

**Robert Edward Barron  
Veteran**

**Kenneth and June Hunter  
Interviewers**

**Interviewed at Stratton VA  
Albany, New York  
on 16 June 2006**

**Interviewer:** this interview is being conducted by Kenneth and June Hunter. Please tell us your full name and when and where were born.

**Robert Edward Barron(RB):** Robert Edward Barron, Woodhaven, New York. Woodhaven is a part of Queens, New York City.

**Interviewer:** and when were you born?

(RB): March 25, 1930.

**Interviewer:** and what did you do before you entered the Army?

(RB): I was a student at the state college for teachers, Albany, New York.

**Interviewer:** Did you enlist or were you drafted?

**(RB):** I was drafted. I had been postponed during my time in school and when I finished they said okay come and in the meantime one of my friends from Long Island had been commissioned in the Air Force and was trying to get me to go into the Air Force. I thought that was pretty good. So I was investigating being an officer in the Air Force when the Army said no, we have prior claim, you come. So I went for induction.

**Interviewer:** Where did you go for that induction?

**(RB):** New York City and this is Korean wartime and they were still desperate for people so they did my physical and said hmm, if you go lay down for a while maybe your blood pressure will go down. So after about a half-hour they came in and tested me again. Well, all right, I think you're in. And so I was in. And I went to Camp Kilmer, processed there and then I went to Fort Dix, New Jersey, E Company, 69<sup>th</sup> infantry Regiment for 16 weeks of basic infantry training.

**Interviewer:** Do you remember any of the special things you did during basic training?

**(RB):** Legally or illegally? (Laughter!) Basic training was during the Korean War and we were taught how to kill and how to survive yourself, which was useful information. We had a normal Sgt. who drove us and for about the first 4 to 8 weeks we were kept close

to the barracks. But once they slipped the reins on us, I wandered around. At this point, I had gotten my degree as a librarian and wandered over to a branch of the Post Service Club in the 69<sup>th</sup> infantry area. So I wandered in there and they were looking for help. So I said okay and the lieutenant talk to me and hired me to work nights. Now at this point in basic training, like I say, we had a little freedom but the Sgt. was still the one who dictated your day. On my first day of work the Sgt. decided we were going to have a toothbrush party that night, which is a real scrub down of the barracks. But I said, "Sgt. I have to go to work." And he looked at me and said, "What do you mean you have to go to work?" I said I am due over at the service club to run the library". He said no you're not. I said yes I am. And I said the Lieut., and I can't tell you now, who he was, is going to be unhappy if I don't show up. So he talked to the lieutenant or maybe he didn't talk to the lieutenant and decided a Lieut. would talk to him, I don't know. But anyway I went to the service club and did the library. And the only thing I remember about that is that I made more money working as a librarian off-duty nights, Saturdays, something like that, then I made in my month of Army pay. At the end of that, also, I don't know, we had the normal bayonet training and shooting. I managed to hit targets so they didn't throw me out. I wasn't a sharpshooter but I did qualify as a rifleman. The one incident that I strongly remember was about halfway through it. It was Easter weekend and they gave almost all of us passes. At that time I was going with a girl from Yonkers, New York. I went home to spend the weekend with Joan. Being Easter we were going to church on Sunday. Now, why I don't know, but the only civilian clothes I had at Joan's house was a summer suit and Easter that year was very early, probably, the end of March, very early April and it was cold. I thought okay I will wear my suit and one thing that had been pounded into us is you do not mix Army and civilian clothes. I think I've got a summer suit and it is cold and the only coat I own is an Army overcoat. So I'm going to carry this Army overcoat and if it gets cold I am going to put it on regardless. I mean who is going to know, who is going to see me? So I have the coat over my arm, I come out of church and the minister greets us, "Good to see you, how are things at Fort Dix?" I thought this guy has the most marvelous memory. I mean he only met me in December when I was here at Christmas time and he remembers I am in the Army at Fort Dix. Wait a minute, in December you weren't in the Army. How does he know I am in the Army at Fort Dix? So I said, "How do you know I am in the Army at Fort Dix?" He said, "That patch on your army sleeve is the 69<sup>th</sup> infantry division and they are headquartered at First Army at Fort Dix." I said, "How you know that." He said "I'm a chaplain, Lt. Col. in the reserves and I laid out all the chapels at Fort Dix." So I went back and finished my basic as I was getting close to the end of it.

And some place, those things you don't remember but stick in your mind, when I had been in library school, Robert Burgess was the Dean of Library School said to us one day because we had a lot of men in that class, "If you are ever stationed in the army, you should try to be stationed at Ft. Slocum, it is the showplace of the 1<sup>st</sup> Army Hq." And, in

and out one ear. So here we are on a Friday afternoon getting a lecture on if we should reup, we could go to the school of our choice. And I sat through it, um, um, of course, I am about to reup, let's see I got 19 months and 6 days left to go. But one of the things he was rattling off about schools to go to was the T. I and E. School in Ft. Slocum. Oh Ft. Slocum, I have heard of that someplace but I don't know why. So I went off for the weekend and this was the Easter weekend. So after the minister said to me you should try to get stationed at Ft. Slocum as it would be closer to home. Now when Bob Burgess told me about this, I thought Ft. Slocum was in the state of Washington. Ok, Washington was a lot closer than Korea and this was Korean War days but it is still not what I would call close to home. So I commented on this and the minister looked at me and said that "Ft. Slocum is in New Rochelle harbor." Now Joan lived in Yonkers and New Rochelle butts up against Yonkers. I said Oh, Ft. Slocum, T. I. and E. school, reenlist, it might be worth it. So I went back on Monday and I saw my friendly Sgt. and I said "did you really, really mean that if we reenlist we can go to the school of our choice. He said oh yes I promise you anything, anything. You know just reup, you know. I said can I go to T,I and E school at Ft. ", "Oh yes, yes." I said "OK I will do it." So it sort of floored him as I don't think anybody else said yes they would. So they sent me down to be processed for the T.I. and E. school. And they had to give me a physical. Now I am already in the army. But I had to get a physical to be able to enlist in the army. I couldn't pass the physical. So they thought about this for a while and fudged this, that and the other thing. Finally, one thing I couldn't pass was the hearing test. They said well if you are going to T.I. and E. school, T.I. and E. is Troop Information and Education, I had figured as a teacher I might possibly be able to do that. So he said I am sorry you can't pass this. Well one time they had said what about Officer Candidate School? I had said OK I will do that. So they sent me down for that and they ask are you allergic to anything and I said yes I am allergic to hay fever, grass, cut things. So just to be sure that I was actually allergic to that, they give you a series of 22 shots. Now the theory being that if you were allergic you would turn red or something at some place around the area of the injection. My bumps were pushing the needles out and I passed out. When I came back to consciousness, I have got a whole group of people staring at me saying you have the most amazing reaction of anybody we have ever tested. Of course you realize that this eliminates you from being an officer. So that was the first time I couldn't pass the test. Now they are saying I can't enlist in the Army because I can't hear. I said well let me out and they said, "Oh no, you are in the army and we can't let you out but you can't reenlist. But then again, you are going to the T.I. and E. school so you probably don't have to hear to be an educator. Alright you can do it."

So I got my discharge on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and I was supposed to report to Ft. Slocum on July 5<sup>th</sup>. And I must admit I was sitting there on July 4<sup>th</sup> looking at an honorable discharge in my hand saying do I really want to go up there for three years. Yes you said you would so you will. So I looked at my orders to go to Ft. Slocum, to the T.I. and E. school and some

clerk/typist had typed P.I.school. I figured typical clerk/typist. Now I was a clerk/typist too when I wasn't doing anything else at Ft. Dix in the Army line. So I got to Ft. Slocum which is an island in New Rochelle Harbor, David's Island. The guards at the gate looked at it and said "OK up the hill there" and they didn't question my orders at all. So I went in and I was processed. Over the weekend I am wandering around the post. Now this is the place that Bob Burgess said is the show place of 1<sup>st</sup> Army. And I wandered into the post library and it was the saddest place I have looked at. And I am thinking Bob thinks this is the best place in 1<sup>st</sup> Army. Either the 1<sup>st</sup> Army is pretty horrible or things have gone downhill since he was here. But anyway there it was and there was a Sgt. on duty and the Sgt. was anything but happy. He was a little drunk but one never drinks on duty so I know that couldn't possibly be the cause. "This is terrible, this is terrible. I will do anything to get out of here. I will take permanent KP for life to get out of this job, you know." I am thinking, um, um, all right. I said "Sgt. you really don't like this job?" "Oh, I hate it, I hate it. I will do anything to get out of here" I said that I will take your job. "You will!" So he runs over and he gets a Lt., "Lt. Lt. this guy will take my job!" So the Lieutenant interviewed me and said I will certainly work on this. And so that was the weekend. So I started my classes and every morning we would fall out at sometimes in the early morning hours and down the street a block, this island looks like a college campus with three story big stone buildings stretched out on one side and officer quarters with all the classes on the end. I didn't pay any attention to those guys down there. I don't know what they were or who they are. They weren't pertaining to me so I didn't bother. Also, being a private who had just been trained by a good Sgt. that when I say jump, the question is how high not anything else and don't ask questions about anything else. So I didn't pay any attention. Now I sat in class, took my notes and I listened. And about the 3<sup>rd</sup> day the knock comes on the door and the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. says, "Report to my office." And I thought OK so I got in there and he started chewing me up one side and down the other as to what I thought I was doing and why I hadn't I been in class yet and if I didn't like his island I could get off it immediately. I am thinking, am I dreaming, what is going on? I haven't missed a class; I wouldn't dare miss a class. I am a private. And finally he kept talking about P. I. and I am going no, I am in T.I. and E. And he says I don't care what you think you are in, you are in my P.I. and either get there or. I thought well OK if I that's my choice I will go ...

**Interviewer:** What does that stand for, those letters?

**(RB):** Ah, ah, I will get to that. But anyway he said, "Get over there!" which happened to be the block down that I hadn't paid any attention to. So I have no idea as to what the PI school is. But I figured it is on Ft. Slocum so let's see what it is before I leave it. So I move all my gear down to the next barracks and went in and ran into two guys I had know from basic training. There was a four man room and they said we have a bunk in here, come on and join us. I said OK and I said by the way what is PI? Oh that is Public Information, you know, like public relations. I said I can do that and so I went to the P.I.

school and I graduated from the P.I. school. Well, in the meantime, about the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> day of class when I had a light assignment, I discovered there was another library on the island besides the information one over at the service club. There was the Information School library and it was a beautiful place. It had windows out on Long Island Sound; it had leather furnishings, all the couches, chairs and tables. And when I got talking to the library director she was begging for help. Well in the meantime I had heard from the Lt. that I had originally talked to. He said I had gotten word back from 1<sup>st</sup> Army that you are essential personnel at Ft. Dix and you will be returned to Ft. Dix when you have completed your schooling. Now one of the reasons I had enlisted was not only to go to Ft. Slocum but to get out of Ft. Dix. And I thought well from the frying pan to the fire, I have done it. So I am explaining to Mrs. McCarthy who is a civilian that as much as I'd like to work there, I had just been told by the Lt. over at the Service Club, who had tried to get me to be the librarian there, that I was going back to Ft. Dix. And she said Lt. Col. Von Votlander runs this place; uh let me talk to him. Lt. Col. Von Votlander didn't ask 1<sup>st</sup> Army if he could have me, he told 1<sup>st</sup> Army he was going to have me when I finished training. And so, when I finished my training I became the librarian at Ft. Slocum. And I was very happy there, it was a civilian job. I mean I was wearing a uniform but Armed Forces Information School drew the elite of all the services-Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the enlisted men and the officers were really top notch. So it was a nice place to be and I liked working there. Evelyn, after awhile, said I am thinking of retiring, why don't you take over as Director and I will be the Assistant Director and in a couple of years after you finish your enlistment you take over as Director here. I thought no Evelyn that will not work you are a civilian, you have a civilian rank equivalent to probably a Captain and I am a private and I am not going to be able to do what you do. So I said I maybe running this place but your name will be on the thing. So that was the way we worked it. Well one of the things that came up at this time was, we had a clerk, librarian, not a clerk. She was a librarian in picksure(?) in charge of periodicals. It suddenly became a civil service job. Well it had always been a civil servant but civil service started cracking down, saying you must take the test and pass to get this job. And Thelma was one of those people that if you asked her, her name on a test, she couldn't even tell you her name. And Thelma took the test three times and failed it. Civil Service came to Mrs. McCarthy who turned it over to me and said you have to get rid of Thelma. I said I don't want to get rid of Thelma. Thelma is a crackerjack librarian, I don't care if she can't pass a test, everything else she knows and knows well. So I said Thelma Civil Service cracked down on me again, I had a long interview with them. I said Thelma I hate to tell you this but I gotta let you go. I said I don't want to do it, you are a fine librarian. So she said OK, let me think about it. So Thelma went home and did a little investigation and discovered she could enlist in the WACS and be a commissioned officer. Thelma was commissioned a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, I don't remember which, and there is a military tradition that the 1<sup>st</sup> enlisted person who salutes an officer gets a dollar. So Thelma was commissioned an officer and I turned around and saluted her and

she handed me my dollar and we went right on working as we had been, Thelma doing her job now as a Lt. This went on for, I guess, as long as I was still there. After that she was transferred out to another place, married a superior officer, and raised children thereafter. That was life at Ft. Slocum.

As always in any library they hate to get rid of a book. I mean a book is sacred. But sometimes they wear out, they get dated and we had books that were really out of date. But 1<sup>st</sup> Army regulations had so much paperwork so what we decided we would do since there was so much paperwork to try and get rid of a book that when we worked nights and the library was opened from 8 in the morning until 9 at night. As I say, this is an island in New Rochelle harbor only reachable by ferry. Each night, Evelyn or I, when we left work would take a book or so with us and we would stand on the back of the ferry, look around and very quietly drop the books over the edge of the boat. That was the only way we could get rid of them. Well I was there a year and a half to two years. And some one, I don't know, I have never figured out this one. But a Major in the, taught public information courses had orders to go to Germany and I had helped him with some assignments and his research. He kept talking about wouldn't I like to go to Europe with him. I kept telling him no, I would not. I mean why would I want to go to Germany where I heard they did nasty things like sleeping out in a field and not in a nice barracks. Here I was and I had gotten married right after I graduated from P.I. training. And so I went home to my wife on the 5 o'clock ferry. I kept saying no, I don't want to go to Europe. Well you might end up in a FECom levee. FECom is Far Eastern Command and it is still Korean War days. And I am thinking as long as Col. Von Votlander is here, I don't think I am going to FECom. So I kept saying no thank you, no thank you. And this went on over a period of several months. And, all of a sudden, one day there was a 1<sup>st</sup> Army general levee. A general levee is looking for a warm body. Basically all they want is a warm body. But once in a while they will tack on a couple of specifications with it. And this one was for an enlisted man, must be at least the following rank, must have at least the following time left in service, which met my qualifications to the dot on the end of the comma, thanking this, this and this,. It, also, said the ability to speak Spanish. Now this is for an assignment to Germany. By the time, they were still using in those days a key, sort, punch thing, and when they ran all the cards through, lo and behold, only one card came up, mine! After that Major Logan came in and he said "Oh, I hear you got orders to Germany". I looked at him and said, "Why did you go to all of this trouble? Why? I told you I don't want to go." "Oh you will like it over there." and I thought I don't think I will like it. But Army regulations being Army regulations, I went. And so I went back, was processed, shipped out of Brooklyn Clinton Harbor on the USS Geiger, a troopship. And it was the roughest crossing of the year. We had a couple of broken legs and things from people being thrown against a bulkhead. My duty for this was to be on the fantail deck for a couple of hours and if anybody went overboard, I was supposed to yell "Man overboard". And we had two meals a day-breakfast and dinner. And as they

say it was a rough crossing and I will always remember turning away from the serving line one morning with my tray of oatmeal and things and we had a wave and that oatmeal just went up and very slowly, I could see exactly who it was going to hit but I couldn't do anything about it. Yeah we were sleeping in bunks, canvas bunks, I don't know, 4 high or something down in the hold. But still it wasn't a bad trip. I kept thinking one of these days I would like to do this on a decent ship. So we crossed the Mediterranean and I am still not sure of my geography but it seems to me the equator is south of where we were and maybe they just had nothing to do, they were stalling and wanted to do something but anyway we crossed the equator. And we had a crossing of equator celebration with all of the nonsense. And we landed in Casablanca and I remember that so because it was my birthday. I was a 25 year old, very naïve and I had never been out of the United States/Canada and I am walking down the streets of Morocco because they gave us leave. Here I am in Casablanca and I saw snake charmers, the beautiful mosaic work that they do there, and then got back on my ship. We had taken/unloaded some people there and then we went on through the Mediterranean, through Gibraltar, and they woke us up at midnight saying if you want to see Gibraltar, there it is.

We landed at Livorno, Italy and they said OK you are off, Livorno. So I reported in and they said well what are you doing here? I don't know. I am on orders. Well we got an opening over at Stars and Stripes which is the paper published for the US forces overseas. So I worked on the Stars and Stripes for a short while and got to see how that worked. Then they said well the Adjutant General is coming and we are over strength with you. We really have to let you go so we are going to put you back in the pipeline I mean my ? I was assigned to .Now back in the days when Major Logan was talking, he wanted me to go to Germany but my orders read Austria and I said Ok, something else. But I wasn't about to tell somebody that I think I was here at the specific request of a Major. So I went up from Livorno to Austria. I got to Austria and they said why are you here. I don't know. Well we have an opening on Regensburg and you can work on the local paper there which I don't even remember now what it was. But I worked on that for a short time. And they said, the Adjutant General is coming by and you are over strength on our organization chart, you know we have to let you go. Ok send me back to the US. Oh we can't do that. Ah, so I thought OK. They said well there is an opening over at the headquarters company for the Austrian area command. So I reported over there and they said, "Oh, we were expecting a Major." I said,"Oh." "Well do you think you could do the job? It is public information director for the Austrian area command." I said "Yes". So I became the Director of Public Information for the Austrian Area Command. At this point, I was with the S-2/G-2 office which is the intelligence unit. You got PIOS, Personnel, Intelligence, Operations and Supply. I realized two things: #1, this is ten years after the end of the war and we have never signed a peace treaty with Germany. I didn't believe it. The second one was we are going to cut off dependents

coming to the command on the first of July. My wife was a teacher in New Rochelle and was booked to come over on the USS America arriving in Livorno, Italy in July. I realized if she wasn't there by the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, she wasn't going to come in as a dependent. Nor was I allowed to say anything about this because it was classified information. So I wrote to her and told her how much I loved her and how much I missed her and how I wished so strongly that she just get over here immediately and she read between the lines and came. She managed to make it, I think, on June 29<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, I had seen a Lt. who had just got his orders back to the States that he had a private apartment in one of the residences just a half a block from where my office was. So I went and asked and discovered that this woman would rent to me. It was gonna be a push but I could squeeze it out on my, let's see by this time I am up to a Corporal because I had been in for a couple of years, so I would make do. I had never flown overseas so I had no idea of the stress. She was flying in, we had bought luggage for her before I left, and we had a couple of very large, sturdy suitcases that we figured a stevedore throwing around on the docks was fine. When she flew over, she had something like 40 lbs. weight and they did not classify what you wore as part of your weight allowance. So she had about four layers of clothing on, she had a straw basket, a handbag, she had things pinned all over that. I had a big bouquet of flowers for her. I had booked the best restaurant in Salzburg where we were stationed and she got off a KLM flight at Salzburg, bleeeeeeahhhh, and I said here are flowers and we are going to dinner. She said can we go to bed, you know or anything. And I had no idea she had been in transit for like 24 hours or something between changing planes. I had three or four weeks to come over, I was real rested. So anyway, she didn't quite appreciate it but the thought was there. I had 32 units under me as the Austria Area Command and I used to make a circle visiting all of them and seeing how they were doing, making suggestions of things to do. All of them were enlisted men with the exception of one unit and I had a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant in charge of that PO. He didn't always take too kindly to my suggestions. In fact, he thought sometimes they were commands and he wasn't about to take a command from a Cpl. So I went back and I told my boss, I have a problem out here with this unit and this Lt. He thought for a minute and he said a Captain outranks a Lt. Now I had been dreaming about all these movies where you get battlefield commissions and all. So I am thinking, yes a captain, I am going to get a rank of Captain. He said, yes, from now on Captain Klock will sign all of your orders. I said yes sir. Well I didn't know that there was actually a Captain Klock. I thought I was Captain Klock until I discovered one day that I wasn't. And so anyway from then on all the orders that went out of my office were signed by Captain Klock. And this Lt., pretty much guessed that I was really pulling his leg. So he checked up and he discovered, yes, there was a Capt. Klock at HQ. So he didn't question it again. I, also, had one fellow there that I knew and the next thing I knew the Russians had agreed to our peace treaty. Well before I took this job, let me back up. Before I took this job in Salzburg, I had also heard there was an opening for somebody in Vienna and they said why don't you go out

and look at the job in Vienna. Vienna has always been my city of love. I have always dreamed of going to Vienna. I thought I am going to be able to work and live in Vienna. This is too much. So I went to Vienna to look at this job and I was interviewed. And after the interview I am wandering around Vienna gawking at this, that and the other thing. Not paying any attention. Now Vienna was divided into four zones of occupation, the US zone, the British zone, the Russian zone and the French zone. All of a sudden I hear this very loud bark at me and I didn't understand what he was saying but I turned around and looked. And I am looking down a rifle held by a very large, brown soldiered officer with a red star on him. I had wandered into the Russian zone and he was sort of telling me, no you don't come in here. And I thought, if this is the way they treat you in Vienna, I don't want to work in Vienna.

So I went back and took the job in Salzburg. And Salzburg is the most beautiful city I know of. I love it there. And the one thing that amazed me about my time in Austria was some of the US soldiers that were in the barracks there, before I moved out to HQ, who spend their entire weekend just in the barracks doing nothing. They didn't want to see anything around and I couldn't believe it. Here you have got this opportunity to see another land, to see a country, how people live and you want to stay in this dump of a barracks. It was a very nice barracks I grant but still I mean, ahh, I just couldn't believe it. So when we were there after Joan came over, every weekend we could, we went someplace. Some of our friends over there who had been there longer than we had, had cars and we would go up to Berchtesgaden for the weekend. We would go someplace else, there was a Sgt. who liked things that I liked and he had a car. I didn't really know the economy that ?. In the office, I had a German secretary and an American secretary. If my calls had to be made someplace in Austria, my Austrian secretary did it. She was a native. If it was the rest of the thing, the American girl did all the calls. And this one weekend, we had a classmate, roommate of mine who was with SHAEF HQ in Paris. Now Eddie had always loved Paris. Paris to him was heaven. So when he heard he was going to be assigned to Paris he thought it was wonderful. I had been corresponding since I was 16 years old with a girl in Denmark and I had never met. And I had given Ed her name so one weekend he had gone on up to Copenhagen and wrote back and said Elsa was a beautiful blonde. And Elsa when we got over to Austria, said oh you must come up and spend Christmas with us in Copenhagen. So we were planning to go to Copenhagen for Christmas and we decided one weekend there was an offer for a 3 day trip to Paris. So off we went to Paris. And one thing we had been impressed with in Austria was mail service. We got mail twice a day and it took usually one day for mail to go back and forth with anyplace. So we didn't tell Ed we were coming. It was a very spur of the moment thing. So we go up to Paris to see Ed. I am thinking OK I had better call him up and say I am here. And they had given me a handful of coins and I haven't got the faintest idea of what they are worth or anything else. They were French, whatever French currency was besides the franc. But this would fit in the slot so I put one of these

in and operator came on speaking French strangely enough. And so being American I understood that if you just spoke loudly to them, they would understand. So I said I want to speak to Edward Layman at SHAPE HQ. Well she could tell by my voice that I was not French and she got somebody who could speak American. And this Sgt. came on and said do you want SHAPE HQ at Versailles or Fontainebleau? I had no idea there were two nor did I have any idea which one Ed was at. So I said I want to speak to Ed Layman. Oh, I am sorry, if you don't know his extension I can't connect you. Just between you and me, even if you knew it you couldn't speak to him, he is not here. I said OK, thank you. So we saw Paris. We went home and we got back to Salzburg and there was a note tacked to our door. A very angry note, I was here! Where were you, Elsa Marie. Well we had gone to Paris to see Elsa and Elsa had come from Copenhagen to Salzburg to see us and a day later we got her letter saying she was coming. It is the first time in the time we were there that I saw a delay in the mail. And Ed had gone to Copenhagen to see Elsa Marie. So that was that. But then we signed the peace treaty and I am thinking, Oh my job is over here. We have to get out. Where do I go? And we had orders to Italy and they cancelled them because they didn't have dependent housing. And we had orders to Germany and then they cancelled it because they didn't have dependent housing. I am getting closer and closer and closer to the deadline. In fact I was directing the closing ceremonies for closing the Austrian area command. And I am watching the ceremony with this eye with half a dozen RKO movie companies doing all the closing ceremonies. This eye, I am watching my furniture being taken out of my office building on the third floor and put on a truck to be hauled away. And I am thinking, okay we still haven't gotten our orders. And then we got orders which said the only place we can send you with housing is back to the US. So I immediately contacted Ft. Slocum and said hey I am coming home, can I come back to work. They said oh we are over strength and we haven't got room for you. So they came in, the Army transportation Corps does a marvelous job of packing. They are swift and efficient but not too practical. All of a sudden, one morning, there they were. Joan and I were still having breakfast and they said we are here to move you. They just took everything. They cleaned off the table and packed it and in the meantime we had gone up to Berchtesgaden and bought Bavarian China that we had been looking at for a long time. We said okay it is Rosenthal China and we are going to live on peanut butter and jelly for a while but we are going to have it. We couldn't afford even the whole service. We had a six or eight but not everything. And they packed it up. I was going to haul it down from the China shop to the post office which was about half a block away. I'm thinking if they don't hurry up I'm not going to make the post office. They finally brought up this carton. When we had been married, my parents had given us a set of English China. For 12 I think it was, it was in a carton about like this. And here I have got a crate bigger than this original carton for like half of it. So I staggered down to the post office, got in just as they closed it and came out and thought boy I am glad I got rid of that. I had shipped it back to my mother-in-law's address in Yonkers. Joan said they will have the other crate

for you in just a minute or two. I looked at her and said what do you mean the other crate? She said that was only half of it. So, sure enough, out they came with this other crate. So I got it on the bus to go back from Berchtesgaden to Salzburg. And I got down to Salzburg and I called up my driver. We were only supposed to use our drivers on official business. I called him up and said Heinz get the Jeep and don't even ask what it is for. Just meet me at the barn half and take me to the house. So he showed up with this crate and so that was part of our household goods that were being shipped. In the meantime I had written to my mother-in-law saying this crate is coming to you, it's China. So one day the truck comes up in front of her house and the driver bangs on the door, I got a crate for you. All right, bring it in please. So he shoves it off the end of the truck and my mother-in-law almost went through the roof. That's China, that's China! Lady I can help it, I got a delivery to make and off he goes. By the time we did ultimately get home and opened our crate, I think we could have dropped that crate off the top of the Empire State building and not have thing broken. Because it was so packed, every piece was wrapped, that's why it was so big. But here we are with another crate of China. Since we'd gone over and expected to be there for minimum of three years, I was going to be discharged over there and then take over the Army information agency when I was discharged, some of our furniture was still in transit coming over and coming this way. We got back and they said we have an opening for you at Fort Dix. I said oh no! So I went back to Fort Dix. Well it's a little different going back at the command level then at the infantry training basic company. And I was the adjutant general's files office. And there I worked with a Sgt. and several civilians. We got along fine.

So that is where I spent the rest of my time. While I was there I worked in the Trenton public library and I met another soldier at Fort Dix. I picked up one night and unless you are a librarian and or an artist, it means nothing to you; he was Ed Emberly, he has written several children's books. His family are artists and they lived down the street from us. Joan worked in the Trenton public library and that was where we completed our military service.

**Interviewer:** have you been in touch with any of those people since you been out of the service?

**(RB):** I stayed in touch with Eleanor until she died. I stayed in touch with Evelyn McCarthy until she died. I stayed in touch with the Emberly's until a few years ago when he was deceased.

**Interviewer:** thank you very much for telling us your story.