course. Months later, when I went and tried to find out about it, I found out about this. ... If I'd had a pistol, I'd go in and shoot the guy, [laughter] because I wanted to go over with General Bradley, of course, in the staff, the Twelfth Army Group, but I never got to go. So, I had all this training for naught. [laughter]

SI: You were really frustrated.

EB: Oh, yes, I was very frustrated. I wanted to get into action. I mean, anybody [would be]. I was a lieutenant colonel then, I guess, and so forth, and I could have been a battalion commander. ... A lot of things could have happened. [laughter] I don't know. I could be dead, too, very easily, ... but, anyhow, those things happened.

SI: When you were in G-1, was that in the Pentagon?

EB: Pentagon, in the Pentagon.

SI: What was the wartime atmosphere at the Pentagon like?

EB: Well, all the regulars were busting to get out and get assignments, you know, outside, because that's where they could move up, and command. The Reserves didn't have all that. I knew that I wouldn't ever make that. You know, I had these special assignments and things like that, and so, I couldn't do that and I had to be satisfied with things like doing the history of G-1 and things like that. So, I was glad to do that and I did my thing and I got out, and so, that's that. Memories, I had a lot of memories.

SI: Were there any other important individuals that you had interaction with?

EB: No. I think I've pretty much told you all [of that]. Probably, well, I'll think of more, if I think of it.

SI: Did you meet General Palmer in the Pentagon during the war?

EB: Yes, in the Pentagon, because I was in G-1. He had G-4 before he became Vice Chief of Staff, and then, somehow or other, I was given an assignment under him, and I did it well and he liked it. So, that's how I then started working for him in these special assignments.

SI: After you left the Army, how did you pick up your life again?

EB: ... Well, I went back to Prudential. I was glad I could get a job back, because jobs were not that easy to get, and they gave me seniority. They were very good. Prudential was really a great company to work for. I am still getting a check, for the munificent sum of one hundred dollars

and twenty-one cents a month, from retiring there, after twenty-some years of service. ... I'm glad to get it, because a lot of companies wouldn't give me that, because I took an early retirement and I'm very glad I did, because I've gotten a lot of money over the years. I've had a hundred dollars every month. I still get it, every month. I don't have it automatically deposited, because I like to see it and feel the check when it comes in. [laughter]

SI: You continued in the legal department after the war.

EB: ... No, I left, and then, started my own business. That was about in 1950. ...

SI: I want to be clear with the timeline of your career.

EB: Yes.

SI: You went from Prudential to McCann-Erickson, or did you then go into your own business?

EB: I went to McCann-Erickson, and then, to my own business. ... [When I began] my own business, I was fifty years old, I remember that, when I started my own business, and I did have a lot of experience there. I had served with hundreds of savings and loans. I had done special work for them and I'd started out with the Keogh plans. Keogh accounts were not too well-known and they were usually for the common working man. They had, up until then, always had retirement plans for the wealthy or middle-class, but none for the working-class. ... Eugene Keogh was a Congressman from Brooklyn ... and he developed this plan for a Keogh account, that you could have a small amount [pre]-tax deducted and not to have to pay tax on it, and you could build this up as a retirement plan. ... I helped sell that to savings and loans, mostly, because I found out that savings and loans could produce a better plan for less cost for the average person. ... So, I was glad to sell it and I did very well in selling it to hundreds of savings and loans. I sold the equipment. It was mostly literature on how to get that moved, transferred, from a life insurance company to a savings and loan, and then, keep on going with the savings and loan, you see, and that went very well, for years. Then, savings and loans started to get in trouble. They had some of these crooks in Texas and some other places who were taking money out the wrong way, and I knew who they were, but I couldn't do anything about it. ... Then, finally, my son came in the business with me and we were doing very well, but I only had a secretary and my son and myself. ... I never had a big organization. I mean, it was just a couple of people, or so, you know. ... I was happy with a small organization. My son just retired and, finally, it was taken over by a company called Imagination Publishing in Chicago and I got to know the head of that, good guy. ... Others had come in, to want to take us over, and I didn't like the guys, but this one I liked, and so, I went out. Then, I became chairman *emeritus* of that for quite a while. I took a very small amount out, but I wasn't working, really, in it anymore. So, that was that, and then, since then, I've been doing all these other things with tennis and so forth, and so on, and then, tennis became a very important part of my life.

SI: How did you get involved in tennis?

EB: Well, I lived in Los Angeles and a friend of mine, in the ad agency business, who later committed suicide, by the way, never forget that, ... he knew me and he knew I was working

hard as an ad agency guy. ... In the ad agency business, you were always working late nights and things like that, and he finally said, one day, to me, he said, "Ed, I am a member of the Los Angeles Tennis Club. I'd like you to come over, ... have lunch and play tennis with me and, I'll tell you, if you were to join the club and play, your life would be a lot longer than it would be now in this ad agency business." ... He was right about that. If I'd ever stayed just in the ad agency business, I'd be dead by now, I think, but I liked the ad agency business until, once, when I had my own business; ... no, it was with McCann. ... I was, on a weekend, down working with the guy who was then the president of McCann-Erickson and I found out from his secretary, I was in her office, ... that he did a lot of things I didn't like. For instance, even though he was president, he had Buick, he had a lot of big accounts, and I was on accounts like the insurance accounts and things like that, that I knew a lot about, but I finally found out, from his secretary, she had a big board and she'd write in things on this for the next week or two, he would book being in five or six places at the same time. That didn't make much sense to me. I thought it was a flim-flam thing for the biggest ad agency in the world. I didn't like that at all, so, right then and there, I thought, "I'm not going to last long in this business," and I figured how I was going to get out of it. That's when I started my own business. So, that was that.

SI: Did you like the work, though, advertising?

EB: Oh, I liked the ad agency business, yes, very much so. Yes, I'm working now; I'll give you a little idea. Through this, I made great friends with "The Four As," American Association of Ad Agencies. It's in New York. All the ad agencies have to be a part of this thing and I got to know one man, Mike Donohue, who's the number two man there. ... He and I have hit it off very, very well and he's got a son who's a water polo player, and so, we got to talking a lot about that. ... He found out ... of an incident. ... I'll tell you this. I think I told you, I've never had a cup of coffee in my life. I told you that. I like to drink milk. Usually, I'd be drinking milk now, but I've got juice and I drink a gallon of milk a day, though. Now, I was in Copenhagen, Denmark.

[TAPE PAUSED]

EB: Now, where are we? ...

SI: You were telling me about something that had to do with your love of milk.

EB: ... Oh, yes. I love milk. Now, I was in Copenhagen with a man; ... oh, I'm captain of that Talbert Cup team. Those are the twelve best eighty-five and over tennis players in the United States against the twelve best in Europe, and we've been playing that and doing pretty well. Seven out of eight years, we've beaten them. ... Now, there's been a little difficulty, politics and a lot of other things, but, anyhow, it's something that I'm very proud of, because we've done well in it, and I started, you know, just at nothing in tennis and I got to be a pretty good tennis player, in doubles. ... Now, I'm going to play in two national championships, but I don't run that well. We'll have to find a guy with good legs, and then, I stay at the net and either block them [or] lob it, things like that, but I can still hit the ball well, if they'll hit it to me. ... A lot of them like to hit it to me, because they know I won't run that much and they think that's good, but, anyhow, we'll see what happens. ... I want to get back to this thing in Copenhagen. So, finally, one of the guys on my team, he had been to Stockholm, Sweden. He said, "Ed, you've never been

there?" I said, "No, I haven't." He said, "Well, you ought to really go up there. It's a beautiful trip, up by ship, in the waterway between Sweden and Norway, to go up there and go to Stockholm." All right, I did that. On that train, and it was a good train; it was a train with ... a lot of compartments, with eight, ten men in them, you know, and it was a non-smoker [compartment], which I like, because I didn't smoke, and there was a young man, he was then in his fifties, I guess, who was head of the milk board for all the Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and so forth. ... They had done a lot of things, you know. Osteoporosis for women, the lack of bone density, is a thing that they've done a lot more on in Europe than we have here, in the US. Now, they have a daily program, they still have this going, which tells women, older women, ... "Don't give up drinking milk later on in life, because it will help you to keep bone density, and that's important for you. Don't stop it when your children grow up and they stop drinking milk." So, finally, this guy'd done practically all the talking in the compartment. Finally, at the end, ... as we're getting up into Stockholm, he said, "Does anybody have any comments or questions?" So, I thought, "Well, I hadn't said a damn thing," and my wife always said I always talk too much. Well, I felt this is one time I hadn't talked, [laughter] and so, finally, I said, "Well, it might be interesting to you to know, I've never had a cup of coffee in my life." I said, "I drink milk. I love milk," and his face lit up and he grabbed me and he said, "Do you really mean that?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Here's my card. You give me your card," and I gave him my card, that card, and he said, "Come and see me tomorrow. I'll put you on our daily TV program. It'll be beamed to all the countries involved in this thing and I want them to know about you." I never got to his [office]. I was trying to be a sightseer, you know. I never got to do this. Years later, years later, my card had made its way to Washington, DC, to the milk board there, and the guy who was head of the ad agency that does, you know, the "Got Milk?" campaign. That's a very, very important and successful program. A co-sponsor of that is Disney World. They select thirty-six top seniors from high schools all over the United States, who are good students, good athletes in some sport or another, and then, ... they're given ten-thousand-dollar-a-year (for four years) scholarships. So, that's a lot of money and they are given a two-week trip each year to Disney World, down in Florida, and so forth, and it's been very, very successful. Now, that's just juniors. They have never thought [of senior citizens]. They know that Europe has been doing the thing with the elder people, because of the women, particularly, on the bone density thing, osteoporosis. So, then, my friend, Mike Donohue, he said he knew of my work at McCann-Erickson and he said [to the milk board], "Well, you know, this guy, Baumer, is now a senior tennis player. He's in his nineties," and so on, "and I think Maria Sharapova, who is now twenty. She's won Wimbledon. She's won [the] US Open," and so forth, a wonderful gal, I've now met her a couple of times, "should be teamed with him in some kind of a thing whereby you're showing the old and the young in different sports." ... I am told they're working on this and I'm supposed to see them when I go East, now, on this thing. ... So, whether I am doing this with her or how it's going to be, I can't tell you right now, but it's an interesting thing. So, that and the Chinese thing are two things, if I can ever find "Mr. Wonderful" here, I can quit doing some of these things in order to do these other things, I hope. [laughter]

SI: Wow, you really have an amazing life.

EB: So, you [could] say, "I'm busy, I'm busy, I'm busy, I'm very busy." That's it. Well, I think I've told you a hell of a lot.

SI: Is there anything else you want to add?

EB: You might look at this. ... It'll show you, you know, a lot people say, "Well, gee, how the hell can you play tennis? You can hardly walk, you know, without trying to play tennis," but, if I get the right partner, as I did in this case, this Eddie [Tyler], ... he can cover the court, two-thirds of the court, and we got to the semi-finals of this, ... in Southern California, the Grand Prix, and we lost in the finals, 6-4, 7-5, which wasn't bad. So, I'm happy that I'm playing and that's why I'm playing now, this next month, in Boston, for the Grass Court Championship. ... I'm playing in the ... eighty-five [and over age group] there. ... Then, I'm playing in the National, ninety [years and over age group], Clay [Championship], down in North Carolina. So, well, that's the tennis thing.

SI: Again, it is very remarkable.

EB: Now, what else do you want to know? I can't imagine what you [could ask]. [laughter] ... You know more about me than I know myself. [laughter] ...

SI: For the rest of your Reserve career after World War II, were you always working for General Palmer or did you have other assignments?

EB: ... They made me retire as a BG [brigadier general] after five years in grade. I forget when that was, but age sixty. Whenever I was sixty, I had to stop, and so, I've been retired in the military for that time, but I get a pension, ... not as much as Social Security, amazingly, but a good [one]. That and Social Security, ... and then, a little pension thing, and that's all that I have to live on. I don't have any big amount, ... because I've never been able to get money out of this, [Senior Sports Organization]. I should be getting at least twenty-five thousand a year or more and I haven't been getting it. Now, whether this new "Mr. Wonderful" will agree to come in and give me something, I hope so, but, if he doesn't, he won't, you know, that's all right. Oh, I wanted to show you one thing. You might look here at this thing. ... We had all the best women players in the world here at a place called La Costa [Resort and Spa]. ...

SI: In San Diego?

EB: It's just north of San Diego. Now, well, you don't have to look at all this, but here is Maria Sharapova, by the way. ... These are the events that lead up to the US Open. She won the US Open a year ago, and so, she's going to defend her title in that. Here she is, she's a wonderful gal and she's twenty years old. You might flip through. ... I've folded over certain pages and you might look and see; ... that's the program for this thing. I didn't have the money to go. Well, they charge eighty-five and a hundred dollars a ticket for that thing and I couldn't afford that, but I have other people that give me the tickets. So, I was able to go to it, but, if they were to put me together with Maria, that would be a tremendous thing for me, because I'm not that well-known, of course, but it would be a wonderful thing, because I think it would help me to get other assignments that I could do, if I could get out of the work that I'm doing in those five jobs right there, [laughter] where I have no secretary, ... nothing. Well, I don't know if it's of interest to you. ...

SI: It is.

EB: She won that, by the way. She was in the semi-finals. I saw the semi-finals, but I didn't see the finals. I couldn't go to the finals, but it's pretty close to here. So, it was a good tournament, very well [attended], and it's not going to be held here anymore, so, that was another reason to try to go and see her in it. ... I'm usually invited into the box of IMG, which is a big company that controls people. Like, they have Maria signed up, in contract, ... and so, whether I'll get to do anything with her, I don't know, but, if it happens, it happens, if it doesn't, it doesn't, that's all. So, I know I've given you more than you'd wanted to know.

SI: No, no.

EB: I'm sure of that, sure of that. [laughter]

SI: Does anything from your days at Rutgers come to mind that you would like to add?

EB: ... Oh, time at Rutgers, oh, as an undergraduate you mean?

SI: Or in law school.

EB: I'm very proud to be a graduate of Rutgers and Rutgers' Law School. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: I saw in one of your records that you were in Scabbard and Blade.

EB: Yes.

SI: What do you remember about being in Scabbard and Blade?

EB: Well, I was captain of the Scabbard and Blade Company. It was a Rutgers thing that the schools had for ROTC, the Advanced ROTC, and it was an honorary sort of thing and I was captain of that for Rutgers, when I was there, and that led to my being named Best Soldier, too. My name is on a plaque somewhere. It used to be in the old gym. I don't know where it is now, but for ... 1934, I guess, as the Best Soldier of the ROTC unit then. I've always enjoyed my military experience and I feel that I want to be one to speak up for the military, instead of [how] so many people are downplaying it all the time. I can understand. They're getting their children killed ... over there in Europe [Iraq], and that's bad, but I don't think we can just pull out of that. Gee, I just don't think so. I think we've got to go [on]. I'm with the President there and with John McCain. ... In my study, I have a nice picture from Senator John McCain, with his signature, and I used to be able to give a lot of money, when I was earning a lot more money in the ad agency business, to the Republican Party. So, I don't know, I'm just trying to keep two-and-two together to get through until I die. By the way, I'm stupid, I guess, but I don't think of dying. I've just been too damn busy to think of it.

SI: Well, that is good.

EB: I guess it's good. [laughter]

SI: Many of the people I know who have had long lives say it is because they stayed active and did something that challenged them.

EB: Yes, right. I think it's true. My doctor says so; both doctors say so.

SI: It seems like you are in very good health.

EB: Yes, I think so.

SI: No reason to stop.

EB: Yes, okay. ...

SI: Great. Thank you for giving me all this information. I think we pretty much covered everything. You gave me a good sketch of your life. You said that you were sent to Paris.

EB: ... Yes.

SI: What did you do there?

EB: Oh, well, it was my own thing in connection with tennis. Part of the job that card says, we have over one hundred ambassadors all over the world. They are not paid anything, but they are given perquisites, things like that. ... For instance, like, I'm now having a scarf done by Hermes, H-E-R-M-E-S, and all the ambassadors will be given one of those scarves, but they are people who know people in tennis and know people with money. They don't have to have money themselves or give us money, but I like to have them say, "Oh, hey, this guy has money and he might be able to send So-and-So to China or Japan, or So-and-So with partial expenses, or maybe full expenses, or So-and-So." That's a very important thing. What I do [is], when I have any of them that come here, I'll put them up in that guest suite here I have and let them stay there. So, that's good. Other than that, I don't know that there's anything else you don't know about me. [laughter] You know pretty much everything else, I guess. [laughter]

SI: Did you ever think that you might be called back for Korea?

EB: Called back?

SI: Called back up for Korea?

EB: No, no, I don't think so. I'm too old.

SI: During the Korean War?

EB: Yes. No, no, I was too high a grade. I think they wanted to call the lower grade guys. They've got plenty of generals. [laughter] ... They can invite me, as they do, they invite me, once in a while, to briefing sessions in Washington and I'll go back for that. So, that's good, too. I'm glad to be included in that. ... My daughter tried to get me to move from here to La Jolla, away from Coronado, and I love Coronado because of all the military here and the facilities. I get my gas much cheaper, about five minutes from here. I get the commissary and PX [post exchange] at North Island [Naval Air Station], right here in Coronado. I'm near a Costco, a wonderful place to shop. ...

SI: If anything else comes to mind, you can always add it to the transcript.

EB: All right. You're going to send it to me now?

SI: Yes. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: I think we are about done with this session.

EB: Fine.

SI: I really appreciate your time.

EB: Thank you.

SI: And for sitting down and answering all my questions.

EB: I think it's a wonderful thing that you're doing, because how else would you get all this stuff? Not that I'm important, but I think some of the things I've done and the people that I've met and that I've enjoyed knowing [are important]. ... I appreciate knowing you and what you're doing here. I think that's great. I'd like to see it continue and I'd like, at some point, when I'm able to give the right money for it, too, ... to help with it, too.

SI: We are grateful to all of our sponsors.

EB: Good.

SI: You told me some very interesting and important stories, particularly about the records system.

EB: Yes.

SI: Before I joined this program, I did not know too much about it, but I have learned about how critical that was in World War II.

EB: Yes, it was, very much, very much so.

SI: To be able to handle all of that information quickly was important.

EB: It was, it really was, yes, it was. It doesn't sound like it, but it was. It really was very, very important. ...

SI: The side that could control their information and put their resources in the right place won the war.

EB: Right, right, of course, right, sure. So, even though I didn't hear the sounds of battle, I do feel I contributed.

SI: You did something very important, and, also, your help with the film, *The Returning Soldiers*, is remarkable.

EB: Yes, the film, that was important, yes. Well, you're nice to come and spend all this time. ...

SI: I appreciate your hospitality.

EB: Whom do you report to in Rutgers now?

SI: We are a center within the History Department.

EB: History?

SI: The History Department has several centers that fall under the department's umbrella.

EB: I see, yes.

SI: My director is Sandra Holyoak, who has been with the program for the past ten years. Her name is on a lot of the materials we have sent you.

EB: Yes, I've seen ... her name. ...

SI: She is my director and that is our status within the University. We also have our Rutgers Living History Society, which you will be inducted into. We honor all the people we interview by putting them in the Society.

EB: I see.

SI: We have an annual meeting every May. It is part of Reunion Weekend.

EB: I saw the write-up of that. I guess I'm on the list to get information about that now.

SI: Yes. Now that you have been interviewed, you are a member. You will be officially inducted in May [2008].

EB: I see. Now, there also [is] the guy who was the Rutgers legal counsel for years, and he just left about a year ago, and I played tennis with him, up in Long Island, and he's heard about some of the things that I've [done]. ... I wasn't pushing it, but one of my classmates, John Paxton, he's older than I am, has been pushing me to become a distinguished graduate, [the Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni]. ... That's going on now for '08. They've finished the thing for '07, but they only induct four or five, just a few people, and one from my class, the only one that's ever made it, is a guy who was an engineer, Larry Leeds. I never knew him, really, and he was the one who helped invent radar. Now, [laughter] that's more important than anything I've told you about that I've done, but he also made so much money on patents, I guess, and things that he was able to give Rutgers a million dollars, which I think is wonderful. I can't do anything like that, but I hope I can leave something that will help some of these things happen, you know, after I go.

SI: You mentioned earlier that you were helped in coming to Rutgers and, now, you want to help other people.

EB: Yes, I was, yes, and I'd like to help somebody else.

SI: That is really great. All right, thank you very much.

EB: ... Shaun, thank you.

SI: Thank you.

EB: Right.

SI: This concludes my interview with Brigadier General Edward Baumer on August 16, 2007, in Coronado, California. Thank you very much.

EB: Thank you.

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Reviewed by Jeffrey Chang 10/17/07
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/7/07
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 12/13/07
Reviewed by Edward F. Baumer 1/7/08