

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DONALD MOLONY

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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Sandra Holyoak: This begins an interview on July 18, 2001 in Concord, Massachusetts with Donald A. Molony with Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Good morning, and thank you so much for taking time today to talk with us. Mr. Molony, I would like to ask you, please, to begin by telling me about your date and place of birth and a little about your parents.

Donald Molony: Well, I was born in Brooklyn, New York in February 19, 1922 at 113 Berry Street. Right now, I guess, you'd say that's in the Greenpoint area in Brooklyn. My father was quite advanced in years when I was born; in fact he was in his fifties ... My grandfather on that side of the family was totally unknown to me. He lived a normal, full life, as far as I know, and passed away some time in the 1870s or '80s. ... As far as I could tell he was born somewhere around 1812 and he was in the American Civil War and then [the] New York Guard after the war. We have some relics of that time, his sword, ... his textbooks, and the like that he used in military work. Then he established a factory building bellows for fireplaces, and that lasted until almost the end of the century. My father tried to maintain that business, as far as I can tell, for a short time but the need for bellows sort of went out of the business, out of existence. ... In any event, I knew my grandmother very well. As far as we can tell, she lived to be 106 and died in Brooklyn, when she was working on the floor laying down new linoleum in the kitchen, alone. ... She weighed about, I think, ninety pounds soaking wet, and was quite Irish in many of her outlooks. ... She was a member of the Church of England, not the Roman Catholic Church. My father's family was Roman Catholic. ... She was a person who you could sit on her knee and she would sing little ditties. ... At first she sort of played a hand ... accordion and in general made a child feel fairly comfortable. ... We had a private home in Brooklyn, but it was not a modern construction at all. It had no central heating when I was born and we really had a fairly pleasant childhood but not with a great deal of personal conveniences, and the like. We moved to Linden, New Jersey, my mother and father and my sister. I had one sister and I had a half brother, I should have mentioned, and we moved to New Jersey, Except my brother did not in 1926. I guess it was. ... Some ... years later, I started school, quite late. My mother kept me home until I was seven years old. ... I never went to kindergarten, ... but then [I] skipped a year in grade school, so I got back more or less on normal schedule. That was all in Linden, New Jersey.

SH: ...Do you know how your mother and father met?

DM: I think she worked for him. He had a business in the garment industry. He was the office manager. Actually, it wasn't his...shirt manufacturing company. ... My mother was a secretary in that company. ...She's much younger than he, but they were married in, I guess, about 1917, or something. My sister was born in 1918, but my father was never in the military. He never took after his father in that regard.

SH: What do you know of your mother's family?

DM: My mother's family came from Germany and ... split between Germany and America. My grandfather and grandmother both came from Germany and, I think, the oldest daughter was born in Germany. ...My mother was born in New York City in what was then a German section around Delancy Street. That area in there, I think it was Delancy Street. ... She married my father and they went on to live in New Jersey ... She lived her entire life in New Jersey and died there.

SH: Did you know why they moved from Brooklyn to Linden?

DM: Oh, just to get a nice house. ... At that time it was a very nice house, with central heating, which we didn't have in Brooklyn, and it had running water, which we had in Brooklyn, ... very vaguely. ... Then we moved to a much better neighborhood and went to better schools ... Then of course the Depression came along and soon after, it became very difficult for them, but we managed.

SH: Is your sister older or younger?

DM: My sister is four years older.

SH: Now was the half brother older?

DM: He was much older. He was nearly twenty years, I guess, or something like that. We were not very close. He was brought up [by] my aunt and we were in good terms, but somehow or other he wanted to stay with her in Brooklyn. ... So he was happy, we were happy, and as I say we had no problems; we got along quite well. I used to look forward to him coming to visit because he was a big brother.

SH: Did your sister go on to advance her education?

DM: Yes. My sister went to Douglass, actually then NJC [New Jersey College for Women], and she was Class of '40.

SH: Did that influence you coming to Rutgers, the fact that she was there?

DM: I suppose it did to some extent, but not really. It was a question of being able to afford to go someplace and it was better because I commuted for a good many terms and it was easier to support me there.

SH: A few minutes ago, you mentioned how the Depression affected your family, could you talk a little about that?

DM: Yeah, my father being older, had [a] much more difficult time getting alternate employment and he did manage to establish a little bit of activity in, actually, in construction industry. He was not a construction worker; he was salesperson, estimator, and the like. ... This did provide some return but it was not a big thing and we had to really hustle to break even. ... Of course along came the war, a few years later and ...

SH: Did your mother try to continue to work?

DM: No, she did not. ... When my aunt in Brooklyn, who continued to live in Brooklyn, became ill with a terminal illness, she went there everyday and took care of her and did that kind of work, but not work for return. It was difficult to get a job, even if she really wanted to.

SH: What are your memories of the Depression?

DM: My memories of the Depression, are say, for instance, "We can always get some such and such things when our ships came in." Of course our ship never arrived. I was down at the docks looking. Not really, but figuratively. ... I remember going down to Linden and seeing these lines in front of the bank where people are taking their money out, what money the banks still had before they closed. That I remember. We had one little advantage, ... my father, when he was doing things, had purchased some property in the Dutchess County, New York, and built a small farmhouse, ... totally without the conveniences. We had no internal plumbing, we had no water inside, we had to dip it in the spring but at least we had a place where we could get some fruit and vegetables, and [the] like, ... in the summer. So we'd go up there in the summer and manage to get some fruit and stuff that kept us alive. My recollection was that it was a very hard time and we tried hard to work. My sister and I both tried to work to get little money for ourselves. I took care of tennis courts and things like that. ... I managed to get very small amounts. I remember distinctly, a friend and I took care of two tennis courts in Linden for the magnificent sum of ten dollars a year, and we worked at that all day. Ten dollars a year. ... Finally ... the club that owned the course said we could rent the courts out to non-members for ten cents an hour and we could keep half the money, and that made a great thing. We at least got some money with a friend of mine, by name of Raymond (?).

SH: What did you think of snow with this kind of a job? Was it good for business or a relief?

DM: Snow. ... The tennis is closed at Labor Day. ... No, I had to go to school anyway.

SH: Did you work after school with any odd jobs?

DM: Whenever they were available, but it was very difficult to get odd jobs. I did some things, I remember washing dishes for one of the people that ran a restaurant and did catering work and he would hire me to wash the dishes and so forth and that was good. ... It usually came around Christmas. Then, of course, when I was in college, I managed to get jobs in various places, like the post office. I worked with the post office every year at Christmas and we, more or less, made whatever efforts we could raise to get jobs within the University. I worked for the mechanical engineering department off and on for very small amounts of money, but very welcome.

SH: Going back to your childhood, were you involved in church organizations or Boy Scouts?

DM: I was a Sea Scout, ... anyway. You had to be a Boy Scout to be a Sea Scout. I never really got too interested in Scouting. My brother became a Scout Master in Brooklyn, but I really didn't have much of that. ... We were not particularly, we were not anti-religion, but we just weren't very active church participants. ... So I really didn't have too much activity with any church.

SH: Politically, how active were your father and mother? Were there discussions at the dinner table?

DM: Oh, yeah. My mother tended to be more conservative, my father was less so, and my sister and I were the outcasts because we had different views politically.

SH: What were those views?

DM: Those views, basically, we were more liberal. ... I remember being very much opposed, in the middle '30s, to the activities in the Spanish Civil War. If I could have, I would have joined with the side that lost, but I was too young. ...

SH: Were these issues discussed freely in your home?

DM: That's a very hard question to answer. I can't really recall them being discussed freely. No, I think my mother wouldn't [be] very happy if we had no thoughts ... along these lines. ... Not something I can really be sure of. There really was very little political discussion, really very little. ... I think that was true in my friends' homes also. I remember during my high school years we had a couple of us students that came from Germany, and with their fathers working in Linden. ... They of course, left immediately when the war began. We even got along reasonably well with them, even the kids who normally would be expected to be very antagonistic to anybody who came out of the Nazi era.

SH: Were you aware of the Nazis?

DM: Oh, yeah. I was. My sister was, yeah, we were aware, most of them. I remember we had a teacher in Linden who used to have us give the morning report on what happened to the news overnight. ... I always was amazed that the other kids in the class couldn't even tell you what happened. ... So he'd always ... ask me to fill in or give what happened. The day the Spanish surrendered to the Germans, nobody in our whole class knew this until I told them and I heard it on the news. It wasn't ... an area actively in politics.

SH: Can you back up a little bit. Were there any discussions of prohibition in your family?

DM: No, not really. ... We didn't have much money, so my father didn't waste money. ... I know, once occasionally he'd have a beer. My grandfather on my mother's side had run a tavern in New York. He owned it and it was Miller and he had a Miller's tavern in New York. ... Then of course, the prohibition came along and that ended that. ... So there really wasn't any basic anti- or pro- alcohol, or anything, of that nature.

SH: What about Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal policies?

DM: Yeah, it was always a bother to me that my mother particularly did not like Roosevelt and really he was the only person who was doing anything that could have benefited her. ... She neglected, to notice that. I guess in her mind, Republicans, anti-Roosevelt Republicans, were probably considered by some to be ... from the more educated classes ... I think that ... if I really had to pin down why she didn't like Roosevelt. ... She later on ... accepted Social Security with open arms and said, "Oh, isn't that wonderful." My sister and I tended to be pretty much pro New Deal type. It didn't always stay that way, but we fluctuated a little bit after the

war because I was out of the service. In fact, Eisenhower I thought he would be good, but it turns out that it might have been a good choice ... The fact is, ... my sister and I tended to be liberals.

SH: In growing up in your elementary, junior high school years, did you have hobbies?

DM: Yes, I always collected stamps to some extent, and, of course, I played tennis a great deal. That was more than just a hobby, it was a devotion, I played a lot ...

SH: Did you compete?

DM: Yeah, I was high school tennis captain for two or three years in a row. Then, of course, I came to Rutgers and I got my letter in my sophomore year. Tennis ended for the war, so at least I got managed an "R" for that.

SH: Do you remember when your sister left? You would have been a freshman in high school when she went to NJC?

DM: Yes, she stayed at home also, she commuted. Yes ... when I was a freshman in high school, she was a freshman in college.

SH: What did she major in?

DM: Education. She worked for a short while as a schoolteacher and then met her husband that way. ... He was a principal and his brother was Superintendent of schools at Linden. ... My sister worked teaching and then she went to work at other jobs. [She] then got married later on to John.

SH: Did she bring home any stories of NJC or the activities at Rutgers at all?

DM: She wasn't an active student in the sense that she went to a lot of social activities. She had some friends that I knew very well, they were lifelong friends. One or two of them just recently passed away and it was very hard for her. They were very, very close for many years; NJC girls.

SH: Did she ever take you to campus for the interview before you went down, or had she already graduated?

DM: No, she never took me, but I remember. My first visit was probably when I already made up my mind. I wanted to go and I had to take a test. That was my first contact with Rutgers. I hadn't really thought much about it.

SH: Did you go on a state scholarship to the University?

DM: No, we had to pay it all ourselves. ... Fortunately one of my aunts helped a lot, but I did not have a state scholarship.

SH: How was this aunt related to you?

DM: My father's sister.

SH: Did you always assume that you would go to college? Was education important?

DM: Yeah, it seemed like it always was an important thing, yes. Never much [thought] that we would [not] try to go. I can't even remember when we had any ideas other than that. We always assumed that we would go to college, somehow.

SH: So it was not a unique thought that your sister would go as a woman in that era?

DM: No, not nearly, no, no. My aunt who helped her also was a schoolteacher in the New York school system. ... She was rather anxious that my sister had a profession. [It] is a little bit unusual, and in a way, to be so concerned about it. Of course, my mother and father also [felt this way]. There was little or no doubt that we would go and try to go to college.

SH: Did your mother and father belong to any organizations that you remember?

DM: I don't think so. I can't remember a single organization that ... they actually belonged [to], ... I think in part that because it's a matter of money. ... To belong to an organization, usually you ... had to provide some kind of support, either dues, or something else and she didn't have the money to do this.

SH: Were there any extended family members living with you?

DM: No, we were pretty much alone.

SH: How did you commute to Rutgers?

DM: Train. At that time, you could get a ticket for a certain number of rides for a month. ... [In] Rutgers, you had school on Saturdays, ... and so you had ... [to] somehow get an extra ride or two, or else pay a lot of money. I remember all the different ways we tried to avoid getting our tickets punched, one or two days. As soon as we succeeded for the month, [whether] it was on the first or the last day, [it] didn't matter, then we were free. I remember we even went so far as to pick up the little pieces that got punched and put them in this ticket. The conductor would punch it and confetti would come out.

SH: Were you commuting with any other Rutgers students?

DM: Lots, oh, yeah, a lot of people commuted from Newark, New Jersey, a lot.

SH: Do you remember any of their names?

DM: The kids that went to school with me were Tommy (McClausky?), was one; and (Joe Leib?), he was older. A lot of young women, Lorraine (Dutow?), her sister; the Orlandos and many, many. A whole group would gather down on those cold winter mornings on the platform.

SH: Did you have your own little club?

DM: You tended to stick together and talk to one another, ... usually by class, though. I mean, we're in the other class and so we fortunately had a pretty amicable relationship with everybody.

SH: What was freshman initiation like for you at the University?

DM: Well, it was over very quickly, like a matter of a day or two, I mean a week or two. You had little dinks that you wore and that sort of thing. ... It wasn't really that we had a high level of activity, because we couldn't. We had to get the train to go home. I remember, I tried to play football when I was a freshman and I went everyday to practice and then desperately had to leave practice and race to the train usually somewhat battered. ... The coaches could never understand why I wouldn't stay around and do a little extra work. When I tried to explain [that] I had to catch a train, they thought something had happened. I got hit too hard and I was ... it was fun.

SH: Were the initiation activities conducted by sophomores or by upperclassmen?

DM: It's hard to believe, but I don't really remember much activity in that regard. The people had, later on, become active in the fraternities. They might have had a different view, but ... all I can remember is that you had certain rules like wearing these dinks which I somehow still have, somewhere.

SH: Oh, wonderful. Do you remember any other activities or social things that you did?

DM: Once in a while, there'd be something there that would be especially arranged for us, like a dance or something of that nature. ... We'd stay till the later trains. You just couldn't stay on campus, if you had to get home. We had a lot of commuter students.

SH: Did you know immediately that you wanted to go into engineering?

DM: Yeah. There never was a question. I was basically oriented to math and physics when I was in high school. ... While I was not a student that would hit the books every minute, I did ... reasonably well. ... So I decided I wanted to ... [go] into the profession ... Engineering seemed like the right thing to do and why I took mechanical [engineering], I have no idea. I never worked a day as a mechanical engineer, afterward, but I really knew that ... this is what I wanted to be.

SH: I wondered if there was an advisor in high school that had pointed you in that direction.

DM: Well, maybe the physics teacher ... by the name of (Yardsley?). ... I remember when I was a junior and senior, ... he would go away to a teacher's convention, or what not, and they would have a teacher come in as a substitute. He went to the principal and said, I should run the class because I knew more than the substitutes. ... So usually ... when he went on leave for a day, or so, I would run the classes for the general science for freshmen and the first year physics.

SH: What do you remember about social activities in high school? Did you dance?

DM: Oh, I did, yeah. Unlike many of the kids in my class of boys, I did like to go to the school dances. ... I think, if I remember correctly, I went to the senior prom when I was a sophomore. There's a young girl that invited me. I was two or three years younger than she, but I did do that kind of activity. We had also in our community away from the high school, where our tennis courts were, ... a building ... where they let us use once a week for a dance of the neighborhood kids and that was an area of activity. Whenever social activities I could [get] into, I got into. I got into the dramatic stuff, like the senior play and that sort of thing.

SH: Were you involved in music at all?

DM: I was in the glee club. I was not a good, particularly good, musician but there were a lot of interesting people there, so I joined.

SH: Did you carry this into Rutgers glee club at all?

DM: No.

SH: I know you said you played tennis.

DM: I played tennis. I didn't do any activities while I was at Rutgers of that nature, at all. The moral sort of affected that. The fact that almost everything took some money, even a little, and we didn't have that extra. ... I got enough to live on, I mean, I love to eat, I knew what day it was by, whether there was a slice of baloney on my sandwich or a slice of cheese, at least it was something I remembered.

SH: Did you work in the summer or on weekends?

DM: I worked in the summer. I worked in the first summer, ... at a surveyor, ... I had to have a course in surveying so I got a job with a surveyor. ... They paid very little but at least I got a job. Next year I worked as a welder, then after that I worked. It was hard to work as soon as we got into the war years. The later part of my career in college was spent in class. They used an accelerated program for mechanical engineers so we graduated early.

SH: I wanted to ask about that, but to start with, do you remember where you were when Pearl Harbor had happened?

DM: I was hanging around at one of the ice cream stores in Linden, where I had some friends. We were gathered there. We heard it on the radio. They interrupted a football game and I remember that well.

SH: What was the reaction where you were?

DM: Well, some of the people who were there had already tried to enlist in the Canadian Air Force. So basically, they assumed that this was something that was inevitable. They sort of

evaded Pearl Harbor to Europe also, so they were a little bit more sophisticated than just thinking it was an attack on Pearl Harbor they believe that it was all part of the same thing.

SH: What were the discussions about going to fly with the Royal Canadian Air Force?

DM: Well, ... it ... came from the older guys that I was with. ... I wanted to very much. We went over to New York one Saturday, I went with them, and ... there was an office in New York and it was closed on Saturday. ... Otherwise I might have put in an application also.

SH: Do you think it was part of the glamour and romance surrounding the Air Force?

DM: Much of it had to do with exactly that, a chance to get to fly. Somehow or other, that was more important than the war effort, ... to learn to fly. ... One or two of the people eventually did, and one left the service as a colonel in the Air Force, part of the same group.

SH: This was a friend from Rutgers?

DM: No, a friend from Linden, much older person than me.

SH: What did you attribute that interest in flying to?

DM: I don't know. In the early years of our life, in our generation, that was one of the things that seemed a nice thing to do.

SH: Was it the close proximity of Teterboro, or the Hindenberg, or Lindberg's flight?

DM: Maybe it had something to do with Lindberg. ... That, ... maybe, where it began.

SH: Could it have been from the movies from World War I?

DM: Oh, yeah, that might have been.

SH: Did you go to the movies often?

DM: Yeah, money was involved, but movies were not that expensive. Ten cents actually could get you into some movies. I went to a movie ... often, ... though not as much as some of the other kids.

SH: What was your favorite movie before World War II?

DM: Good question. I tended to be more of a romantic. There was the movie called *The King Steps Out*, it was about Franz Joseph and Sissy. Later on I found, when I got married, Dorrit's [his wife's] father had written the original script for *The King Steps Out*, and ... I like that sort of a movie, *Soul to Remember*. These are not great movies, they just had very good music and I like that.

SH: Had you seen *All Quiet on the Western Front*?

DM: Yes, yes, I did. It was a great movie, ... a real horror but very dramatic, very well done.

SH: Were there certain books that you read, or what were your favorites? Did you read a lot as a young man?

DM: I read as much as I had to. I like poetry better than I did other things. ... You had to write a certain number of book reports, and that sort of thing. So I wrote those and I read those. I was a pretty fast reader so I could get by. ... My kids [and] my grandchildren are very avid readers and even today, ... [I went] over to my daughter's house here and ... [they had] a stack of books that they were reading. I didn't do that as much as I should have, I guess. Although I managed to pick up some knowledge, at most.

SH: What were your favorite musicians during your college years?

DM: I like the opera, therefore I like Lily Falls and (?) and those people.

SH: Were there any activities or concerts like that at Rutgers that you went to?

DM: Rutgers had a good concert series that promoted some reasonably great people. Paul Robeson had a concert, I attended that. There were others in New York, the Symphony of Boston, I guess, did also play there.

SH: What do you remember about the Robeson Concert?

DM: I remember that he was very well received. It was a great thing. The big thing was the thing called. *The Ballad for Americans, In '76 the Sky Was Red*, (?) he did that very well, and that *Old Man River*, of course, I remember that, and then in the same program, there was a woman who played this instrument in the close proximity theremin, they call her ... it was very interesting. It never caught on as a real instrument, but you wave your hands in front of it in the right position depending of the proximity, you get a different note, different tone.

SH: What was it called?

DM: Theramin, I believe theramine, or something like that, but she was on the program with Paul Robeson. That's all I remember. I was interested.

SH: What about football games?

DM: I used to stay, I'd walk across the street to watch kids play football. I love football and so I attended whatever games I could, because, we had them. We got the tickets. So I would go to football games and I saw most of the Rutgers games in those years. A lot of my classmates in engineering were on the football team. ... (Lou Angelily?) was a football player, [He] was a football player and [an] engineering student. Morgan O'Brien was killed in the war, he was a football player. ... I like football. I like all sports really.

SH: Tennis was your favorite one, though?

DM: Tennis is the only one that I really participated at a higher level.

SH: How long did you last on the football team?

DM: Well, I went through the entire season, ... freshman year in ... lightweight football. ... Somewhat battered, but unbowed, ... I knew I wouldn't be able to do it after that.

SH: After Pearl Harbor, what was the word that you received from the administration as far as enlisting, or the draft, or things like that?

DM: Well, they gave you whatever information they had. They had an office, somebody, the dean of students I guess it was. Dean Metzger's office, or somebody, kept track of the changes in the law and that sort of thing, and we just figured what we should do. As ... for most of the guys, [they] figured that they should stay in school as long as they could and finish as much as they could and then go when they asked you to. ... So, that's the way it went with most of us.

SH: What about mandatory chapel?

DM: We had that. We had mandatory chapel. I, even at that time, did not like the idea, and I thought it was wrong, but I went because you had to.

SH: Did you ever try to cut?

DM: Yeah, as much as possible, but I haven't succeeded much. I don't think I did. ... Dean Metzger was the Dean of Men and his office kept track of chapel attendance. He actually married Dorrit and I ... in 1944.

SH: Really? Did you have any interaction with the other administrators or the college president?

DM: Clothier I remember was a very stern man. ... He got to know a lot of us by name. ... When I actually finished undergraduate mechanical engineering, ... [in] fact the week before I finished, I was hired by the electrical engineering department to teach until I went into service. ... I remember I was walking across the campus and encountered Robert (Clarkton Clothier?) and he made a remark. The fact that here I was on the faculty ... and I didn't have a tie on. ... That was a no, no. So, I had to always remember to have a tie handy. He was a very bright man but he was very stern, at least he gave you that impression.

SH: Was Demarest still there?

DM: William Demarest was. Whistling Willie, as he was known as. He lived there but he was no longer active. You can go see him, he was a very nice person. He had a house very near the

engineering building, which had long since torn down. People used to make fun of his whistle, he was known as Whistling Willie.

SH: Tell us some of the stories about the campus that you remember, like Silent Willie?

DM: Willie the Silent. Yeah. I remember that we followed the traditions. Some of our guys were very much more involved. I don't think I was such a good subject in that. I did not get involved with that sort of activity, particularly. I am trying hard to think, I can't.

SH: Well, tell me about the accelerated program, when did that kick in and can you describe college life?

DM: Well, first of all, the first two years, were more or less normal operation. ... Then when the war began, [in] the mechanical engineering department, there were maybe four or five people in the faculty in those times, [they] decided to accelerate the program going during the summer of 1943. ... By doing that, we finished on January 8, 1944, the last class was on New Year's Day, a week before. ... We had our regular little graduation ceremony in Voorhees chapel and somewhere or another I still have the announcement. I tried to carry on a little bit, but they did very well by getting us through quickly. The other departments did not, not all of them did, and so a lot of the people had to wait till the war was over to come back to school. This way I was able to graduate and then, as I said, I was hired by the EE department and I then stayed [and] waited there until I became eligible for the draft. ... I just waited until I was called. They kept increasing; they rewrote my contract every three months until October, then I went in.

SH: What about ROTC?

DM: That was compulsory when I was a freshman, and I was active in the ROTC in freshman and sophomore years and I really would have liked to continue with the ROTC, but I have a physical problem with my teeth, and so forth, and so was not eligible, which was fortunate because these guys didn't finish until after the war. There was so much misleading information around. The idea was, if you got into the advanced ROTC program, that you'd be finishing at Rutgers. It turns out that almost immediately they were taken away and became a group; that from my class ... was known as the Black Fifty. ... They came back to finish one term in uniform and then they were taken into active duty. So ... [there] was no way they could finish, and we all thought they were misled. I remember the guys saying, oh, now we will finish, were finished. Those of us who didn't go into advanced ROTC did finish ours, most of us, but the ones who did, didn't.

SH: What about the ASTP program on campus?

DM: Yeah, that kept Rutgers going in part and the ASTP people were, ... [taking] regular courses. In fact, some of the guys in the so-called Black Fifty came back as ASTP students. I was in the ASTP at Ohio State later on.

SH: Really. What do you remember of the housing that was provided for them, or the interaction between ASTP and everyone else?

DM: Yeah, they had regular dormitory. They stayed in Fort Hall and places like that and there [was] no barrier around. They were free to move in and out. The ASTP students, the ones from Rutgers, originally are the ones who came, apparently. There were quite a few over the years. I bet ... you could get the total number of people who attended Rutgers on ASTP, there are several thousands, probably. But then, as I mentioned, with my wife's attachment to Rutgers, she came in 1943. She graduated at Wittenberg and then she came east and got a job at General Motors and they sent her to Rutgers. ... Of course, we used to sit down there (at Stolemans?) with these girls and help them with their homework, and what not, because they were really were making them to do things that were far beyond what all of us expected them to be able to do. ... They did remarkably well, considering.

SH: These women that were there doing the graduate or the engineering courses, were they considered NJC students or Rutgers students?

DM: No, they were extension students at Rutgers. I guess that was what you would call them. I never thought of them as having a title like that, but there must have been something like that. They lived wherever they wanted. They rented rooms at various campuses.

SH: Did their curriculum focus on engineering?

DM: It was. It was strictly an engineering program; drafting, engineering mechanics and thing of that type. They learned a lot. It was remarkable that they could do as well as they did.

SH: Was it strictly women that were part of this extension course?

DM: Yes, basically women.

SH: How many were involved, do you know?

DM: Well, there were several different classes. There was a group that came from Trenton, originally, and another group that came from Linden. I don't know how many they had. They had quite a number. I think there were at least three separate classes, might have been more, and they ran like thirty or forty, fifty people in a class. They really had quite a bunch, and it worked out well for them. It worked out well for Rutgers. It kept the place intact.

SH: Who was your favorite professor when you were an undergraduate?

DM: That's hard to say. Probably somebody who was in the EE department. I'd say somebody like Roy Potter, who hired me later. That's why I liked him then, too. I really can't tell.

SH: Were there any courses that you took that were not affiliated or related to the EE courses?

DM: Oh, yeah, you had to. You had certain basic requirements, more so than they have now probably. You had English, and you had economics and you had other electives you had to take.

[There was] ROTC, which was compulsory, and every term you had some non-engineering courses.

SH: Was there any friction between commuter students such as yourself and the fraternities?

DM: I don't think friction. There was just sort of a mutually exclusive. ... We didn't have a lot of their contact, except through games and sports and like that. ... I was the only engineer on the tennis team, for example, and there were lots of others, many of them were probably fraternity people. We didn't have a lot of animosity between fraternity and non-fraternity people. There wasn't much, at least not that I recall. Maybe if I lived on campus, it would have been more difficult.

SH: Did you read *the Targum*?

DM: Oh, yeah.

SH: What did you think of *the Targum*?

DM: It was pretty decent. I have written on the high school newspaper. I thought *the Targum* was reasonably good newspaper of that type.

SH: Did you ever write a letter to *the Targum*?

DM: I don't remember. I don't think so. No, I read *the Targum* every time it came out; I certainly did, because it provided information, too, that we needed to know.

SH: When you began working, did you start right away in January?

DM: I started. I met my first class, as an instructor, as my title, about seven days before I actually graduated. I started right away.

SH: Were you teaching these ASTP's?

DM: Yes, and a few civilian students that were left. I remember I taught a course to four students, the AC circuit course and this was a course that ... we couldn't get out of the ASTP program. The ASTP program took precedence and established a whole bunch of courses where some of the civilian students sat in and took them at the same time, but for some reason or other, there's one that didn't work out. I remember having four students in the class.

SH: Do any of your students that you had as a very young man stand out in your mind?

DM: Oh, I had so many; it really would be unfair of me to talk about any. I can't remember the names of so many thousands, literally. I was ... a very active professor. I taught a lot of different courses, and so I had diligent students and that's always embarrassing, because I don't get there anymore. ... When I ... go there as a member of the alumni ... somebody comes walking up to you. They'd be surprised. They'd be embarrassed that I didn't recognize them. I'd

recognize their face, but they say, "Well, we recognize you, why can't you recognize us?" ... I [would] say, "Well, there were thousands of you, there's only one of me." ...

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

DM: ... He kept saying that up until the night before I had to go to induction. He said, "Don't worry about it, we'll find a way to get you back," but nobody was gonna do that.

SH: Who was the acting dean?

DM: A fellow by the name of Bert Holland. He's long gone, but he meant well. He thought he'd talk to some general or some generals would say, "Oh, yeah, we'll take care of that." Baloney. The fact is that I came down, taught my last class at four o'clock, five o'clock, in the afternoon, got on the train [and] went back to Linden where we were living. ... The next morning, I got on the train in Newark to Fort Dix and I didn't get back to Linden for quite a while.

SH: Let's back up a little bit. I understood earlier in the conversation that you met your wife when she came to Rutgers as an extension. Can you tell me about that first meeting? Do you remember?

DM: Yeah. I remember, yeah, it was in Winants Hall. At that time [it] had the bookstore, and cafeteria, and a dormitory, all at once. ... I remember she was with the Eastern Aircraft women and she was sitting there talking to somebody. At that time she was a very pretty person and so I went to talk to her and I convinced her we should do something. I don't remember what, but from then on we were very close and we were engaged a few days after. ... Not too many days after we've met.

SH: Really.

DM: Yeah, ... we were married in April and I met her in January, so there was decent length of time there, several months even, but there was a war and you kept saying, "You're gonna go away," and all that sort of thing. ... It was not very romantic, but it was good meeting place, ... the cafeteria, because I remember you could get chicken wings very cheap and I didn't have much money, especially after I got engaged. I had no money then because I bought a ring.

SH: Tell me about the wedding. Was her family able to come?

DM: Yeah, her family came, my family came, my mother and father came, and my sister. My brother did not. Her mother and father came.

SH: Where did they come from?

DM: Austria, where she does.

SH: How were they able to travel at that time?

DM: They ... didn't come from Austria then. They had gone out of Austria in 1938.

SH: Where were they coming from?

DM: They lived in America, in New York City.

SH: ... Did you have a party afterwards, or dinner?

DM: No. ... One of my faculty colleagues was best man, (Billy Pyatt?), and Metzger did the wedding. Kline Smith played the organ and we had quite a nice wedding and got in a train and went to New York and her mother had boiled a chicken. That was our first day together, night together.

SH: You went right back to teaching on Monday?

DM: Well, we went, one night, the first night after our wedding ... to the New Yorker. ... It was a good hotel at that time ... [but] we were very unhappy because it was so crowded in New York. One of the other women's parents had a bed and breakfast in Atlantic City, so we got on the bus and went to Atlantic City for one day and got terribly sun burned and came back and went to work.

SH: Now, was she working at that time?

DM: Oh, yeah. She worked. She ... [had already] gone back while coming back to New York, to work in Linden, actually at Eastern Aircraft.

SH: Did you find an apartment in Linden, or did you live with your folks?

DM: Lived with my folks. We stayed with my folks in Linden. Not much chance of finding an apartment at that time.

SH: That's what I heard someone saying.

DM: Yeah, yeah.

SH: We talked earlier that you had gone to Linden after your four o'clock class and took the train to Dix.

DM: Yeah, the next day. Yeah, that was where we went. ... I sort of waved goodbye as I went through to New Brunswick. I knew, being a little bit more realistic, ... that [it] was very unlikely that I was going to get back there for a while. ... Fortunately and interestingly, all that time that I spent there counted toward my state retirement, so I actually gained a little bit in the long run. ... As I said, there was no way that they were going to get me out of the military just to teach a few ASTP students.

SH: Tell me about your time at Dix.

DM: I had a very short time at Dix. ... I vividly remember going into the barracks and getting our uniforms and that sort of thing. ... My name was called out to go to the orderly room and I went there and they said "Molony, you go over to the POW camp and pick up Lieutenant so and so, an Italian prisoner who is going to meet his nephew here and you're his guard." So, I had no weapon, no anything, [and] I was his guard. I remember that, and then a few days later they put us on a train and sent us to Fort McClellan, Alabama. That's the infantry-training center. ... We became infantrymen. ... I remember the days when the Battle of the Bulge began. I remember how they called us out to explain that we know the military, in trouble, and they were, and that they might change our cycles, ... sending us more quickly as replacements in the casualties there. ... That ended fairly quickly and they got control of that phase. All of a sudden I got orders to go to Ohio State and go to the ASTP graduate program. ... So I went to Columbus, Ohio, and Dorrit at that time left General Motors and came with me ... to a room in Columbus, for a very short while. ... She worked for a person in the physics department, one of the inventors of the electron microscope, and so she was able to work and help out with the finances. Then, when I went farther from there, I went to the Combat Engineers [and] she went back to New York and stayed. That's the way it stayed until the war was over and she was able to join me out in the West Coast.

SH: Tell me what it was like for you to travel from Dix to McClellan.

DM: Never having been there, that was an interesting thing. We were on a train for a God-awful length of time, and wandered around here and there during the various stations. It would stop and the Red Cross people would give us coffee and that's about it. Very crowded, we got to Fort McClellan and we immediately we were assigned to things that you didn't like much, but it was kind of interesting, now that I look back on it. ... Infantry training in the United States at that time was a fairly dangerous kind of thing. It wasn't exactly fun, but then I was fortunate to go to Ohio State.

SH: What do you remember about the South?

DM: Yeah. ... Later on, let me backtrack. The ... North/South relationship didn't really impact me so much at Fort McClellan because you were always on the post. You didn't leave, pretty much. ... It didn't have much impact [on me], but later on [it did], when I left the Ohio State area, and went down to the South again, as now a member of the engineer unit, and then ... went into town, and so on. We then did see a lot of the problems that one now associates with the South. I remember, then a soldier from my outfit, Norman (Crumholt?) and I came back one day from the town. We had gone out to have a few beers or something and we sat in the back seat of the bus. There was a tremendous commotion, while, the guy driving the bus wouldn't move ... unless we moved out of those seats. Those seats were not allowed for white people, you had, ... to sit back there if you were colored and he didn't have the white people sit there in case somebody came in who was ... colored. At that time we did use that word. ...

SH: Which town was this, what base?

DM: That was in Leesville, Louisiana and that was at Camp Polk. There was ... obviously ... tremendous amount of potential problems in the South. ... I know that (Crumhalls?) and I we were very indignant, we decided that we were gonna try to break the color barrier ourselves, it didn't work.

SH: Where was (Crumhalls?) from?

DM: New York.

SH: Did you ever consider applying to OCS or was that ever an option for you?

DM: No, I didn't. It really wasn't an option. I probably couldn't pass the physical for OCS and that was my (?). I actually got promoted fairly quickly within the enlisted rank, and I got to be First Sergeant in a matter of a few months. ... Every time I looked at the bulletin board, there was another promotion, so I really wasn't worrying about it. I got paid as much as a Second Lieutenant, anyway or just about.

SH: What did you attribute this fast rise in promotion to?

DM: I suppose I was a classic, probably a good soldier type. I did things the way you're supposed to do then. They were a little impressed by the fact that I had taught also in the University and I really never could quiet pin it down, why it happened to me. No one could explain that either. As I went within a few days after I got to Leesville, Louisiana, to Camp Polk, I had my first promotion. I went from Private...to Corporal and then every time I turned around I was sewing stripes on and they'd say, "Hey your name is on the bulletin board again." I'd go over there and I got up to be staff sergeant very quickly, and then got to be first sergeant and I became first sergeant, master sergeant, the Headquarters Company, 1154th Engineer Combat Group and that was a very rapid rise. Then of course, I got a lot of perks out of that. When Dorrit came out to live there we had the commissary to provide food and live nicely.

SH: What were your jobs? What did you have to do? I understand when you went to Columbus, you had been a student and then you went back to Polk.

DM: I went there, and my first title, besides getting my rank increase, ...was listed as an electric motor repairman and I got several different job advances having to do with the electrical systems of tanks and bulldozers, and what not. ...Then I became basically a soldier, not just associated with repair of things, but they had a thing called the combat patrol, intelligence patrol, where they even tried to teach us a little Japanese. We were supposed to be the advanced guard and I got promoted once out of that.

SH: Did you have any other language skills?

DM: Ichi, ni, san, shi is the end of that, sayonara, my daughters both speak fluent Japanese.

SH: Really. What brought that interest do you think?

DM: My wife. My wife was interested in languages and so she encouraged them. She's always been very supportive of education in general.

SH: At Camp, Fort Polk, what were you being trained in?

DM: I think its Fort Polk now. I think it still exists, but we called it Camp Polk.

SH: Well, at Camp Polk, were you continually being trained?

DM: Yeah, it was all training and then we got orders to go to Japan. ... We got our stuff on the train [and] ... we all went up to Seattle, ... and the war ended. We were already on the boat.

SH: Really. Can you tell me where you were when you heard that Franklin Roosevelt had died?

DM: I'm not sure. I really don't remember exactly when. I don't. I really don't, I should. That's why I'm surprised that I don't remember, but I don't. I remember about V-E Day.

SH: Tell me about that.

DM: V-E Day, I was in New York City on furlough. I had gotten furlough and I came out of the South and I was in a summer uniform, and of course ... the dark uniform was supposed to be in existence here. I got back, I had a lot of trouble, every time I had to explain why. ... I remember being in Times Square.

SH: Really? ... Was Dorrit with you then?

DM: No. I met her downtown, I think. I mean there was a tremendous activity.

SH: Can you describe some of the scenes you saw?

DM: Oh, the usual ones, hugging and kissing, there was a lot of that. Actually, then some of us began to realize that the war really wasn't over on V-E Day.

SH: That's what I wanted to ask.

DM: We realized pretty quickly that that's one thing that we couldn't count on. The war was not over.

SH: When V-E Day happened, you were on furlough in New York? Were you training?

DM: I was finished training. I was pretty much finished with training, oh yeah. We were ready for shipment. In fact, if I remember correctly, I got, ...a seven day furlough, which was a little unusual because I had done a lot of work, extra, in packing all our equipment and getting it on the train. ... So those of us who had been involved in that, got the extra furlough.

SH: You already knew before you went to New York.

DM: We knew that we were heading for Seattle, so we were gonna go there.

SH: When you were on the furlough before the V-E Day and you were in Times Square, had you talked with your parents about what they had been doing as far as the war and how it had affected them?

DM: Not that I recall, to be very honest. I might have talked more to my sister. ...They [were] just kinda anxious that I get to come back in one piece. That was the whole interest, and they were doing reasonably well. Then they had enough income that they were surviving, but I don't remember having much give and take with them on this subject.

SH: I wondered if they were part of the war bond effort or bandage drive.

DM: I don't think so. My father was quite old, I remember he was. I as I say, he was in his fifties when I was born, and so there wasn't that much that he could do.

SH: Right. I understand that. I just wondered if he had participated as part of an air warden or your mother had been involved with the Red Cross?

DM: No, not really involved, no.

SH: What about your sister, what was she doing?

DM: ...She was teaching, but she wasn't involved in ... any extra activity.

SH: Had her husband gone to war?

DM: She didn't have a husband at that time. She married after ..., and he was not eligible for the draft.

SH: You had spoken of him, so I thought he went to war.

DM: No, he had a heart condition.

SH: Did your wife have family, siblings, that were involved in the war at all?

DM: Her sister remained in England during the war and that's the only sibling she had. ... Her mother had to work, her father tried to work. It was very difficult when [you] don't know the language, ... you're not native born, and you're a writer. I mean it's pretty hard to write in somebody else's language.

SH: Did they have family members that they heard from?

DM: Oh, yes, they heard from them and maybe for the last time too. ... Most of them, they lost track. These people, my mother-in-law and father-in-law, considered themselves very fortunate

that they got out alive. Not all the members of their family did and they lost contact pretty quickly.

SH: I just wondered if they have been able to keep up or if they've gone to another country.

DM: My wife could answer that better than I.

SH: After the furlough and V-E Day then you returned to Camp Polk?

DM: Camp Polk, yeah, that's right. Then we continued to get ready to leave there. ... We, ... this time, ... really had [the] stuff on the train and we went to Seattle and got on the ship.

SH: Do you remember the name of the ship?

DM: No, no, ...the (material?) did, but we didn't. ... My colleagues and most of us then ..., just after a few months of stalling around, ... were disbursed into various other units. They broke up our unit.

SH: When did you realize what the atomic bomb was and what it had done?

DM: Yeah, I remember that. We were talking and got the news that something had happened and to those who had more science education knew roughly what it was. ... That brings out another point. Let's digress for a minute. When I was at the ROTC, not ROTC, in the ASTP in Ohio State, I was interviewed to go to work at ... *Los Alamos*, not *Los Alamos*, in Tennessee and they didn't take me. It was very fortunate, because I didn't even know what they were doing at that time, except I knew it had something to do with radiation. ... They didn't take me because Dorrit was from Europe and even though she had been a refugee they considered her as a potential enemy. ... So I couldn't go there, which is indeed fortunate because I would have ... had a terrible moral time, worried about what happened. With those of us who knew what it was all about, immediately changed our joy of the fact that this is gonna end the war. We had a pretty good idea it would and then to realize this is what it had done. And I've heard a lot of people, ... fellow soldiers who said the same thing. They said, "Oh, boy, it's wonderful to go home and they would say, wait a minute, no it's not." Henry Winkler said that. I remember he mentioned that to me once.

SH: How aware were you of what atomic energy was?

DM: I knew a little bit about it. I figured a little bit about it. ... Interesting enough, when I went to Ohio State, I went to work, they wanted us to go the classes and they were very boring to me, because I already had these courses. ... So I got in touch with the guy who has the name of Wang, who was in the physics department, and he said, could I come and work with him in my spare time from the army. ... I talked to the commanding officer and he said, "Why don't go over, and just report there during the day and come back here at night?" ... So I did that and I worked with building the (Betatron?) which is the earlier part of the partial accelerator. ... The guy, by the name of (?), who later became a professor at Yale, and I rebuilt all the control systems in the (Betatron?) in a matter of weeks. ... When I was getting out, he tried to get me to

come back, not to Rutgers but to Ohio State, but I didn't. ... I knew enough about radiation and things of that nature, ... [to know] pretty much [what] had happened at Hiroshima. I mean, it was a known fact that you could do this if you had the right stuff. I mean, hindsight is much better than foresight, but after being at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, both, I've been there.

SH: Have you?

DM: I'm unhappy that I have to stand there and say, "Yeah, we did this." Just three weeks ago, or four weeks ago Dorrit and I were in Dresden and something pretty rough had happened at the end of the World War II in Europe.

SH: At the time, when the bomb was dropped ... you were preparing for the invasion of the mainland...?

DM: Yeah, yeah, that's exactly it.

SH: Do you know what you would have been doing had this not ended the war?

DM: We were engineer units. ... We worked with a great deal of heavy equipment, bulldozers and road graders and rollers and big bridge building equipment. Our outfit was to support the engineers in repair and maintenance of those pieces of equipment, so we would have known that we would have been right behind the people who did the invading, because ... the engineers were often with the invasion force and we would have to be there immediately to repair the stuff.

SH: In your training at Fort Polk, were you ever in contact with veterans who had either been in the European theater or coming back from South Pacific?

DM: Oh, often. The guy I spent some weeks with in his pop tent had been island hopping in the Pacific till he got very sick. They sent him back and they were going to send him back again. We had others to talk to.

SH: Do you remember any of the stories, how they affected you as a potential soldier?

DM: Well, again, that's hard for me to say. I remembered individuals. ... I don't remember. Most of them didn't talk that much about it. You'd be surprised they were ... happy that they got back in one piece but they didn't say, "Boy, this was just terrible," which it was, but they didn't say that.

SH: Your training times ... in Louisiana, what do you remember about the climate and some of the people that you were working with then?

DM: You mean the non-military people?

SH: Either, or.

DM: Well, these Southern towns took quite a beating when the army arrived there because immediately they were overrun with outsiders, particularly New Yorkers, who they couldn't understand. ... They were very, very unhappy about that. ... The village was Leesville, which we called "*disease Ville*", and I guess they, the local residents, were very pleased to have us leave, even though they made money.

SH: Were any of the colored troops around where you were in training with the engineers?

DM: No. Another interesting thing is, when I finished up my career up at Washington, not that exactly because I spent another several years, three years in reserve, but I was, as I said, First Sergeant, Headquarters Company of the 1154th Engineer Combat Group. Now when you write that out, you write "engineer," "Engr.," "combat" you don't write, you call it "C" group, but the military called "black soldiers," colored soldiers, so we were getting new men coming in where you get a bunch of, intermixed with the white...soldiers. We'd have blacks, but you say, how did they get there because they're not supposed to be in that unit. Well, of course it's that "C", Engineer C means engineer colored group. ... This shows you the level of stupidity. They used the word "colored" anyway which even at that time was considered by many black people, as a very offensive word. ... We have to get, always, in every group of ten or fifteen or up to twenty guys who transferred in. Almost always there'd be one or two that ... had gone to the wrong place and it would be my job to go tell them that, "Sergeant" or whatever, "We're gonna have to send you somewhere else." Very bad, very bad. Of course, Truman finally ended that.

SH: How long were you in Washington before you were able to make your way back?

DM: ...Quite a few months. ... Dorrit got a job with the Commanding General of North Fort Lewis, Washington, as a secretary. So she was able to help us, but the fact is that it must have been five or six months, maybe more. It was quite a while, yeah.

SH: Did you have to honor the point system?

DM: Yeah, I could have gotten out earlier because I had this guy Wang, in Ohio State [who] asked for me to be sent back to Ohio State, but I decided I didn't want to do that, so I stayed until all the points ran out.

SH: Did you already have an offer to come back to Rutgers at that time?

DM: They had to, I mean, there never was ... a question. They more or less had to by law. They could keep me out every two weeks if they wanted to, but at least I had it initially. ... See, I didn't want to do exactly that. I didn't take back my full time job. I took [a] part time job and I went and registered for another undergraduate degree. I got a degree, my second undergraduate degree in electrical engineering. Then immediately, as soon as I finished that, I was hired full time as [an] instructor in electrical engineering. ... The years that I spent as part time, also counted in my retirement. Thank God, because I went, not voluntarily, I went involuntarily.

SH: You had mentioned before that you stayed in the Reserves. Was that a difficult decision to make?

DM: No. I thought it was a good idea. I originally thought maybe I would stay in the Reserves enough that I could take advantage of some of the military perks and that sort of thing ... [I was] able to get decent commissary and that sort of thing, but it turned out, we had children fairly quickly then. We had four and I just couldn't take the time off to work in summer and go to military camps.

SH: You were out of the Reserves by the time Korea came along?

DM: Yes, but the army does not always know that this is so. I got a letter asking me to report for physical in the Korean War and I quickly wrote back, and said, I was discharged two years ago, one year ago, whenever it was. I got a nice certificate and everything, all the seals. Got a letter of certificate out of that and I got out of the regular.

SH: When you came back to Rutgers, where did you live?

DM: ... It was too late for that, when we got back, to get housing at the Heights, in those trailers. ... Fortunately, a friend, in fact it was the chair of the department and, of course, a personal friend, had a neighbor who owned... a two family house in Highland Park. So we had pretty quickly got into, well, I shouldn't...say that... We did that, but in the second year. The first year, we stayed with my mother and father. I forgot that, and we then moved to Highland Park and we stayed there until I retired.

SH: Who is the Chair of the Department?

DM: The Chair at that time was Roy Potter, James Leroy Potter, better known as Roy, a very, very bright man.

SH: Tell me about going back to school then as an undergraduate and a veteran.

DM: Yeah, it was interesting because they also knew that I already had been [given the]... title of instructor, and everybody treated me very well. I can't quibble about any treatment that I received at that time. ... Many of my classmates that were original Class of '44 came back about that time and finished their degrees. ... We had good associations with most of them. Never had bad associations with any of them.

SH: Tell me some of the impressions you had of campus when you came back.

DM: Oh, it was so much bigger...because it had so many more students ... with the military people coming back. It was obviously going to be a big place.

SH: You had been a serious student before the war, did you see more serious students after the war than you had seen before the war?

DM: Yeah, I think so, I think so. You didn't go to get the GI Bill. They paid the bills but you didn't use that as an excuse not to offer the real world. You used it to get through school and at

that time industry was hiring. So most of the people who were in engineering got good jobs, relatively quickly, but I stayed teaching, which was probably not the most lucrative thing, but it was more fun.

SH: Did you enjoy teaching?

DM: Very much so. I liked teaching. I like teaching in small classes and big classes and what not. To hear me talk now, I used to have a very loud voice and I used to be a loud lecturer.

SH: Where were most of your lectures held?

DM: Oh, much of our earlier years was in downtown in Murray Hall area. Engineering built a building at the Heights, fairly quickly but it was not for electrical engineering. We got Murray Hall, which upset the history department a lot because they thought they were gonna get Murray Hall. ... We built new labs there and everything else and that was really nice downtown. We didn't have to face the Dean of Engineering every few minutes because he was at the heights.

SH: Who was the Dean of Engineering then?

DM: Easton, Dean Easton.

SH: Tell me about the administration. How did it change as you worked at Rutgers.

DM: Oh, golly. ... Rutgers was pretty much, ...in...the hands and pockets of the history department. History had the most powerful impact on Rutgers campus when you look at it from my standpoint. People I liked, that Henry Winklers was a personal friend from way back and many of the others...assumed that engineering people could get support from the government for research, and such things, and that the history department, and others like it, could not. ... Therefore, they said, they won't support engineering. You had to raise your own funds. It didn't turn out to be too easy all the time, but they got along pretty well. ... I knew all of the old administrative people quite well.

SH: Was Clothier still there when you came back?

DM: No ... I guess Clothier was. I'm trying to think some of the other Presidents. I can't recall. I don't know the new one at all. I couldn't even tell you the name of the current President of Rutgers.

SH: It's Fran Lawrence.

DM: Yeah, I thought it was.

SH: Was there a mixture of eighteen-year-olds and veterans in your classes?

DM: Yes, they were totally intermixed.

SH: Did this cause problems?

DM: I don't think so. No, not really. I never saw any. It never affected me negatively or anyway.

SH: Were some of your engineering students, ... trying to catch up? ... Were you having to catch up the eighteen-year-olds?

DM: No, the eighteen-year-olds could come in as regular students and they followed the same ... normal program ... The ones that you had to work with to expedite their passage through were the ones returning that, maybe, had finished two and a half or three years and now, you know, what do you do? Do they take the same program that ... [we] our teaching? Will they be able to catch up, or should they take the preliminary course, some prerequisite course. ... By and large, Rutgers did, I think, as well as any.

SH: Were you able to be flexible within your curriculum to accommodate?

DM: Well, yeah. I guess so. Although, some of my colleagues were not all together that ready to say ... the student didn't have to take this course, because they had this one. Engineering tended to be, a fixed thing. It's not as free as the liberal arts.

SH: Do you think the curriculum in engineering suffered because of the war, or did it become better? Did it tighten up after the war?

DM: That's a good question. I suspect that the war changed the nature of the University so that anything that you say about what it was and what it is, is difficult to pin down. ... It's a much better place, it really is. ... I read the publications and the catalogue and I can see a much better place both in engineering and in other fields. They just changed the name of the school. It was the College of Engineering all during my career and now it's the School of Engineering, which I don't know what the politics there was, somebody in the history department. Though maybe the engineering people wanted it that way, I don't know. I wouldn't think so.

SH: As you saw the College of Engineering as you were teaching through it, when you came back, Rutgers was a State University, right?

DM: Oh, yeah.

SH: Did they do that before you left?

DM: Actually, I guess about the same time. It was then called the Instrumentality of the State. I'm not sure when the exact business came about but it really became a State University in the true sense. Soon after I got back, I'll put it that way, it became a State University in the true sense of the word.

SH: As far as your classmates in the Class of '44 and the casualties that were suffered by the different classes, how aware were you of those that were lost at Rutgers?

DM: While we were active, when I was active in the alumni days, ...we were very much involved in that. We knew the list of people and we knew who were lost. I can remember some of them. I used to attend every alumni function, but then we bought a place to live in Austria and so, ... when spring comes along, we go there and I'm not here for the alumni festivities. I would like to go once more before I can't. We'll see.

SH: How involved were you with the alumni?

DM: I was for a long time. While we were still in New Brunswick, I was involved all the time. (?) Dean's (?) husband, and I would put out the paper, newspaper, at the end, for distribution at the various meetings, but that ended a few decades back because I wasn't available anymore.

SH: Did you stay in Highland Park?

DM: Yeah, we stayed in Highland Park. We bought a home in Highland Park and Dorrit had saved some money when I was away and bought some land and I built a house and we kept that until the '80s. All our kids were long gone to school, and everything, and one of them lived here in Concord with her family and we were up visiting. We saw these places and it so seemed like such a nice place that we bought one. ... Then we sold the house in Highland Park and we have ... not gone back ever since.

SH: Tell me about your family and where they were born and what they've done?

DM: My family, my children?

SH: Your children.

DM: Oh, all the children were born in Highland Park. I mean we lived in Highland Park. We had four children, including twin boys and two girls. ... They were all born very close together. There are thirty-three months from the youngest to the oldest. We had all four toddlers in carriages actually. ... I sometimes didn't appreciate just how hard it was, but she struggled and did it. But they all did pretty well in school. They did well in Highland Park High and they liked it. They all went on. Cathy started in Douglass as a math major but transferred to Princeton and then studied Japanese in their first class of women at Princeton and Barbara graduated from Harvard. She got all her degrees in Harvard. Cathy got her PhD in Michigan and Barbara got hers at Harvard and her undergraduate at Harvard.

SH: What were their degrees in?

DM: Actually, they both started out in mathematics and both ended up in Japanese history and Japanese studies. Barbara today is a full professor at the University of Santa Clara in California in Japanese studies and women's studies and a couple of other groups. Cathy just started a new job with Harvard. The twins both became medical doctors. One works in Texas and the other one works in Wisconsin. So we have children in all four corners of the country. We don't see them much, to say the least.

SH: Now your boys, did they go to Rutgers for undergrad?

DM: Don went to Yale and Ron went to MIT, so we had, at the same time, undergraduates in Princeton, Harvard, Yale and MIT. All four at the same time, simultaneous.

SH: I can imagine those tuitions bills.

DM: Oh, God. ... I often think now, when we have dinner, I didn't notice that Dorrit didn't always eat.

SH: She must be extremely proud of her daughters. They're very impressive.

DM: Well, she did it. My wife did it really. She encouraged that education.

SH: I was going to ask what she did during the years that your four children were at school. Did she work?

DM: She worked, before the children were born, she worked at Rutgers Library for a time and then she got her Masters in Political Science/History. She did bits and other teaching, and then ..., when the children came along, she couldn't work, of course. Obviously, it was a miracle she got done what she ... did get done. ... Then they called her to teach at Rutgers Prep, which was not a very pleasant experience, but she did it because it was a job. Then later on, she decided that she was not in the modern version of Political Science since she was not really what she wanted to be even though she had passed all her exams. So she went and started over in German and they immediately hired her as an Assistant Instructor. An Instructor because she was native born, of course, and she finished her requirements there. ... She ...[began] to try to get an approved dissertation topic and every time she'd come up with something, particularly if it had something to do with Austria, they [disapproved]...

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

SH: This is the beginning of tape two side one with an interview with Donald Molony on July eighteenth the year 2001.

SH: We were talking about your wife's inability to get a dissertation topic approved.

DM: Yeah, well, it was so obvious that was going to be close to impossible that she finally just said, to heck with this, I don't need this. ... It was unfortunate because she was a very good scholar and she has an awful lot to offer, but she's been relatively pleased that life turned out the way it did. I'm really speaking for her, I shouldn't speak for her, but she really worked hard with her children and she's worked hard on her father's work too. Her father was a writer, an Austrian writer and she was very much involved in resurrecting his good name and hopefully she makes a real progress in that area. ... It would have been nice if she could have used some of that for her dissertation. ... Several other people have used them, in their work, getting dissertations, but for some reason or other she never could get the right people to come to bat for her.

SH: Tell me what it was like to work at Rutgers from the post war period through Korea and the Vietnam Era at Rutgers. You really covered a lot of history.

DM: Yeah, we covered a very good span. First of all, Rutgers behavior during the crises in the world has been pretty good, on average. Many of the people at Rutgers did rather well. We certainly did contribute enough, in a way, of people over the years to serve their country in various capacities. I wonder if other schools like it really did anymore. I don't think so. I've always been relatively proud of my association. The Korean War was an interlude that really didn't not seem to affect our students particularly because most of the students that I had at that time had fulfilled their military service requirements and some were called back as participants in that conflict because they were in the Reserves. ...[In] fact, ... our Best Man, Bill (Pyatt?), who did not go to Rutgers but had been a Rutgers faculty person, ...was called back in the Navy during the Formosa patrol type. ... I had other students who did the same sort of thing. As far as the Vietnam War, it's entirely a different story. Many of us were actively involved in protest movements. In fact, Dorrit and I both participated in marches on Washington and I was a member of a committee of Rutgers College. Engineering at that time was in limbo between Rutgers College and independence. Only a few of us were in Rutgers College and I was a member of the thing called, "The Action for Peace Committee." It was appointed officially by Rutgers College, and we did as best we could to provide a place for information and the like.

SH: How did it work? ...

DM: Well, because the University was very anxious that we don't involve the University directly and officially, we had to do things carefully so as not to antagonize anybody in the State and what not. ... So I would say that we really accomplished a lot less than we should have. ... We did at least make the fact known that many people at Rutgers were opposed to the war.

SH: What did you do?

DM: Mostly people gave lectures of various kinds and we probably met and did nothing more often than I'd like to admit. We didn't do a lot, but the spirit was willing anyway. I remember a letter appeared in the New York Times from the Action For Peace Committee with all our names on it and people from various [places] depending on what, their bosses thought, ... had to find a way to dissociate themselves from the relationship between the University and the action. The University did not want to make it appear that this was an official reaction of the University. ... So you had to be very careful that you did not antagonize anybody because, actually I, in the final analysis, ... have to admit that you can't really take a state university and have one faculty committee speak for that University as an exclusive speaker. So I thought, in general, we did as much as we could without really doing anything in the final analysis that would upset anybody.

SH: Any repercussions against those who participated?

DM: No, I can't say there were.

SH: Who was the President of the University at that time?

DM: It must have been Bloustein I think. I don't remember the exact, the dates. Was there somebody between Clothier and Ed Bloustein? I'm not sure, think he was the President. ... His own personal attitude, I'm sure was pretty much antagonistic to the war. I mean, I don't think he supported it at all. That's my guess.

SH: Were there other people protesting for the war?

DM: I never saw a single solitary soul that took the opposite view. They just kept quiet.

SH: Was there someone who headed up your committee as the spokesperson?

DM: I can't remember who was the Chairman of the committee, Baker was it? I'm not sure.

SH: How often did you meet?

DM: We met a lot, almost everyday for a while there, but then things changed.

SH: Where were the lectures given?

DM: I think at the Student Center, I'm not sure.

SH: Did anyone give you a hard time about the facilities that you would need for this, or were they well attended?

DM: As I recall, yes.

SH: What about the students at that time? What were they doing? How were they reacting?

DM: Well, students everywhere basically were opposed to the war, pretty solidly, and so they behaved like students did in Princeton or in any other place.

SH: Were they protesting?

DM: Yeah. There were marches on ... Winants Hall was taken over.

SH: Was it?

DM: Sure.

SH: Can you tell me about that?

DM: Well, students were allowed in. By making it so you didn't resist anything, you didn't cause any real serious problems. So they were left alone, so long as they weren't hurting anybody and didn't destroy the facilities or whatever. ... I remember some of the people, Billy... I can't remember. He was involved and certain [people], more likely from the history department [were involved], and the like. I find it difficult to actually recall names.

SH: Genovese was active.

DM: Oh, yeah, yeah. Did you get information ... on the few Rutgers faculty people who were fired because of their views [and] who chose to testify in... Washington. (Heimlich and Finley?) I guess that was their names. They were Rutgers faculty people, I think from Newark, actually, but the whole University sort of ganged up on them for refusing at that time to testify. Again, that was not the Vietnam thing, that was the predecessor of that, the McCarthy times. ... Anyway, ... hopefully, that's all gone.

SH: We're talking about the way that the University has changed. You talked about two professors that had gone to Washington and they refused to testify.

DM: Yes. That was the Heimlich and Finley Affair. It occurred and the University organized a ... committee of review. The Committee of Review actually voted to support the professors. ... Someone in the hierarchy overturned ... the Committee of Review and both were fired. Roy Potter was on that committee and he was a conservative engineer. ... He was honest, and he said that he supported the professors in their right to refuse to answer. ... Well, anyway, the University did not back up the professors at that time. It earned its lesson I think and I suspect that we never would have quite the same problem again. In the Vietnam era as we said, there was much activity at Rutgers campus including some, not really violent but some disturbing elements. Those of us who were in the ... Action for Peace Committee tried to keep things calm and we moved in and out among the students. They trusted us and we really had no problem keeping things under reasonable control.

SH: How did the police force react?

DM: The police disappeared. The campus patrol at that time was a separate entity but they weren't really around and that was good thinking. I suppose they were close by, but nonetheless, they did not have the presence that they somehow have had in various places. ... Anyway, I hope we don't ever have such a thing again. What some of the Presidents said in the past might help to make sure that no adverse things take place.

SH: How much interaction did you have with the faculties at Camden and Newark?

DM: They were on various committees together, but Rutgers, I'm afraid, this is just my opinion, paid less attention to these campuses than they should have. They were part of the University. Pure and simple, they were part of the University. They should have been always treated as equal partners and I'm not at all sure that that was the case. Fortunately, engineering didn't have that involvement, because there was no engineering except at Rutgers, except in New Brunswick. ... I had some friends who were in the Newark faculty, particularly in physics. They did have a physics program going on there and I did help. When we get some old equipment that we were getting rid of, and ... that's the case in point. We would get some stuff that we got rid of and ... we gave [it] to Newark. ... He was pleased to have it. ... So I don't know what it is now. I really don't know what the relationship between the various pieces in fact is. ... Hopefully it's working out well. I don't know.

SH: Were you involved in any discussions when Rutgers College became co-ed?

DM: Really at that time, the engineering women who were studying engineering were all enrolled in Douglass. ... They had a program there that the Douglass people wanted to keep. They liked the idea that they were offering engineering but it turned out, really, that most of the women wanted to take their elective classes in non-engineering classes in Rutgers College, not in Douglass. ... There, of course, all engineering courses were taught, in Rutgers, not Rutgers College, but Rutgers. That was always a problem. You see, that was always a problem. Maybe it's solved now, but there was a Rutgers College and then people who were in the AG School [said,] "... I'm in Rutgers College," but they weren't in Rutgers College. ... Hopefully, that's gotten pretty well straightened out by now, but [in] my day, you said that you were in Rutgers. It was Rutgers College, or Agriculture, or Engineering, you're all part of Rutgers, and Rutgers College as a separate entity seemed to be somehow or other [a] troublesome thing to some of us who were ... involved in the earlier days of Rutgers. We'd like to be considered part of the same group and I know my engineering friends in my class in '44 would have thought themselves as being Rutgers College students. They weren't anymore in a way, because Rutgers College didn't have engineering. ... I guess that ... [it has] really evolved into something much ... better organized than it was then, hopefully.

SH: When you decided to retire, were there any certain reasons for retirement?

DM: Well, yeah. I suspect so. First of all, there was an incentive, which in the final analysis didn't amount to that much. But I also had a feeling that I was not going to be able to do the same things that I had been doing and as well as I thought I had been doing. ... I just didn't like not to do things well. And I felt that if I didn't have as much to offer, as I should, I shouldn't be standing there teaching. ... So, I decided that was the right thing to do.

SH: I've asked you off the tape about any involvement with the IEEE. What do you know about it?

DM: I do know that they set up this interaction. That apparently Rutgers becomes the depository for the information and history of the IEEE. I don't know, I think one name that I recognized in engineering that I think had something to do with it from the engineering standpoint was David (Dawd?). ... He was there when I was there, but as I say, I'm a member of the IEEE. I was a member of its predecessor, which was the IRE, and I'm a life member of this.

SH: In closing, I'd like to ask just one sort of philosophical question, in that, how do you feel World War II impacted the man that I'm interviewing today?

DM: Not me, I guess, right? It impacted me in many ways, but the simplest way for me to say it is that it set-up the nature of our life from that point on. From the time I was a high school student at Linden to the time as I sit here today, World War II has always been a part of that. After all, it brought me my wife. She ... would be sitting in Vienna, Austria right now as a perfectly good Austrian. ... If it had not been for World War II, ... [which] caused her to flee, I never would have had her as my wife and that would have been very bad. As far as other things

go, it impacted me in the selection of careers. I decided to remain in the teaching profession even though it was about a two or three or four to one change in remuneration. I could have made infinitely more money by doing other things but it became a thing that I wanted to do. ... I think it had a positive effect on our family, whether or not it's so obvious all the time. My daughters became academics and my sons, physicians. I think part of that came about because of the nature of our association with the University and its proximity to us. ... We lived nearby and we went to the swimming clubs there and we went to other things there and ... so it did impact me, and my life, and that came about, really as an outcome of the war. Really no matter how you separate it, everything I've done has had some relationship to the past. You're all something from the elements of your past, of our past, but that's it, really.

SH: Is there anything else you would like to leave on tape before I go?

DM: No. I don't think so, except, it's been very nice to sit here and be interviewed. ... Hopefully, I was not too incoherent, as I say, I'm still tired from a little jet lag and I suspect that coherence will return sometime next week.

SH: Well, again, I thank you very much, this ends the interview.

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

Revised by Kathleen Ruck 01/14/02

Revised by Jessica Ding 8/25/07

Revised by Donald Molony