

TRANSCRIPT – JACK BRICKMAN

Interviewee: JACK BRICKMAN

Interviewer: ERIC DONALDSON

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ERIC DONALDSON: Okay. Well, I'm Eric Donaldson, and I'm a cadet at The Citadel. I'm a senior. I'm from Charlotte, North Carolina, and today I am interviewing Jack Brickman, who is a World War II veteran and was in the Army Air Corps. So, Mr. Brickman, if you'd like to introduce yourself—

JACK BRICKMAN: My name is Jack Brickman. I was born in Charleston, Sept—I started to say September (Laughs.)—July 8, 1921.

ED: July 8, 1921—

JB: I remember; I was there.

ED: Where? So, where? I think you told me before, but where, specifically, were you born in Charleston?

JB: I was born at the corner of Bee [Street] and Ashley [Avenue], which at one time was a maternity hospital, a three-story building with pillars in front of it, and that's where I was born. Right across the street from the Porter-Gaud Chapel, the old Porter-Gaud Chapel.

ED: Now where did you—so, what did your mother and father do?

JB: My father and mother came from the old country, Poland.

ED: Poland.

JB: My father came here before World War II, before World War I, excuse me. And, um, he became engaged to my mother before he left, you see, before World War I, came to this country. Came in by way of Galveston in Texas.

ED: Yes.

JB: Was shuffled to Rock Island, Illinois. A Hebrew Immigration Aide Society found him a place. Moved him from place to place until he came there. He worked for a while in a factory. Didn't like it, and eventually moved to Charleston—

ED: Well—

JB: Where he'd make a living. Lived there all his life. Half his life.

ED: Well, what did he do in Charleston?

JB: He ran a men's store.

ED: A Man's store?

JB: Man's, yes, men's clothing store.

ED: Oh. Alright, and then your mother the whole time, was she just—

JB: My mother came there after World War I and didn't get here 'til 1920. So they were engaged for a long period of time. And she came here, she was a mother. Good cook. Good baker. All the things my wife has, needs to get talent, but doesn't have. (Laughs.)

ED: Okay, (Laughing) I think that's okay. How many—so, how many siblings do you have?

JB: I have one sister only.

ED: Okay.

JB: My mother probably had trouble bearing children because my sister's ten years younger than me.

ED: Okay, and where is she now?

JB: She lives in Charleston with her husband, who is also an Army veteran. Went to The Citadel, graduated from The Citadel.

ED: Oh, okay, okay. Alright, so your mother, father, siblings, oh. What was your father's name?

JB: Sam Brickman.

ED: Sam Brickman. Okay, did he change his name?

JB: No, that was his name all the way long.

ED: Okay.

JB: He may spell it in Eng—in Poland B-R-Y, but B-R-I-C-K is how we spell it today.

ED: Okay, so, what school did you go to, or what lower school did you go to here in Charleston?

JB: I went to Courtenay Public School; then I went to the High School of Charleston and I graduated. Then after I went into the College of Charleston. I went there in 1938 until 1942 when I graduated.

ED: Okay, so when you graduated, that's when you enlisted?

JB: I enlisted prior to graduation. When War broke out in 1941, when Pearl Harbor was bombed, the Air Corps of the Army were advertising on the radio—we didn't have TV in those days—for people who had one year of Physics in college. I heard the announcement, and I rode off voluntarily. I had just completed one year of Physics in College of Charleston. Rode off thereafter.

ED: Wha—Why were they looking for people with Physics?

JB: Well, the Army was looking for people to qualify for various jobs. Mine was gonna be in Communications; the Army was already thinking of expanding and moving along for the future. And, among the things they did, they were looking for Communications Engineers, and I qualified. I said I would be listed or assigned to a class to begin in the fall; thereafter, my draft number came up and I wrote them and said "I've got a draft number. What should I do if my draft number is called?" And immediately thereafter I got a call from Fort McClellan, wherever that was, saying they wanted to sign me up and just sent me to Fort Moultrie to be sworn into the Army, Army Air Corps.

ED: Oh yeah, and so that was around 19—?

JB: 1942, early '42.

ED: Early '42. Okay, and so where did you do your basic training?

JB: Well, I didn't go into the service until September of that year, which was in limbo, and I was sent to Scott Field, Illinois where they had an airbase, Belleville, Illinois—Scott Field rather—outside of St. Louis. We stayed there about two months, and the Government decided to put all of its aviation, or aviation cadet program training, into Yale. And we moved the entire school from Scott Field, Illinois, to Yale University, where I graduated eventually.

ED: So you spent time at Yale?

JB: I spent two months at Yale.

ED: Where it was just Army training though?

JB: Army training—Communication. Physics and things of that nature.

ED: Okay, I see. And so your job within the Air Corps was not a pilot?

JB: No, I was a Communications Officer.

ED: So—

JB: So, they had us pick whatever number you wanted, and they sent us down to Florida. And Florida, when I was there, Tampa, had picked the Air Drone Squadron. And I was transferred from Tampa, Florida, to Savannah, Georgia Chatham Army Air Force Base, where my unit was being organized. At that time, the Army planning was far advanced, and they were thinking in terms of eventually moving into Europe. And they set up these Air Drone Squadrons. I was in the 87th Air Drone Squadron, and these were set up and operated in Europe, where after we invaded Europe, the armies would move forward and capture air bases, and we—we would go in along with the engineers and other types of people, my unit. We had 187 men and officers, including me, all specialists.

We would then operate the air bases until the ground units would come out and service them. We had Communications, Engineering, Air Control, things of that nature. And then we would move forward to another base, and the troops would come in.

ED: So now—

JB: But, we weren't assigned there. We went into the Pacific.

ED: Oh, oh, it didn't work out that way?

JB: It didn't work out that way (Laughing).

ED: (Laughing) Okay. So when you left Yale, just to clarify, you were an officer?

JB: When I left Yale, I became an officer, yes; I received a commission.

ED: Okay, and so originally you were supposed to go to Europe, but instead they sent you to the Pacific?

JB: My whole unit was sent.

ED: To the Pacific, so how did that—Where did you go? How'd that start?

JB: Well, (Pause.) I left, by strange coincidence [some time] after I was in Savannah. We were organized—they brought in various people who qualified for the positions available entering as radio people, radar people, different types, all of them specialists, plus me. I was not very much of a specialist; if it had an “on” button I could turn it on; if it had an “off,” I could push the button to off.

ED: Okay.

JB: But, we were organized and, at that time, we finally received orders that we were gonna go to the Pacific, and we knew that because the uniforms we were issued were summer uniforms. So we knew we weren't going over to Europe. Just before going overseas for the Pacific, I got engaged to my wife. My father sent me a ring; my wife came over to headquarters in Savannah, we got engaged, and thereafter, the next day at my unit, we had a special train that took us from Savannah to San Francisco. The officers had a club car on the back, and the enlisted men slept two to a bunk, and we had food on the train. Officers had nice accommodations.

ED: Well, the enlisted were kinda (Claps hands.) sardined together.

JB: Unfortunately.

ED: But that is the way it is.

JB: But everybody ate the same.

ED: Yeah. So, go ahead.

JB: So I was transferred. I got, it took us five days to cross the country in a train, and it went, my unit, got into San Francisco, wherever we were stationed—it will come back to me in a moment. It was the beginning of the Jewish New Year by then, by strange coincidence, Rosh Hashanah, and I went to service that night; it was packed. We were in camp for about, I would say 7 days, 10 days, and then were assigned to go on Yom Kippur, which is a fasting day, by noon I was transferred to the camp, Camp Stoneman, to a ferryboat to San Francisco. I remember, they served me the ham and cheese sandwich; since I didn't eat ham I had, ham sandwich for cheese sandwich.

ED: Well, now, were there a particularly large number of Jewish men in your unit?

JB: Not too many.

ED: Not too many. Okay, so once you got to San Francisco, Camp Stoneman, you were only there for a few weeks or—

JB: We were there for about 10 days only.

ED: Ten Days.

JB: I got there on Rosh Hashanah, and we left on Yom Kippur, which is a week later.

ED: For the Pacific?

JB: We went down on the, yes. We went on a ship called the *USS Satterlee*.

ED: The *Satterlee*?

JB: Beg pardon?

ED: *Satterlee*?

JB: *Satterlee*.

ED: *Satterlee*, okay.

JB: And the first night out I remember the Captain had the officers at his table. We had tablecloths and silver, and I drank a lot of water and coffee. That night they had built on the deck a cabin, and the smell of the diesel engines came into the room where we were living or bunked, and I got seasick. And I was sick for five days before I got to San Francisco, or Honolulu, rather.

ED: Uhhhh.

JB: Round swells.

ED: That sounds—

JB: Horrible.

ED: Was the—was the boat dike big?

JB: Beg pardon?

ED: Was the dike big? Was it a big boat?

JB: Apparently—it took all of our men plus one other unit.

ED: Oh, wow, so it was a big craft.

JB: Not a particularly large ship, but they made the cabin so it could fit all the troops.

ED: Right, so what happened once you arrived in Honolulu?

JB: When we got into Honolulu, there we girls with grass skirts greeting us at the dock and we got aboard. Well, we got off the ship and we got onto small, narrow-gauge train, probably a sand train, train that carried sand, low sides, and I got transferred. My unit went up to Kahuku.

ED: Kahuku?

JB: Kahuku, on the island of Oahu, which was the northern-most portion of Honolulu. Or above Oahu, rather.

ED: And then you just spent—

JB: Stayed there a few days 'til we got ready to move up.

ED: So the time that you went from thinking you were going to Britain, to actually ending up in the Pacific was very short.

JB: Yes.

ED: Okay, so when you, what happened once you ended up, was it training or acclimation?

JB: In that period, we were just waiting for orders. The High Command did not include me in their thinking. However, at that time, the Government had already determined its program for the war, and Nimitz, who was in charge of the Pacific was given—assigned to the center Pacific—MacArthur was given the southeastern Pacific—and plans were they were going to go into (unintelligible) and then move across the Pacific little by little. Meet MacArthur's troops coming up from the south.

ED: So you were in the—under Admiral Nimitz?

JB: Yes.

ED: And were you attached to the Navy, is that why?

JB: I—my unit was still in the Air Corps, but then they needed 10 men to handle communications, so then I was transferred from the Army over to the Navy for temporary duty, and what we did is we trained on the—we had radio communications to copy everything that they had transmitted. Tarawa was a horrible thing, and many soldiers got killed going ashore, and I was trying to prevent that when we went into the next phase, which eventually turned out to be the Marshall Islands.

ED: Tarawa was an invasion of an island?

JB: The Gilbert Islands. Tarawa was in the Gilbert Islands, and that was taken first.

ED: But it didn't go very well?

JB: Well we captured it, ultimately, but a lot of troops were killed in a horrible way, and I was trying to prevent that from happening again. I had a unit of about eight enlisted men, plus I had a Second—I was a First Lieutenant by that time. I had a Second Lieutenant in the Army and I had two naval officers who were escort or whatever it was, to learn. And we trained, with whatever we had, listening to the conversation. Our vehicles were then fixed so that the exhaust came up from the hood, 'cause we could not land on the beach—there were coral reefs along—but they contemplated that problem.

We had two jeeps that were filled with radio equipment. And I had a big Army, rather big post, put on top of a large vehicle that housed a lot of our communications equipment, radios, receivers, and things of that nature.

ED: So, I'm curious. With the Tarawa, was the issue poor communication? Was that why it turned into such—

JB: No, we just didn't realize how the Japanese had fortified the beach. We tried to land directly on the beach, and the Japanese had—

ED: Substantial forces there.

JB: Yes.

ED: Okay.

JB: And what we did—not we—what the Army did was land on the adjoining island—it is part of an atoll—and used that as a base, bombarded Guadalcanal proper, and advanced that way. My unit was assigned to the island where we were standing next to the Headquarters.

ED: Okay, and so after the period of training, was then the mission for the Marshall Islands?

JB: Uh-huh.

ED: Can you tell me some about that?

JB: Well, we were assigned a large fleet, were assigned to train for whatever we had to do. We were supposed to be available if the Navy was attacked by the Japanese. If they were there and they had to withdraw the Japanese, rather the naval units, then we would be there to handle all the communication for the Commanding General and the troops. We were also the plan that if the troops had any problem they would call back to us, and we would arrange for whatever sort of protection they needed.

ED: So was your Communications Unit, your eight-man group, was that the main Communications Unit?

JB: Well, the main one was aboard the ships. We were there as a supplement to them. Now, beginning when the troops were too fast, they were using our unit. A full Colonel in the Army Air Corps was assigned to us; he would communicate with the troops up front. By strange coincidence—you know, I've been very fortunate all my life. And there is one incident that happened that I've never forgotten.

As we went ashore, I assigned two people to the Jeeps, and I took the big truck. I figured if anything happened I would push the driver out, and I'd drive it ashore.

I didn't think it was right to submit the enlisted man to that, so I took that one responsibility, by the way, my scary thing was climbing off the edge of the ship by these rope ladders where the LVCP was below. After we got ashore, my Second Lieutenant had the electric generator. He was worried about his bedroll, and the beach master gave me a place and we pulled it ashore. We were assigned a place. We had got up at, I'm backtracking.

They fed us that night. They woke me up at 2 o'clock that morning for the invasion, getting ready. Gave us rations of scrambled eggs along with the other people. And they gave us two days rations, which were like Cracker Jack boxes, and they gave us an assault ration with it, which was candy and cigarettes—I guess that got you addicted to cigarettes. When we got, after our first night ashore, I got my men established and we put up pup tents and I dug a little trench in the sand. Nobody had tents, and I put on my poncho. In the middle of the night it started to rain and I had bulletin boards to keep track of information, and I pulled the bulletin board over my head. I said, "Look how lucky I am that it's raining, and I [don't have] water coming on my head." I've just been very fortunate all my life. Somebody's protecting me.

ED: Yeah. Was your, that initial assault on the beach was uneventful? Or was there resistance?

JB: Well there was resistance, but we got ashore alright. My problem was there was a sergeant on my left; the plan was when they let the ramp down, two men were supposed to run out to make certain there were no shell holes on either side. They ran out, and one of them fell into the shell hole. I started to say the damn Corporal or Sergeant ran his jeep into that and sunk.

I never cursed until that day, but I said anything I could think of. But, we eventually got the vehicle ashore. But the radio was lost.

ED: Oh. Okay.

JB: But we were very fortunate.

ED: That is very fortunate.

JB: I've led an enchanted life all my life.

ED: So, the story of the poncho, just so I can understand it. You were kind of in a ditch in the sand with a clipboard over your head?

JB: Well we had bulletin boards to keep track of—

ED: Oh, bulletin boards.

JB: And I pulled one of the bulletin boards off the, pulled it forward to protect me from the water coming into my little trench.

ED: So you were dry?

JB: Well, my head was dry.

ED: Your head was dry.

JB: Yeah, my poncho was covering my legs.

ED: So, so what then did you do from that initial landing to—?

JB: Well, we stayed there about a week while they were invading the major island.

ED: What was it like on this island?

JB: There were several things I remember. The commanding General had a tent, a lean-to for him. He had an outdoor commode, which was four boards and a double-seater, so if he had company he could enjoy himself with company. The rest of us had to go in the bushes for whatever it was. I remember after a few days, my men and I got hungry, so we went to the food dump and I was scavenging and looking for what I could steal. The commanding General came up and saluted us and I thought, "Oh my God, I'm gonna be shot". He wanted to know if we had any dill pickles. We hadn't found any yet. He said, "Carry on." I saluted and grabbed a gallon can of sour cherries and one other thing, and we went back to where we were living.

ED: So you had sour cherries and something else to eat for a little while?

JB: Yeah. I haven't eaten sour cherries for twenty years, I have to tell you.

ED: Must not. I can imagine that must not taste very good.

JB: One thing I can tell you for that time, excuse me for interrupting you.

ED: Oh, no, you're okay.

JB: We would capture Japanese civilians, and we would bring them to where we were to be interrogated by other people. They had Okinawans that had been captured, woman Okinawans, and they brought them, landed near us. The American soldiers, being what they were, offered their hand to the ladies to help them off the LCPs. They thought we were going to do awful things. They put their legs and their skirts together, figuring that the Americans were going to do something improper. That was the furthest thought. Americans were still civilized and they helped them off. They were so surprised how they were treated properly.

ED: Were these just civilians?

JB: They were civilians, yes.

ED: That had just been moved?

JB: We captured them to be interrogated [about] was what was happening.

ED: Just for the purpose, okay.

JB: And after five days we eventually captured. They recalled the troops; the troops were called back for resistance. We had grid maps, and if we had resistance in grid—northeast corner—the Colonel would call in and get aircraft to bombard it, and the amazing thing was that Hawaii, strictly dark at night, we never turned off the lights once we landed in Kwajalein. A beautiful sight was the flamethrowers, yellow and orange, purple. Horrible death, but—

ED: Did you witness that at a particular point?

JB: Well I could see it out there in front of us. I was not exposed to any of that personally.

ED: Right. So, during the time you were on this island, what was the name of this particular island?

JB: Kwajalein, it was an atoll.

ED: Within, inside the Marshall Islands?

JB: It was in the Marshall Islands. An atoll is a number of, a series, series of islands; I mean a community. As if it were a volcano before it and filled with water. It had been the headquarters of the Japanese Fleet after World War I.

ED: Oh, okay. Alright, so now, I think my professor told me that you were on board a ship when it was kamikazed. Is that correct?

JB: No.

ED: No? She must have been talking about something else.

JB: No. At some age, never mind.

ED: Okay. Alright, so you spent the five days there, and then where did you move after that island.

JB: After that I was transferred back to my unit, the 87th Air Drone squadron, and we established communication system for the island. We were equipped to repair aircraft, I mean the radios on the aircraft; we were also equipped to take care of the radar unit, and this is what we did, service the aircraft. And I was there for ten months on the island of Kwajalein.

ED: In Kwajalein.

JB: Yeah.

ED: So you stayed there almost the entire time?

JB: Well, ten months out there. Then I came back to Hawaii, where I spent an additional year and a half.

ED: But during that time, it was just on base duty or something like that? I'm assuming communications work.

JB: What's that?

ED: Was it just duty on base, or were you still doing communications work for the war?

JB: Well this was the communications work for the Service, yes.

ED: Okay. Was the war? What year was that?

JB: 1943.

ED: Okay, so the war had not yet ended?

JB: It had just begun. As a matter of fact, when I was there in 1942—let me go back, the Japanese gentleman who had planned the entire program for Japanese expansion was Admiral Yamamoto. The name might be familiar to you.

ED: Yes.

JB: And he had planned the economic and the military plan for the High Command, and in 1942, by that time, the American government had deciphered the Japanese code, and we were able to intercept and determine what the Japanese were going to do. We had already met the Japanese at Midway and won because we knew where the Japanese was—we ambushed 'em. At that time in '42, Admiral Yamamoto was gonna go do an inspection of the troops in the south part where the Japanese expansion was. And what—we knew what he was going to do because of having deciphered, and prior to making his tour of the South Pacific, Guadalcanal and areas like that, he wrote the Japanese High Command, sent a secret memorandum, opened up 75 years

after the event, in which he told the Japanese High Command that they ought to think of trying to work out an accommodation with the United States. With the Allies.

He said there were three reasons why Japan ought to work out something with the States. The three reasons were one: that the economic strength of the Allies was far greater than that of Japan. Most of the resources were still under our command or under our control. Second, he said that the Allies had the capacity for replenishing ships and things like that might have been sunk, but he said that there is an even more important reason why Japan might want to work out something with the Allies.

ED: And?

JB: And that point was that Jack Brickman had been assigned to the Service, and we better do something before he comes 'round here! (Laughs).

ED: (Laughing.)

JB: Anyway, we found out his trip, what he was planning to do in the South Pacific, and in April 18 of 1942, after I had already gotten my commission, he was gonna try to do a tour to bolster the morale. We learned about it, and he had been warned that the United States knew about it. Roosevelt had given an order to get him for who he was. A squadron of P-38s was assigned to shoot him down. He had some Zeros accompanying him and two aircraft, and on his way down to the inspection, the Americans came from behind and shot him down, which greatly affected the—

ED: They killed Yamamoto?

JB: They killed Yamamoto in '42. I think it was April 18, 1942.

ED: Huh, I was unaware of this, I did not know that.

JB: Yes that's right. You can find it on "Google."

ED: Yeah, too late now; you've told me. And what kind of effect did that have on the— well, I'm assuming it had a pretty big effect.

JB: Well, it had to have—it did affect the morale of the Japanese.

ED: Because he was the general in command of that entire theatre.

JB: Right. He had been educated in the United States, by the way, and he planned the entire Japanese plan for expansion, even before the war begun. So this affected them to some extent.

ED: So when you were—well, two questions. First, my generation, all we see of the war and of the Pacific is kind of the stuff you see on the History Channel and stuff. And we, uh, my personal impression was that Americans themselves kind of had a strong feeling of animosity towards the Japanese, is that correct?

JB: Yes, we absolutely did. I didn't think it was right to put them in camps, but we were scared that there might have been traitors. I don't know if it was wrong, but—

ED: When you returned to the United States, or when you returned to Hawaii, were there any camps there?

JB: After I was ten months on Kwajalein I was—my entire unit was transferred back to Hawaii where we were assigned in a place called "Barking Sands" which was an Air Base and

there they had a combat replacement position where the air craft were checked to make sure they were equipped, and they were sent to a forward area.

ED: When you were—what was the feeling towards the Japanese during the attack, I mean when you were on, when you were on, um, what was the name of the island?

JB: Kwajalein.

ED: Kwajalein, what was, were you guys scared of them, were you angry at them? What was the feeling?

JB: Somehow I was never scared, but the only time I was frightened was on that damn rope ladder.

ED: Are you afraid of heights?

JB: No, no. I'm not afraid of anything.

ED: Just if you fell, it was scary.

JB: No, I could, I'm a very phlegmatic individual. I don't scare very easily.

ED: Okay. And then, you're Jewish?

JB: Yes.

ED: I'm assuming that had you been in the European theatre, there would have been express feelings toward the Germans and the Nazis.

JB: Yes, there would have been.

ED: But I guess the, did you have those sort of feelings because you were in the Pacific theatre? Was there that type of, um—?

JB: Well we didn't, it's difficult to say what I did 70 years ago.

ED: Yeah.

JB: Um, I didn't give a second thought to what we did in Kwajalein. We probably killed 10,000 Japanese.

ED: Yeah.

JB: 9,000 round about, didn't bother me at all.

ED: Yeah.

JB: By the way, what we did, at first they tried to bury them in canvas bags and took them to the middle of the atoll, but they came up and washed ashore. Then they tried that in the ocean, but they stilled washed ashore all these people, and arms. So what they did was dig big pits. Put all the Japanese in there and put lime on top of it and covered it and then had a fence around it so nobody—so they'd know it was a Japanese burial.

ED: So we did that or the Japanese did that?

JB: No, we did that.

ED: Okay. Did you have any express feelings about getting transferred to the Pacific, as opposed to the European Theatre?

JB: No, none whatsoever; that was my job.

ED: That was your job. So you did, that really didn't matter?

JB: What?

ED: That really didn't matter?

JB: No.

ED: No.

JB: My job wasn't—both of them were our enemies, and we needed to win the war.

ED: So, I think I asked you this on our first meeting. Truman was the President for the second half of the war right?

JB: Towards the end of the war, Roosevelt was the, was the main part of the war and the service.

ED: What was the feeling about him?

JB: Roosevelt?

ED: Hmm-mmm.

JB: I think for the most part the people were behind Roosevelt a 100%.

ED: Did you like him?

JB: As far as I know, he was good, yes. There were certain things I didn't like. When there was a ship that came into the United States with refugees—I forgot the name of the ship—he sent them back because the immigration didn't allow them to come in under the quota, the

result of which they were ultimately sent back to Germany where they were executed. I thought that was very horrible.

ED: That is very horrible.

JB: We should have given them refuge.

ED: We should have. So then, the Presidency, Roosevelt died.

JB: Yes.

ED: And the Presidency changes to Truman. People, well, Truman was the one who made the decision on the bomb?

JB: Yes.

ED: So what was that kind of feeling about?

JB: My feeling was that it was proper, if I ever had to do that, if I were there again, I would say that it was a good thing that they did to have a turn to end the war.

ED: What about the second bomb?

JB: That was what did it. The first bomb alerted them; the second bomb showed them we mean business. Otherwise, we could have lost half a million men trying to invade the Japanese mainland.

ED: That was uh, that was something I had learned about reading recently. I hadn't realized that the Americans were planning an invasion of mainland Japan.

JB: Yeah, we were planning a complete invasion of the Japanese Island, and they figured God knows how many casualties we would have had, and I think it helped to end the war. And if I had to do it again, if I had to rethink it I still think what was done was proper.

ED: Yeah, and I think that was probably the general sentiment.

JB: Yes.

ED: So you spent your time in the Marshall Islands, you returned to Hawaii and had ten more months there.

JB: Yes.

ED: And then what happened?

JB: Well I was in the Marshall, well back in Hawaii. Ten months in Kwajalein, then I came back to Hawaii.

ED: Sorry.

JB: Where I was until, I had spent my time and the war was ended, and I eventually worked my way home.

ED: So when you came home, what did you do?

JB: Got married. I had been engaged two and a half years. I came home Friday, Thursday or Friday, and the following Sunday I got married.

ED: So there was—two questions. Written communication the entire time you were in Kwajalein?

JB: Yeah, we—

ED: And you wrote the entire time. So when you came back, there wasn't any question about it. You were getting married.

JB: Yes, that's right.

ED: Okay.

JB: I had gotten engaged before I had gotten overseas to protect my rights.

ED: To protect your rights? (Smiles.)

JB: Yeah. There were other people courting her.

ED: Oh, other people courting.

JB: Protecting my rights at the time.

ED: I see.

JB: (Laughing.) I wanted to make sure other people couldn't interfere.

ED: Uh-huh. They didn't go to the war, though, they didn't go to war?

JB: Eventually they did.

ED: Oh, okay. So you—

JB: By strange coincidence, my father and my mother were separated for almost ten years before she got here. Of course I was separated from my wife for about two, two and a half years I was overseas.

ED: Uh-huh.

JB: I got married right after that.

ED: What was the church, or what Temple did you get married in? I was a member of the Orthodox Synagogue.

ED: Downtown?

JB: Yeah, I got married right when I got home. I lived at that time—my father had an apartment at 539 King Street. It was a larger apartment; we had nine or ten rooms at that time. My father had expanded little by little, and we got married in my father's home.

ED: Okay, and where did you live? Did you live there?

JB: I stayed there for a while, and then my father decided that wasn't the life for me, to run a men's store, and he had some people talk to me, and I decided to go to law school.

ED: Okay. So who, uh, who talked to you about law school?

JB: Probably my father's neighbor. Frank.

ED: He was a lawyer?

JB: No, no, he ran a shoe store next store to me. Right next to my father. At that time, I guess I had been reading magazines, "Dark Savage"—I wonder if those names mean anything to you?

ED: (Shakes head).

JB: In one of them, one of the characters was a lawyer, so I said, “What the hell.” I fit into his characterization.

ED: And then where did you go?

JB: I went to the University of Virginia.

ED: And how was that?

JB: Very nice, I studied there, my wife and I; it was almost like a honeymoon.

ED: At Virginia?

JB: Yes.

ED: Okay, and I’m assuming your father paid your way at Virginia?

JB: Uncle Sam paid my way.

ED: Oh, the GI bill.

JB: Yes, the GI Bill.

ED: Oh, I see.

JB: My father supplemented it, but Uncle Sam, and my wife had a job while we were there—

ED: So, oh, go ahead.

JB: I’m very—among the things where I say the “Good Lord looks after me,” I had been married for around that time about 3 years and my wife had been unable to conceive. My wife

went to a gynecologist or an obstetrician; he himself had adopted two children. His wife couldn't have any children. He found that my wife's fallopian tubes were blocked and that was the reason we couldn't have it. He cleaned it out, very painful procedure, and thereafter had no problem having children.

ED: Wonderful.

JB: So, the good Lord looks after me regularly.

ED: So how many kids did you have?

JB: Six, so far.

ED: You're still virulent [virile], so.

JB: I'm still thinking.

ED: Thinking. (Laughs.) So uh, six kids.

JB: All my children have law degrees.

ED: All have law degrees!

JB: I told them, "Don't study to be a lawyer—it's too much work"

ED: But they did it anyway?

JB: Paid no attention to me.

ED: And where do they live?

JB: One of my children lives here in Charleston. He's a lawyer and has his own law firm, Richardson Patrick. He was with Ness Markley originally, I suppose, and he was not happy so he left them. They had seven partners and five of them joined him, so of the seven—five formed another firm, so he has his own law firm. My oldest boy is also a lawyer in Birmingham, Alabama. I have two children in Dallas, and I have one son in Austin, and I have a daughter in— at—in New York.

ED: Okay.

JB: By the way, all my children graduated college Magna Cum Laude.

ED: Did they? So all.

JB: Four of them are Phi Beta Kappa.

ED: Wow, wow.

JB: They did; they must have taken after their mother.

ED: Was she Phi Beta Kappa?

JB: No, no.

ED: Now what section of the law did you study? Did you practice in?

JB: Well most of my practice has been—when I first started, there were about a thousand lawyers in the entire state of South Carolina, a little over a 100 in Charleston. And I started helping other lawyers examine titles; in those days I did everything. Went to probate court, went to police court, tried cases on everything you could think of, but I got into the Real Estate adventures of my own little by little.

ED: Was there, have there been any cases for you that have really stood out?

JB: Not particularly.

ED: No, well, I didn't get to ask this, and you told me the story about the board over your head keeping you dry. Was there any stand out moments other than that one?

JB: Well, yeah, after my wife wasn't able to conceive, it resulted talking to the doctor and fixing it so we could have six children thereafter.

ED: That is big.

JB: Thereafter, I would continually, if one thing didn't work out, I would meet somebody who would turn out to be good for me, and I remember several occasions, one person came to me and said, "Jack, I'm thinking about going into the real estate business and buying some land. I need some help," and I helped him and we bought a piece of land in Dorchester County, about 800 or 900 acres. Coincidentally, he just came out of the clear blue sky to meet me. I did reasonably well with him. Thereafter, I met another person, and we went in business and developed another tract of land of about 400 acres.

ED: So—

JB: One other thing that was fortunate—these are good things that happened. I was going to that sense of climax, and the land was beginning to decline, and two boys came from a friend of mine and said, "We want to start a business on the dock." My friend said, "Jack, what do you think of this?" I came in and one of them said that he wanted to repair these large containers, said he had an in where he could get a lot of work. So I got nine other people, I listened to him and I talked about it, we raised about—each person put in about \$3,500, and we got 10 of 'em and we

started a business. That business turned out that we had an operation in Charleston. We then had one in Savannah and two in Jacksonville. So those were fortuitous things that came up that that I figured somebody must have been looking out for me.

ED: I think so, too. I think so. What, uh, are those businesses still in existence?

JB: They are in existence. We sold the business but retained the real estate. I imagine our real estate today is worth probably 15-20 million dollars.

ED: And that's just going to stay within your family?

JB: No, we are going to sell it.

ED: You're going to sell it.

JB: But, I only have a 10% interest in it. And my interest has been divided among my children. We have eight divisions and everybody in my family participates in it.

ED: Okay, okay.

JB: But it's been fortunate these things have fortuitously come up when it looks like I'm finished with one thing, so somebody must have been providing for me.

ED: The blessings are coming in.

JB: Right.

ED: Yes.

JB: Very fortunate.

ED: Well, I'm trying, I'm trying to think. It sounds, it sounds like were close to the end of it. Is there anything else that you can remember or that you particularly wanted to say in this case?

JB: The most important thing is that I've been very fortunate, and I thank God for what has happened to me, might just be coincidental, but I think the good Lord's looking after me. On the second, I think the war was necessary; I think that dropping the bomb was necessary. The defeat of Germany and Russia's Communist government was good, and hopefully we've got a wonderful life ahead of us, and the rest of our lives, and for you, too.

ED: Well, thank you. And that is the interview.

JB: That's all? You wanna blood sample?

—END OF INTERVIEW—