

# The Home Front

Interviewer: Jennie Valyer

Interviewee: Jane Washburn

Instructor: Matthew Rozell

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# Statement of Purpose

History is really about people and things related to them. Oral history is often neglected because it is often tainted by false memories and it is told by one person's particular state of mind. However, oral history does give a larger perspective of history through the stories of those who lived during that particular time period. The purpose of this project is to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the Home Front of WWII, specifically what role was played by those who contributed to the war effort and what occurred.

# Biography

Jane Washburn was born in 1917 on her family-owned and operated farm in Gansevoort. It was hard times for her and her family growing up in the Depression. However, it was not as bad for her as it was for most. No one had any money during the Depression. She and her sisters wore hand-me-down clothing. During the Depression her family was quite well off. They had plenty of food and other necessities since they lived on a farm. She and her older sister were sent to Russell Sage at which she studied Home Economics. There was no such thing as student loans and her parents put her and her older sister through college with their own money.

After being put through college Jane began teaching in September of 1939. The war did not seem to change her life for the worse but for the better since she had grown up during the Depression.

Her younger sister joined the WAVES in which she treated burned victims in Virginia. Her older sister's husband went to war while she stayed at the family's farmhouse with her two little boys.

Jane Washburn went traveling to many places after the war ended and one of her ventures brought her to Japan. She thought that the Japanese were very clean, efficient, and very nice. However, still held the feelings against the Japanese she felt during the war and still did not trust them. Jane taught Home Economics at the Hudson Falls High school during the war. There she was faced with the air raid drills she felt was unnecessary. She also did airplane watch there up on the school. Since the teachers were very organized people during the Depression they also organized things for the war effort. Jane was a Methodist but converted during the war, but not because of it. She had the hard tasks like that of

walking to and from school everyday for about two miles and took the trolley. Jane did not like many problems that were associated with the war but thought it was necessary.

# Historical Contextualization

Even before Franklin D. Roosevelt took office, the post-Versailles Treaty world was collapsing. The Great Depression, which had helped bring Adolf Hitler to power as the Führer in Germany and encouraged the militarists in Japan, had weakened the democracies' will to resist. In America, isolationism became kind of a national belief for many in the 1930's.

Isolationism in the 1930's was strengthened by the belief of many Americans that the Versailles Treaty was an incredibly unfair settlement. In this atmosphere the Fascist powers were able to win a good deal of sympathy by making themselves out to be the "have not" countries. This allowed Fascist Powers to rally together a great deal of supporters. They insisted that their only demand was enough living space for their people and if other nations of fortune would surrender some of their own holding, there would be no need for them to conquer other nations.

The disappointments of WWII not only strengthened the beliefs of isolationists, but helped to create a pacifist movement that had many followers. Pacifists opposed the use of force under any circumstances and for reasons of conscience to refused to participate in war or any military action. The pressure sustained by both isolationists and pacifists resulted in President Roosevelt's difficulty in establishing the democracies' goals. The leaders of the Western democracies goals were to maintain peace, to contain fascism and to restore the international economic community.

Nowhere did there seem to be the will to resist the Fascist powers. Tokyo bluntly declared that they were building a New Order in East Asia, in which Japan would have a desired position. Fascist powers were also taking over in Europe. Hitler then occupied

Austria in March 1938. In September, there was a near panic as the Nazi leader demanded that Czechoslovakia hand over to Germany its Sudeten region, which was highly populated by Germans. Before a fight broke out, Hitler met with British Prime Minister Chamberlain along with the French Premier Daladier at Munich to discuss his demands. In the end the Allies did not agree to his demands.

Roosevelt responded to the threat posed by Fascist expansion by stepping up American rearmament. Congress voted, Roosevelt increased military and naval appropriations, but isolationists thought that the President was to try to cause a war and bring about a crisis.

Many Americans did not approve of Roosevelt's actions and thought that Hitler's demands were reasonable. Hitler soon rid most of them of their false notions. This was because he said, "Once the Sudeten question was settled, there would be, no further problems in Europe because the Germans did not want the Czechs." Less than six months later Hitler gobbled up most of the rest of Czechoslovakia. After that point the Fascist powers swiftly seized territories. "Never in my life," Roosevelt wrote, "have I seen things moving in the world with more cross currents or with greater velocity."

Later, the "Lend-Lease" plan was inaugurated in opposition to Congress. By the end of March 1941, Congress had voted in favor of the Lend-Lease Act. Soon after, Japanese launched an unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941. The next day, a grim President went before Congress and asked for a declaration of war. The Senate approved his request 82-0; the House 388-1. Three days later Germany and Italy announced that they were at war with the United States.

When war came it made profound changes in American life. Millions of men departed from their hometowns for the services. A staggering eighteen million women entered into the labor force, while once well fed Americans had their menus reduced by

food rationing. People who were well accustomed to going everywhere by car had to get use to gasoline rationing. People were asked to save tin cans and hand in fats and put up with city-wide dim-outs to conserve power. Income taxes and living costs climbed while many men were stuck in vital war jobs and could not take higher paying work elsewhere.

Despite unimportant annoyances and intense uprisings, for most Americans on the home front during the war, were times of achievement as well as a time of anxiety. During these years of total war, there was rarely a man, woman or child who was not contributing to the war effort in some way or another.

People who were at the home front of WWII worked much longer and harder, earned more money and had less to spend it on ever before in their lives. So they bought war bonds and paid off old debts. Many things were rationed so many people went without items. When shoes were rationed, families with growing children used up their ration points quickly so many parents were forced to walk on thin soles. Many things were either scarce or inconvenient during the war. Train seats were scarce so many travelers had to stand up or perch on luggage in the aisles. Plane seats were also scarce so ticket holders with low priority ratings were often “bumped”- left behind in favor of a government official or an industrial expert. Reading material was written smaller, and some magazines were forced to limit circulation because of the paper shortage. Then if you wanted to buy something new you most often had to wait in long lines to get it. People at home looked for useful things to do fore the war effort and found them. People served on draft boards, flew private airplanes over coastal waters in search of U-boats, stood watch as aircraft spotters and, as air raid wardens, policed practice blackouts. People also donated 13 million pints of blood to be given out to the wounded. Most Americans went about their war work in a good manner. However, there were unpleasant

episodes of racial violence. In Detroit 34 men died as whites rioted against blacks. Young Mexicans in Los Angeles usually dressed in Zoot suits, were harassed by servicemen.

The harsh treatments put upon that of the Japanese-Americans was in some ways the most unjustified of all, because it resulted from government policy. It began when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, and continued through fears into each U.S. defeat. The fears of the Japanese created panic in both the military and civilian leaders. People of Japanese descent, two thirds of more than 110,000 of which were American citizens, were taken and looked up in concentration camps on the west coast. Although many of the people were held at the concentration camps with out proof of sabotage or espionage they stayed there for most of the war. The Japanese-Americans had more than proved their loyalty to the U.S. by helping with the war effort by being farm hands and their work in the Army service in Italy. But these Japanese-Americans were not allowed to return to the west coast until 1944.

People at the home front also contributed their time and effort towards the war by helping in war production. The output from U.S. factories was so much speeded up, it astonished the Allied enemies as well as U.S. and her allies. The range of products produced for the war effort ranged from steel and aluminum for the machines to life saving drugs like that of penicillin.

It just took Americans two years to produce as much war material as Germany, Italy and Japan put together. It took Germany eight years to produce their war materials. In 1943 the U.S. production was twice as great as the Axis powers put together. Then, by the end of the war, workers had produced more than 297,000 planes, 86,000 tanks, 6,500 naval vessels, 64,500 landing craft, 5,400 cargo ships, 315,000 artillery pieces, 4.2 million tons of artillery shells, and 17 million rifles. From that, the Allies were able to

win the war four years after it began. Fighting in the Pacific ended when the Emperor of Japan surrendered to the powers, WWII was finally over. On August 14, V-J Day, Americans celebrated across the country.

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# Historical Analysis

Not only did Jane Washburn's interview reinforce the problems and achievements faced on the home front, but she also challenged some aspects. She discussed in length how there was rarely a man, woman or child who was not contributing to the war effort in some way or another. She discussed how, "they only allowed you to see what they wanted you to see." This quote referred to the government keeping knowledge from the citizens. She discussed how "everything was very, very secret." She talked about how she knew a woman who worked on the *Enola Gay* and knew nothing of it until after the war. If anyone wanted to know about what was going on in the war, "you went to the movies," she often would say. She discussed how the people who were coming out of the Depression had no money. She said, "the war created jobs, which was extra money needed for families." She would say how many people were not trusted in America and how people had it tough. She thought mothers had it bad because when rubber was rationed, babies had no "Pampers" and they had to knit soakers. She discussed many things about what was rationed to what she did to contribute to the war effort as well as other many things. She explained how everyone had to learn to do first aid. She told how her sister joined the WAVES and how she was stationed in Virginia.

To describe the entire war is near impossible for one person to discuss because it was so complex, and our time together was so short.

The new information I believe that comes out in the transcript is to better understand that one person's experience of the war was like no other. The new information that I attained in my interview will give you a better understanding of the life of a home-front American citizen growing up in the Depression and WWII. I think Jane Washburn's story helps us better understand one more person's view point of

the war, because all people had different and more unique experiences than others. The war included the lives of many, so to better understand the time period we should look into as many of the peoples lives who have lived through and experienced the war first hand. It is not like reading a textbook, but it makes you understand the war as a whole and realize that the war involved everyone, not just the governments and military.

Jane Washburn believes that telling her stories would be a great thing. She believes that if she tells them, future generations will have a better understanding of the WWII era, and I hope that that does happen. Oral history, hopefully, will help future generations understand WWII as a whole, rather than what you read in your text books. The war did not just affect those who where right at the battles or those who were in charge, but also the ordinary citizen as well, just like Jane Washburn and her family.

## Interview Transcription

*Jane Washburn is a retired Home Economics teacher, having taught most of her career at Hudson Falls High School. She was born and raised in the small town of Gansevoort, but enjoyed many days of travel. On one of her many travels, she visited Japan. She was very impressed with their lifestyles and friendliness, but as she stated, her “old feelings towards them still remained.”*

[Interviewer] Jennie Valyer – My name is Jennie Valyer and I am conducting my WWII Living History class project. Today’s date is December 13<sup>th</sup> 2003, this is Jane Washburn, I will be interviewing her. Would you like to tell us a little bit about your background?

[Interviewee] Jane Washburn – Thank you, yes I certainly would. You probably wonder how come I was a teacher at Hudson Falls. I was born on this property and my grandfather was four years old when he came here to live back in 1854. He came, so the Washburns have lived here all this time. How I feel about the wars and the Depression are somewhat colored by my families back ground for generations, if you know what I mean.

I was born before the Armistice. Therefore WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Palestine, and Israel, Wars in Africa, Gulf War, and the present two wars have all been a part of my life. I have had very few years in my life when there’s been total peace in the world. Too bad isn’t it? [Pauses] Now you want to know about the Depression?

J.V. – Yes.

J.W. – I was a teenager, of course. The big crash came in 1929. Nobody had any money anyway. I went to South Glens Falls... [Pauses] At first I went to a little private school... Then I went to school in South Glens Falls. I took the trolley! I had to walk up the road here and took the trolley from there, from South Glens Falls. At the end of seventh grade, I was

sent to the Glens Falls High School because it had a better curriculum. My parents, neither one of them had education beyond high school; they wanted it for their three daughters. So, my sisters and I, all of us graduated from the Glens Falls High School. My family paid tuition for that. So we didn't have any money, but living on a farm made a difference.

We always had plenty of food. Plenty of milk, plenty of eggs, plenty of butter, plenty of meat, lots of vegetables. If you wonder what might have contributed to the fact that today I'm 86 and still navigating, it might be because I had a long walk everyday to catch the bus. From up here near Moreau State Park to Glens Falls and then back again at night. We got plenty of exercise; we didn't have time for a lot of foolishness. [Laughs] We took piano lessons you know, and all of those things. My sister graduated two years ahead of me and went to Russell Sage. So when it was time for me to go to college and I was interested in home economics, Russell Sage was the place. They had a very good economics department there then. So I was sent to Russell Sage. She [refers to sister] graduated two years a head of me. It was Depression days we each got an allowance of four dollars a month. A dollar a week! How would you like that? [Laughs] We didn't have a lot of clothes. We didn't have cars but we did have a very good education. I graduated in 1939 and it was right around the time when schools were beginning to centralize. With centralization, they put in a lot of new departments. Home Economics was one, agricultural courses was another, industrial arts courses, all things that were going to be helpful to train people in the Depression days.

So I went out to Western New York to teach for 1200 dollars a year. Worked into a school that had no economics department, nothing, but I got it going. I was there for six or seven years and I was there during Pearl Harbor. One of the questions you asked was Pearl Harbor?

J.V.- Yes.

J.W. – I didn't know anything about it until that night. [Pauses] When I heard, somebody had the radio on and of course...

J.V. – Where was this?

J.W. – This was in [Ribbley], New York. That's the last town left of New York State, it's right on the Pennsylvania border. My sister was teaching at Newfield, which was just south of Ithaca. She taught French! Somebody always had a radio on. When they heard a piece of news, they immediately got onto the telephone and then that person got the radio on. This is how news got around and that's how I got the news. Somebody had the radio on and heard about Pearl Harbor. As I told you before, I was indignant because I had been to the movies previous to this and knew that two ambassadors from Japan had come to visit Franklin Roosevelt at the White House, the day before the seventh. They never let on that all of this was being planned, you see. We all knew that something was going on; we didn't know what it was.

As I told you I think previously too, my roommate's boyfriend joined the air force in 1940's summer and he was a pilot on the B-17s. He flew to Manila, the plane had all the armaments on it needed but it had no ammunition. He was there when Clark Field was bombed. The only thing he saved was his camera. Then he had quit a hard time getting out. It took months to get out of the Philippines you see, all this time of the war with Europe was going on too. Here again, if you wanted to know something, you had to go to the movies. To see the path they used, to see about the battles and things and whatnot. There was lots of talk but what, what Hitler was doing, nobody really knew. The terrible things, only rumors! We had rumors of it, but nobody really saw it. No one ever knew! Then when Pearl Harbor came, about all the Japanese people were rounded up. You've probably seen pictures of that, haven't you?

J.V. – Yes.

J.W. – But ... they got prisoner of war places for them. Many innocent people... were... People of foreign descent! [A friend] who was up here on Mount McGregor, she'd been there for 20 years, a Japanese girl. After that she was temporarily relieved of her job as caretaker up there. We had German people, we had Austrian people and we were very suspicious, we couldn't help it.

It was really after Pearl Harbor that things began to tighten up. You couldn't buy an automobile, you couldn't buy tires, and gasoline was rationed. Here on the farm, of course, we were able to get more gasoline, because we didn't live in town.

In fact, I was a sophomore in college before we got electricity. One of the biggest things that Franklin D. Roosevelt did as President was to bring about rural electrification. It was wonderful, wonderful thing to be able to slip a switch and have a light. This is digressing, but my mother and father heard about this, you know. So-and-so out in such-and-such a place is getting electricity. My mother said, "Why don't we have electricity?" So, she called Niagara Mohawk and they said, "If you want electricity, you get all the people in the community together that want it and I will come and tell you about it." So everybody called everybody and they all meet down there at the farmhouse and had a big meeting. One month later, they had electricity, it was just wonderful!

Now to get back to after Pearl Harbor, we began to have rationing, sugar was one of the first things to go, butter was another. We had olio, which was just the color of Crisco, you know. You had to put colored things in it to perk it up. Meat was terrible! Except for Spam, can't eat it even today. Hot dogs you could get, they were the mixtures you see of

things. We had lots of vegetables, we had our own pork. Now and then we would have a piece of beef.

We had a dairy farm, so that's why we had beef. In the town where I was teaching, they got the rationing. The teachers were one group of people that could always get together to get a job done. So the teachers were responsible for signing all the people in that town up for rationing. You got stamps for gasoline and for butter, and for various foods. Canned foods and meat and meat products, you see. This is beside the point, but we had one famous person in this little town. He was a Civil War veteran and he was one of the last ones to die. He was over a hundred years old when he died, but he was a vegetarian. So anyway he was very, very patriotic. So when rationing came along in that little town, everybody who had any extra stamps or canned vegetables or canned fruits, they gave to the grocer for Grandpa Rounds when he did his shopping. But Grandpa Rounds would never ever give anybody one of his meat stamps, because it was unpatriotic. Yet, he never knew that everybody in that town was keeping him well fed with their extra stamps. We all knew! [Laughs] He was rather interesting!

We all got along somehow or another with what we had. We had lines that would form! If you were walking along Glen Street and you saw a line, you would know someone had cigarettes or they had candy or some one little thing. You would get into line, whether you would want it or not. Buy the product, maybe for somebody else who did want it and couldn't get there, you know.

Stockings, we got so we couldn't get nylon stockings. We had to wear rayon stockings which would run. It was weak when it was wet, so you would get runs in them all over. We had to wear cotton stockings but somehow we managed to do that too.

Travel was very hard! I sat on my suitcase from west of Buffalo to Albany on the

train one day. Now that's a long time, it's about six hours. I had to sit in the aisle on my suitcase because there was no seats on the train you see. Somehow or another we all got along ...

J.V. – Could you tell me more about the train?

J.W. – The train, well there would always be men on the train, servicemen on the train. That was the first time I think when gentle men did not have to give up their seats to a lady. If you saw a serviceman on, he got to sit. I took a trip on an airplane and if you were changing planes in like Chicago and there was a serviceman waiting to get on that plane, he got on, you were bumped. They had priority, which was probably right because many of them are tired and many of them didn't know where they were going or what their futures where going to be. I don't know how many were lost but we had a lot.

J.V. – Now did you ever get bumped?

J.W. – Yes, I did! [Laughs] Yes, I did! It was about 1945, I went to Galveston, Texas to see this college roommate of mine who had a new baby. Her husband had come home and was flying out of the airbase there, he was a weather expert. I got bumped every stop from Buffalo, then Detroit, then I think it was Chicago and Kansas City and Dallas Texas. It took me 24 hours to get there, which now you would do in about 4-6 hours. Then the planes were not big planes like they are today, of course. I always was able to get on the bus. You could always get a train but, you would always have to sit in the aisle on the bus or the train. It was not easy because when I wanted to come home, I always took the train to get here. Then my father would meet me up here at the mile walk down. [Laughs] I couldn't hold a suitcase very well. Now what else would you like to know?

There were a lot of recipes by the way, too. For egg-less cakes and butter-less cakes and sponge cakes and things like that. It was amazing what women did to give

variety to their foods.

J.V. – Were you ever asked to join the work force, for the war?

J.W. – No.

J.V. – What did you think about the teacher shortage?

J.W. - Well, that was very, very difficult, very difficult. We had a lot of people in and out and in and out. Usually, they were people that were not successful from just the beginning. I think we had a lot of bad education. I remember at that time the State of New York enacted a law that all students had to take a health course. Who was going to teach it? Turned out that the home economics teachers were going to, because we all had a science background. We were very health conscious, we all had to do first aid. Home nursing courses, all the women did. Men and women took first aid courses. [Laughs] You had to learn how to do artificial respiration. They would get you down on the floor and push your chest and you'd be aching for about two weeks after that, but everybody did that. We rolled bandages, we knitted a lot, hats and scarves, and some did sweaters. We made bob cats, which were little toilet bags, and then filled it with things, you know. If you knew someone was in the service, you made a lot of cookies. Some goodies, you know, and tried to write letters. You keep writing to them to let them know what is going on here. Then of course, you watch the newspaper because it would give a list of all the local people that had been injured or killed. All the towns had these big signs out, you know, of all the people in the town who were in it [Refers to war]. Now, I don't know where Hudson Falls had theirs, but they must've had one that had a list of all the people who were joining the service. It also changed your social life for women particularly, because there wasn't anybody to go out with. Unless he was "4-F" and [Laughs] there was something "with him", you know. That was the first that

women felt free to go to a restaurant or a movie unescorted. It was really rather an uncomfortable time, we weren't use to that, you know.

J.V. – Did you find that there was an advantage to the war for women?

J.W. - A lot of women got jobs! There were a lot of women that had always just stayed home and looked after the children. They got out and got jobs and earned money. Of course it was Depression time too, so that extra money was wonderful to come by. ...One person would have a car and everybody would pay him or her so much to ride to say, Glens Falls. One of the places we had for women was McMullan's place that made men's shirts originally. Then it went into making woman's dresses. Very, very fine quality, very attractive dresses. The women learned very good sewing techniques by working in the shirt factories and the dress factory. Then a lot of women went to General Electric, which wasn't far enough, they couldn't drive back and forth from Schenectady, if they would team up, you know, and take turns driving. G.E. took on a lot of people from this area, probably to where the Imperial Wallpaper was. That was a chemical company, it didn't make wall paper, but the chemistry of it was important. That was along the Hudson there in between Hudson Falls and Glens Falls. What's the name now... Gieco... or, I don't remember. I think the buildings are gone now.

Yes, I think I mentioned to you on the phone that you wanted to get a hold of the "Look" magazine "Hometown U.S.A."

J.V. – Yes.

J.W. – Have you had a chance to?

J.V. – No.

J.W. – You might even find that the library in your Hudson Falls might have a copy of that.

J.V. – Yes, when the men came back from war, how did the women feel when they

started taking back their jobs?

J.W. – Well, I don't think the men did. I think there was a boom on them to produce things. We had the materials then to make clothes and make shoes and automobiles. My father kept saying... I didn't have a car you see of course, and he said, "well as soon as the war is over, then they will make cars again. They were not making any, so of course when the war was over, I was ready to buy a car. The price moved up considerably. My father said "If you only wait a year or two, the price will go down". Of course, it didn't happen, so it was 1950 before I got my first car, and it was a brand new Pontiac. I paid \$1700 cash for it, because I saved my money for it. That was my first car, some of the first cars that came out were very poorly made and very unsatisfactory. So probably waiting a little while didn't hurt, but there was a big boom. There was also a building boom, there were no apartments, there were no houses built. There were these young couples, that was the time when girls and young men were getting married, and then there was the baby boom. There was no place for them. My sister lived down there at the farm house for I think about two years while her husband was in the service. Then when he came home and they began looking for houses, it really was very, very hard. If you knew somebody who had died then you would get a hold of the relatives [Laughs] to find out what was going to happen to the house. Then they started making and building a lot of houses too. Have you ever heard of Levittown?

J.V. – No, I haven't.

J.W. – Never heard of Levittown? It's a very large town, city now, down on Long Island because that was near New York City, you see, and they needed houses. They built hundreds of houses in this area. They were all alike and they were all small houses. Beginners houses, you see, for these young couples that were getting married and having

children. They had to have places and so the whole town was built. Schools were built, the whole thing. I wonder sometimes what happened to it.

J.V. - Do you know of anyone who went to WWII?

J.W. – Yes, I know several who went right here in South Glens Falls, I new a family.

Two brothers, they both were Marines. One was in Guadalcanal and the other was in Iwo Jima. They both came home safely but they don't talk about it.

This little project that you've got has probably started a lot of people talking. I have a magazine here, which I don't know where it is now. ... A little article in it about three men who have been in the war and they were just beginning to talk about it now. So you're going to find out maybe a lot of things that people kept kind of in the background.

J.V. – Yes, I already have heard some.

J.W. – Yes, some probably weird stories, sometimes.

[Pauses] It was not easy! My sister was in the navy, my younger sister. During the WAVES, she was down in Virginia. Some of the folks that came in were a lot of burn patients. She doesn't ever talk about it. Of course, she wouldn't sail out of the country, either. [Pauses] She saw the men when they came home and the condition they were in.

J.V. – What did you think of the air raid drills?

J.W. – [Laughs] They were a big pain in the neck.

J.V. – Could you explain them?

J.W. – Yes, in your high school today was one of the places that they had the air raid drills, you would hear things [Raises voice] 'clang' you know, and everybody would get up. Each homeroom had its assigned place, as I remember it. It wasn't your class you were in, it was your homeroom. You had an assigned place to be, it was all along the corridors and it was inside the stage. All up against the wall, and you stood face to the wall and waited. Until...you were protected by the walls, you see, rather than being in the

corridors. I don't remember if we had to get down on our hands and knees or not, but I don't think we did. But we did have to stand there until it was all over. It was like a fire drill in a way but the rules were a little different. Some people had air raid shelters too, you know. They stockpiled canned food, sugar and milk, dry milk and so that when we had a bombing they would be protected. It was a very big fear, a very, very big fear {later} that Russia would bomb us. We lived with that! We had a family in Hudson Falls who lived over on the road to Hartford, a German family. I won't say the name because I might have the wrong name. But, I remember the father's brother came over from Germany and they had been in the war over there. They had been deprived, of course. I seemed to remember another young man who had been taken prisoner. He was in the air force, that had come down and gotten into some German area, you know. He had been taken prisoner there, he got out of it eventually. [Pauses] We were all glad when it was finally over.

J.V.- Now, you told me about the first aid you had to learn, can you tell me about that?

J.W.- About first aid!

J.V.- Yes.

J.W.- Well, we had to learn how to bandage. We had to learn about what we should use for certain problems. Mostly bleeding was the main thing, and how to put a splint on if you had a broken limb and artificial respiration for drowning, you see. Also, how to protect against smoke inhalation and fires. [Pauses] I guess that was about it. Now, England, of course, had terrible air drills and lots of their families were lost. I know one young man who ended up in Bermuda and he lost his whole family. His mother and sisters and all of them, you see, the whole town would be wiped out. The bombings were so terrible, you see. The whole town would be wiped out, the bombings were so terrible in parts of England.

J.V.- Could you tell me more about rationing? You were telling me about hoarding things.

J.W.- Oh my mother, my mother was it began... We knew we were going to have sugar rationing, my mother stored sugar! Now my mother canned a lot, she canned peaches and pears and she made jellies, and we needed sugar for those things, you know. So she...we had these great big tin cans, that I guess originally potato chips come in. They were probably 10 gallons or so, they were like lunch pails, but were only metal. She would get sugar and put it up in the attic, so when necessity rose we would have sugar. We never really did run out of sugar, but we were very careful. Soap was another thing, very hard to come by and you would be very careful with the soap. Of course, we didn't have laundromats and we didn't have automatic washing machines either. So you would have to wash with the old fashioned washers with a spin drier on it. If you had a modern one, it had a spin drier and you would put it in this one to wash them, then you would take them out and out them in this, and it would spin them out. Then you could put them in a tub of water to rinse them, you know, then place them in the spinner to get the water out again so they would dry faster. No driers either...even after the war.

Jennie Valyer- Now you were saying earlier about the quickie marriages, were you getting married?

Jane Washburn- No, I wasn't!

J.V.- No.

J.W.- I wasn't, no!

J.V.- Could you tell me about the quickie marriages?

J.W.- Well... there were a lot of quickie marriages. The boys would come home for a furlough and knew they were going back and felt if "I don't get married... [Pauses] and get this woman pregnant, I will have no offspring to carry on my name". There were a lot of marriages of that sort. Then, of course, when the war was over, the marriage was no good.

They just didn't get along. Then it started this terrible time with lots and lots of divorces and separations. There were a lot of girls who settled for any body who came along because it was a time when every girl was suppose to get married, settled down and keep house. That was the main objective in many families. That all the daughters should get married, keep house, and have children. Then, when the war came and so many thousands of men were lost, there were not maybe available men of the quality that a girl would like- good education or talented-so they married whoever came along and that did not make for a happy marriage either when the war was over, because they didn't have anything in common. I will say too, that there was a lot of drinking going on, terrible, not only during the war, but after the war. These men that came home, they were going to party and live it up. There was a lot of drinking going on. I think about that and I think, how did anyone survive, because we didn't have laws about not drinking and driving. Cars were not as safe as they are now. Roads were not as well kept as they are now. But yet, and there were a lot of people who were killed too, but almost not as bad as they are now. Well of course they didn't have the speed that we have today. But, there was a lot of drinking going on, which is very regrettable for both men and women.

J.V.- Did you know of any conscientious objectors?

J.W.- I can't think of any.

J.V.- You can't? What's your religion?

J.W.- I'm...[Pauses] Presbyterian.

J.V.- Did the war change your beliefs in any way?

J.W.- Actually, [Laughs] during the war I was a Methodist.

J.V.- Really!

J.W.- [Laughs] Yes, I was.

J.V.- Why did you convert?

J.W.- Well, I don't know if I should tell this on camera, but I will tell you. After my father died, I would visit a place in Hudson Falls and stayed over there. My mother went to Florida so there wouldn't be this drive back and forth. There were people in Hudson Falls that would go to Florida, loved to have their house taken care of for the winter, and so that's what I did. So as long as I was a Methodist when I went there, I went to the Methodist Church in Hudson Falls. Where do you girls go to church now?

Jennie Valyer and Emily Thomson (cameraman)- [Reply at the same time] Roman Catholic!

J.W.- You are both Catholic, love that church, beautiful church. Any way, I went to the Methodist Church, it was not friendly. I would go in and nobody who would say hello. There was one girl who I had in school and she would come sometimes and sit with me. I would go out in the morning and say good morning to the minister and he would say good morning. Never said, "Who are you? Have I seen you before? Did you come last year?" I won't mention names but there was a girl who was a Hudson Falls girl and she was a teacher at school. She said to me one day, come on and go to church with me. We've got the most wonderful new minister. They were looking for a new minister after [former minister] died, after he had been there for 27 or 30 something years. She said, "he's a professor from R.P.I and he really is good," so I went with her. He really was good, he had a real message. So I went the next week, somebody came up to me. Now one of the philosophies of that church is if you see somebody there that was a visitor... [Raises voice] Speak to them, be friendly to them. Somebody came up to me and said, "Miss Washburn, we're so glad you could come today, were having some kind of church supper and we'd love to have you come." This is the way it was from the very start, "we're so glad you've come, we're so glad to have you with us." I was glad to be there because I was getting a good message and there were friendly people, they're that way today.

J.V. – So, the war didn't make you convert?

J.W. – No, the war had nothing to do with it. It was the message I got and the service that I got; the type of service that I got. They... their sermons are based on the scripture. It will either be the Old Testament or the New Testament. Now, that's what the big difference between the Protestantism and Catholicism. Their religion is based on the New Testament, right? You probably don't know much about the Old Testament.

J.V. – No. What was the milk strike about?

J.W. – What was that?

J.V. – The milk strike you told me about on the telephone.

J.W. – Oh, my father, yes, there were milk strikes. The price of milk was just terrible, just terrible and farmers wanted more pay for their milk, so they went on strike. They called people who continued to sell their milk "scabs". Farmers would take their milk... the milk man was over there in Gansevoort right near where the post office would later be. A lot of men dumped their milk. But, of course, before all of this they were small dairy farms. Early on in my father's life they made butter. My grandmother made butter; I can remember it very well. She had butter customers in Glens Falls. So, my father just got out the old churn and made butter, we had plenty of butter! When the war finally got over, they raised the price.

J.V. – Do you want to tell me about rationing; will you tell me more about that?

J.W. – [Laughs] All rubber things... You couldn't buy a pair of rubber overshoes, you know, that were made of rubber. [Pauses] I'm trying to think of... you know your underpants have elastic around, they did away with that. They were stitched around and buttoned on the side. [Laughs] I had a college friend and she was very proper you know, she was walking down the street one day and the button fell off her on her pants. She was in the middle of the street, she said, "I just stood there a minute and let them drop down and reached down and picked them up and went on." [Laughter] But the babies you see, babies {before rationing} would always have rubber bands. No rubber bands, they were not to be had. So we knitted soakers,

they were three corner pieces of wool yarn because wool holds the moisture and wool keeps you warm. Our bathing suits were all wool then because you get out of the water and you wouldn't feel cold. But then they stopped all that, you know, when you got swimming pools. This was because lint has... Wool has lint and it would clog up the swimming pools. So now you don't have wool, very rarely would you find wool bathing suits. But...this was very hard on the mothers, there were no Pampers and things of that sort, you know. It was bad, the problem was very, very bad. This sounds unbelievable but when you went to buy a tube of toothpaste it was in aluminum tubes you had to take that back to get a new tube. That was because the aluminum then would be converted for the war effort. You gave in your old pots and pans that had holes in them. If they were aluminum they would be reprocessed for that. The rubber was needed for...jeeps and trucks that were part of the war effort, airplane tires and things you see. Everything was converted to the war effort that was possible to do.

J.V. – Is there anything you missed during the war?

J.W. – That I missed, [Pauses] well we were very careful about coffee. You didn't waste coffee... but we always had some but we drank a lot more tea probably, which wasn't so scarce. [Pauses] Well of course they grumbled about things like soap and nice smelling soap. Nice things like that and... we also had very nice French perfumes, which we don't get much like today. For some reason or another we did have those things. So I don't know if there was too much I missed. Our clothes... the skirts were very short. Actually, the government regulated the width of the waistbands and belts and the pulls on the skirts, saving money on materials you see...the quality on material you see. [Pauses] The quality of the materials was rather shabby too. We all wore hats, hats were very fashionable. A good hat would be made out of a fur product with a ...sheep hats were made just of wool and that they began to put other products in, you know. Another thing, our underwear was silk. We wore slips which were silk satin and they had to be ironed too, but they were nice. Our stockings were silk,

nylon stockings didn't come in until about 1940. That was one of the big graduation gifts girls got when they graduated from high school, a pair of nylon stockings. They had seams in the back; you know you had to be very careful that your seams were straight, never twisted stockings. It was... we rolled our stockings because with silk you could roll them. Of course girls got this habit of always pulling up their stockings, then when rayon came through you couldn't, you couldn't roll stockings because they would stay up. So that's where the two-way stretch came in and that had its problems too. I think back now and think probably the happiest moment of my day when I was teaching school was when I could get home and get the girdle off. Now girls don't wear things like that, you see.

J.V.: So did you date during the war?

J.W.: Well yes, I was going with a fellow, who was a metal artist, I didn't think much of it at the time. But he didn't go to war and I know now that is was because he was a metal artist and the Americans didn't want him in the war effort, which he didn't talk about.

J.V.: Now why did you choose not to marry while everybody else was marrying?

J.W.: Well, I didn't see anybody I thought I wanted to spend the rest of my life with. There wasn't too much to choose from.

J.V.: Did anyone try to push you into it?

J.W.: Well, I had my chances but I'm glad I didn't take them. [Laughter] I...

J.V.: So you don't regret it?

J.W.: No, No, No! I think a lot of them...I wouldn't...I would say maybe my sister...There was a young man that was in the town I was teaching in and I introduced him to my sister and she married him. She has five wonderful children but intellectually they weren't on the same channel. I think my sister didn't get to do the things that she could of done if she hadn't been too busy raising a big family. But her children did well and...that's to her credit certainly, she was bound by having to go back and living in a small town. I don't think I would've been

happy doing that. I was a great traveler when I was teaching and I wouldn't trade that for anything. As one of my friends says...she had married and she had no children and I'm not going to have any children. She said, 'You know how it is, they come to visit you and when you're tired of them you can send them home,' and that had advantages too you know. But, the children were all very close because this was the farmhouse they came, they came, they came, they came and they're still coming. This last Thanksgiving I had a nephew and his wife who had been here, born here, now living in Tucson and his son who is a golfer in Atlanta, they were all here for Thanksgiving and it was great. He married...my nephew who was in the Air Force, he flew the A-10s so he was in the Vietnam War, he went to Korea and Alaska and his wife probably rarely saw him in the morning without wondering if he would come home.

J.V.: Now I'm sure you heard stories back at home like about things that were going on across the sea in Europe, did it affect your life in any way?

J.W.: I don't think so. We did not hear a lot. What was in the paper, what was on the radio. Lowell Thomas was on every night like you know, like Dan Rather is now. They would tell us stories and then if you really wanted to see it you went to the movies. The [Path way] news would come on, it would show the ships that were being burned and the soldiers that were marching and the tanks that were down in the mud and all those things. That's the only way you got any pictures of anything, except Life magazine would come out with pictures. They would show a picture, that's why it was so popular. But we all talked about all of these things and shared whatever we heard from...

J.V.: Could you tell us some of the stories if you remember any that you heard?

J.W.: I can't remember off from the top of my head. I had one friend whose husband was a flyer and he flew the Hump. He wrote her long letter about this trip. The Hump was the end of China.

J.V.: Himalayas?

J.W.: Yes, I guess so. It was a scary thing. He used to write these letters to her. She was a commercial teacher and so she taught typing, so she would type them up and mimeograph them off and send them to her friends. They were very interesting to read and I kept them around for years and then I thought this was wrong, they should go back to her children because they should know what their father had been doing, you know. So I wish I had some of these things but I don't because I set them back to the families. I heard my brother-in-law tell he was on a LST that here we were, we never saw a nice ham on the market or a beefsteak on the market. They had so much of this food on his ship that sometimes it would go bad. They had to dump it overseas over it into the water, you know, to get rid of it.

J.V.: This was your brother?

J.W.: Brother-in-law.

J.V.: Brother-in-law.

J.W.: My sister came here to live with my mother and father. She had one child and the second was born here at Glens Falls Hospital. So they were here all the time, he was in the service.

J.V.: So you had two other sisters?

J.W.: One other sister, a younger sister who joined the WAVES. So she wasn't home much of the time.

J.V.: So it was just you and your sister growing up here on the farm?

J.W.: Well, the younger sister, she was seven years younger than I but the older sister was only a year and a half older. So we walked many miles together. We went to school together, we walked to the bus. It was...when the trolley went out we had to go up to old Route 9. That's the road by the Moreau State Park up there, you know where it is. Well I had to walk up to that corner which was a good mile and a half to two miles and get the bus, which took

us to the Glens Falls High School. Instead of waiting down town to turn around, they took all of us. For boys and girls who came over from Spire Falls, came over Spire Falls Mountain to get to school. It was really not easy task. There was no school bus; there was no school lunch. You all took a paper bag lunch. Then, lots of time it was a nice day like today we would walk downtown down to Woolworth's and ... We would walk down there and back and then we would walk down at night and get the bus and walk down here. I would leave the house at about a quarter after seven in the morning and the bus would come along about ten minutes of eight. School started at 8:30 with an hour off for lunch and out at 3:30. How does that compare with your schedule?

J.V.- A little different...

J.W.- [Laughs] You only get... how many minutes do you get for lunch?

J.V.- We only get about 35 minutes.

J.W.- Oh dear, when I was there it was only 26 but...

J.V.- We also have a lot more people in our school.

J.W.- Yes, but your cafeteria is probably bigger. We had two cafeterias then, do you still?

J.V.- Yes we still have two cafeterias.

J.W.- I understand the offices are on the main corridor now, in between B and C wing is it?

J.V.- Yes.

J.W.- That's where my room was then.

J.V.- Really!

J.W.- The offices were on the other side by the parking lot. Teachers were not allowed to park in the front parking lot because everybody in the office had to watch to see who was sneaking out early. The kids you know sneak out early so they parked in the front lot, we parked in the back lot. [Laughs] I don't know what they do today.

J.V.- Do you remember any other stories?

JW- Oh, I don't know. There were things I thought about, I have a couple of questions I wish someone would answer for me. One is, what were the results of the bombing of Hiroshima, one of the big fears was that people would become sterile from the results of the bomb. I want to know, did they?

JV- Did what?

JW- Become sterile, now we know Japan certainly has a population boom, but was the population effected by the bomb?

JV- It was, yes. People were affected by the bomb but I'm not sure if people became sterile from it.

JW- That was a great worry!

JV- Really, I don't know, a lot of people got cancer and things like that but I'm not sure if they became sterile from it.

JW- Well, that's one of my wonders and I have another wonder about Adolf Hitler. Adolf Hitler was going to create the master race so he went about it very scientifically. He had camps for girls which were located by the men's army camps and children were literally bred. The finest of the German youth! Now if a child was born with a hearing problem or mongoloids, or poor eyesight or some other thing, they were destroyed. But these young women had these perfectly beautiful babies. Life magazine had pictures of them years and years ago. They were a year and year and a half old, beautiful children. I want to know what happened to them. Have you ever heard?

JV- No. I haven't, have you? [Refers to cameraman, Emily Thomson]. I never even heard about those camps.

JW- Have you ever heard of anyone who came forward and said "I was one of those children?"

JV- No.

JW- What's happened to them?

JV- I don't know. I never even heard of the camp.

JW- Well they had them all over Germany. It was going to produce the master race. The brightest!

JV- I will look into that for you.

JW- I would love to know. I asked Sarah. Do you know Sarah Petteys? She lives there right across the road. I asked her, she said she was going to look it up on the Internet, but I don't know.

JV- I will look it up on the Internet for you.

JW- Where are those people? Wouldn't you like to know if they are outstanding and if they are healthier, or if they produce more healthy children? Or if they are brighter, or if they're more attractive? I think it is so interesting that nobody has ever...

JV- Maybe they have but... people aren't interested in it.

JW- No, some of these people have to make big news out of everything. Don't know? Let me see, are there any other questions that I had in mind? I wanted to tell you that there is a book that's going to come out in June of 2005 and the book is called "Dumb but Lucky". The man who is writing it is Doctor Curtis, Dick Curtis. His son married my niece. Anyway he was a college professor. But at nineteen years old he flew a P-51 Mustang which was the fighter pilot, fighter plane and he preceded the bombers over Italy and Germany and parts of... So that's how he says he's dumb but lucky. He kept a diary. It's being published by Random House so it won't be out until June of 2005. So you'll be in college then?

JV- Yes, I will be in my second year of college.

JW- You can maybe look for that. See there is quite a lot being written today. Another book if you like to read is to read Mitchner's book called "Caravans". Have you ever heard of that book?

JV- No.

JW- Well there's a program on TV called CSPAN2 and it's on every Saturday and Sunday. You know it? [Refers to cameraman Emily Thomson]. You watch it, do you?

Emily Thomson- No, but I heard of it.

JW- It is a book review of non-fiction books. It covers a vast lot of things; a lot of history is covered. A lot has been done about Franklin and Washington and some of those things you know. Anyway they're coming through with stuff about Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Iraq and all of them. One author said, "If you want to understand Afghanistan today read Mitchner's Caravans." So I got it and read it. When you think that that culture pre-dates Jesus Christ and in many ways they're not very different today. Plus that they're hampered by mountains and deserts and it's lots of little tribal communities, you see. It's terrible existence, very hard and the people are very violent.

Is there anything else I wanted to mention here as I thought about things? Oh, at Christmas time, I think this must have been about Christmas of 1939, probably. The radio had a program where the children, the British children who had been sent to the United States for safe keeping could talk to their parents on the radio. It was just, it was just the most heart-wrenching experience. To hear these children seven and eight years old, you know, talking to their parents out there. But they had been sent here to be safe you see, to be safe from the bombing. There were a lot of care packages too, at Christmas time. Even though you didn't know the boys, you know, you would collect them. Red Cross did a lot of getting people involved in things. We also had airplane watch, you know, right on top of the school. Where every plane, that went over, you reported it. They kept track of things. Of course along the coast there were submarines and all kinds of things that people had to watch for.

JV- Now did your sister's help contribute to the war effort?

JW- Don't remember, don't remember that they did. The younger one was in school and then she went into the Waves. The older one was involved with her family. She was a great knitter but I don't think she ever did anything for the war effort. I guess that was about it. We went to the movies a lot. It was cheap and you really got a good... You got the feature movie and you got the previews and you got the news the [Pathoy] news.

JV- Was this all about the war, the news, or...

JW- Basically about some of the movie actors too, about what they were doing because that was something we were very interested in.

JV- Yes

JW- I watched...Once in a while one of those old movies come on, I just think they're terrible. There's a lot of cigarette smoking for one thing and all black and white. We went to the movies a lot, what else was there? There wasn't ...Everything was kind of closed down you know. You couldn't go any place because you didn't have a car [laughs]. Quite different from today. You kids both drive cars? You could go all over. Parking lots are full of your cars.

JV- Would you like to stop and think of anything else?

JW- Well, if you have any questions I'll try and answer them.

JV- I don't have anymore questions.

JW- Well, then maybe that's where we're running into a dry spell.

JV- Okay.

[Background discussion]

JV- What did you think about President Roosevelt, when he died?

JW- We all knew he wasn't well, you could look at him and knew he wasn't well. I was a Republican and I knew I made a mistake in feeling he had been in too long. He had been in for 16 years and previous to that he was Governor of New York State. So he was in the lime

light for a long, long while. There was a slogan, "You can't change horses in the middle of the stream," which meant you can't change Presidents while a war is on. That was one of the reasons he was put in year after year. It was to maintain his position to knowledgeably be able to help us with the war. He was probably the best equipped that we had. He wasn't afraid of Stalin and he wasn't afraid of who ever the Prime Minister of England was. He and Churchill were great friends, you know. But as he got older was less and less able to get out and around. They only showed us what they wanted us to see, they didn't want us to know he was in such poor health. That was probably smart.

Harry Truman was an entirely different kind of man. Roosevelt was a very highly educated man and spoke very beautiful English, you know. Harry Truman was a...just an ordinary man who had worked in a men's clothing store and sold suits and hats and things. I don't know how come he ever got into politics the way he did. But he had a sign on his desk that said, "The buck stops here," and by golly nobody could talk him into spending money that he didn't feel was right. He was actually a very good President.

JV- What did you think of June 6<sup>th</sup> 1944?

JW- What did I think about what?

JV- June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944, D-Day?

JW- D-Day, the most...jubilation and we got the day off. We got the rest of the week off as I remember it. We were very happy. We knew it was coming. We didn't know about Normandy until it happened, you see. That was a very, very great secret. We did not know...We figured something big was going to happen but we didn't know when exactly.

JV- Did you think the invasion of Omaha Beach was necessary?

JW- Yes I do.

JV- Yes.

JW- I do. It was a terrible thing for a lot of those fellows. In fact I took...to do all this embroidery I took classes at [Elsa Williams] in Massachusetts for several years I went after I retired. One time there was a man there and his wife had been interested in embroidery and he went with her and he became interested. He had only one arm and he had been in the battle for three hours and lost his arm. He did very, very nice work with one hand. But he was maimed for life, you see, because the way it hurt his shoulder.

JV- Do you know how he felt about that?

JW- No, he never did talk about that, he just said three hours and his arm was gone. It was a very violent thing, very violent.

JV- It sure was.

JW- These men keep going back, you know. Like the Marines they have meetings every year and then they go back to some of these places and see what has happened you know. It was a terrible thing, so many of them so young, not much older than you are, you see.

JV- Yes, we know that.

JW- Well, I don't know you've probably got young men that you know of going into war now, do you?

JV- Yes. What did you think of the draft?

JW- The draft? Well I think at the time of World War II it was very essential. There are a lot of people that wouldn't have gone into it if they hadn't been drafted. It was getting down to the point where they going to draft men as old as 38, you know, which seems pretty old, but that's how hard up we were. All the young ones as soon as they got out of high school, they joined up. I remember one boy in particular we were very fond of and he wasn't over there very long and he was killed. He was probably nineteen, a lot of them very, very young.

Mothers, little things they hung in the window, you know a little red, white, and blue sign and it had stars on it. When you had one son in you had one star, two sons, two stars and so

on. Then if you had lost a son you had a gold star. You could go by the houses and see these and you would know where there were men in the service and who had lost sons. Of course, this area lost some too.

JV- Now, I heard some of these men went to Canada to escape the draft...

JW- Well, that was not World War II.

JV- No, it wasn't, were they eager?

JW- No, I don't think they were eager. But I think the draft was very efficient, they couldn't catch them...I mean they could catch them. It was the Vietnam War where the men went to Canada and there was a draft then too, but somehow it wasn't as strict as it was in WWII. The feeling was totally different because of the Japanese. We were mad, and my sister, the younger sister, lives down in Georgia, is still mad. To some degree I am still indignant. I went to Japan on one of my trips. Beautiful country, friendly people, clean, very clean, but I didn't trust them. I'm not sure if I do today, I don't know.

JV- Did you hear about men enlisted in the army early when they got their draft notice?

JW- Well many of them enlisted before they got draft notice. Therefore they could select whether or not they wanted to go in the Navy or if they wanted to go into the Air Force and so forth. Now the Air Force was actually a part of the Army at that time. It was the Army Air Force, it was different division of the army. Only the Army and Navy and the Marines. Marines were a tough bunch and you had to be ready to do all kinds of things to join the Marines. They were tough and a lot of them were sent to the Japanese war.

JV- What did you think of the bombing on Japan?

JW- [sighs] I think probably it was the only way to get things done. It was just going on and on and on. It ended things in a hurry. We spent a lot of time getting it ready. I knew of a young woman who worked at Oakridge. She didn't know what she was working on. So even

the people who were making the parts for the atomic bomb didn't know about it you see.

Have you ever seen the movie "The Enola Gay"?

JV- No.

JW- You haven't? You tell your teacher to get that and show it to you.

JV- [laughs] Okay.

JW- Do you know what the Enola Gay was?

JV- No.

JW- No, you don't! The Enola Gay was the airplane that carried the crew that dropped the atomic bomb. It was named for the mother of one of the men on that plane. It's a wonderful, wonderful short movie. It was very, very, very secret. You also have known about Amelia Earhart?

JV- Yes.

JW- She was lost, she was probably doing secret work for the government too. The Enola Gay is an exciting movie to see. You probably could pick it up too couldn't you, but then it's been on TV years ago but it's a good movie, it's true facts. There was a lot of secret stuff that went on very, very quietly, part of it probably because we didn't have television because you know we've got people over in Iraq right now. Well you probably watched it, sat right there in the truck with them while they're going down there towards Baghdad.

J.V.: Yes.

J.W.: Yes, [Laughs] couldn't do it back then so it was quite different. I have a nephew, grand nephew, probably shouldn't tell all my family tales. He was in the Gulf War and he was...he had been in England for two or three years he was in the air force he was in security work. He was sent from England to Saudi Arabia and he got there...this was around Christmas Eve and he said, ' we've got off the plane and there was someone meeting us with a shovel.' He said, ' Here, take this, get busy and start shoveling and fill those sand bags. ' They were

filling up these berms all around, you know got off the plane and did that. He also got a chance to see Bob Hope who came in, you know. So he was there all during a lot of the war. He doesn't tell a lot about it but it's interesting. The interesting this is that he now is a security man working for the ambassador from Saudi Arabia...down in Washington. I think part of his success probably is that he had this experience over there and he knew what the people were like and so... the women don't drive for example, they have to be driven every place.

J.V.: Did you find that the soldiers when they returned from World War II, were they very secretive about what happened?

J.W.: No.

J.V.: No?

J.W.: No, they just wouldn't tell anyone.

J.V.: They wouldn't say anything to anybody?

J.W.: Well, also if you were polite you wouldn't ask. You didn't try to dig it out of them. I think even their parents didn't know Vietnam was the worst! I've heard cases where some of the men still have nightmares. It probably made a lot of them violent too, you know. It was...that was a terrible thing. Anything else you can think of?

J.V.: No. Do you have any questions for me?

J.W.: What happened to those beautiful babies? I want to know that. Now I was...I went in...I was in Europe, my first trip was in 1957, which wasn't very long after the war. Feelings were still very high. When we were in Germany we had a young man who was guiding our group and his father was in the war.

J.V.: So what do you think about the war today?

J.W.: The Iraq war?

J.V.: Yes.

J.W.: I feel we had to do it for the safety of the world. I feel indignant that France and Germany won't help. After all, who were the troops that went marching into Paris when the W.W.II was over? Who was it that helped to get that Berlin Wall down? How much money did we put into all of this? Now this terrorism is a worldwide thing that has to be stopped. I do feel as many people that were planning this because there was women in on this too, didn't plan for enough as to what to do once the battle was over. Its been an unexpected situation where we have been...we've lost many men and we've been badly hurt by it because their way of life is entirely different from ours and I don't think we've understood it. Also we're not always right, Americans are not always right. People don't always like us because we may appear to be cocky and superior and we're not always right.

J.V.: Well, thanks for letting me interview you.

J.W.: Well I was...If it's any help to you I'm happy to do it. I want to say this too, when I was young, my grandfather would tell me stories, I didn't listen very well, now I wish I did, my grandma too, I didn't listen.

J.V.: So you're saying that people should start listening to the older generations?

J.W.: How are we going to keep these things, don't you agree?

J.V.: Yes.

J.W.: They're very precious, really! Little things that I think about my grandparents, the little sayings that they've had. I have a book out there in my desk.

J.V.: Do you want me to pause this so we can look at it?

J.W.: Yes.

J.V.: OK.

J.W.: If you...This is not it, where is it? I had the wrong book, they're dropping all over the place. It is dated 1776, his home was [Gimmel Garland house]. Can I come up closer?

Emily Thomson: Yes.

J.W.: Can you imagine trying to read out of this? But...why don't you turn that off. [Refers to camera] {END}

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