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Interviewers

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Culver Road Armory  
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**Q:** Sir where were you born?

**JR:** I was born in Italy, born in Reggio Calabria in Italy. Came here when I was five years old.

**Q:** Came to Rochester?

**JR:** Came to East Rochester.

**Q:** So you grew up in East Rochester?

**JR:** Yes I did.

**Q:** Went to school there?

**JR:** Went to school there and still there.

**Q:** When did you graduate from high school?

**JR:** I graduated from high school in 1938.

**Q:** So during the Depression?

**JR:** Yes.

**Q:** What was life like in Rochester at that point?

**JR:** Depression, strictly depression. That's another you know life experience, people that live through the world's worst depression, it's quite an experience especially for the mothers and fathers raising children . . . what a job.

**Q:** What was it like as a kid?

**JR:** It was a . . . as a kid of course, you had fun with not spending any money. There's no money to spend so you had fun with others, with other kids, with absolutely no money. You know you play street hockey and field baseball and football. I don't remember basketball because there's no outdoor courts then, but you had good times, you had good times with each other. The thing that amazes me today with the children today,

they have to pay for entertainment where we entertained ourselves, really it's true. I know my children, their average . . . people that they have to be entertained and you have to pay money, in our kid days we entertained ourselves, there was no money for entertainment.

**Q:** What did you do when you graduated from high school?

**JR:** I started off as a caddy, at the Monroe golf club and ended up working in the pro-shop and eventually became Assistant Pro. I went to Rochester Business College for a year and a half, and left that and then became assistant golf professional at Monroe Golf Club and that's been my life since. I'm a retired golf professional.

**Q:** Where were you when Pearl Harbor broke up?

**JR:** Pearl Harbor, I broke out when . . . where was I.

**Q:** Were you working?

**JR:** No no, I was . . .

**Q:** Were you in the service?

**JR:** Yes I was working, I went in the service in 1942. I enlisted at forty-two, Pearl Harbor was when . . . forty-one so [unclear] . . .

**Q:** You don't remember for certain?

**JR:** I remember, I remember the attack on Pearl Harbor, but not too much detail because I was involved with my job and the golf course there. Young, we didn't no war, who knew war in the United States before World War Two you know. World War One was so far back, so there was no war that was the biggest thing that happened except that, it sunk in as the days went along and they started to call people and you knew you had to go sooner and later. So when I finished my summer job at Monroe Golf Club as an Assistant Golf Professional I enlisted, because it was a matter of when do you go in and how'd you go in.

**Q:** You enlisted in the Army?

**JR:** Enlisted in the Army.

**Q:** Why did you choose the Army?

**JR:** I think it was because it was bland, I was not a sailor more than anything else. But they lied to us then, they said if you enlisted you would get a choice of service as well as what to do in that service. It wasn't true, you just got to land, whatever land you got in when you get into the service your inducted, that's the line you stayed for the rest of the service.

**Q:** Where did you do your training?

**JR:** In, I got in at Fort Dix Camp Campbell Kentucky. No no, Fort Smith Arkansas (Arkansas) first, then we maneuvered to Camp Campbell Kentucky Nashville.

**Q:** What was that like?

**JR:** What the maneuvers? Maneuvers in Tennessee, it was tough because it was in the hills. We were troubled with snakes and ticks and cold weather, it was you know in the winter. Living in tents . . . it was quite an experience. It was good experience for going overseas.

**Q:** Was this your first time going away from home, going into service?

**JR:** Yes, well no I was in Pittsburgh from East Rochester to Pittsburgh as a kid but, away from home per se yes.

**Q:** You acclimate yourself pretty well to it?

**JR:** You had to . . . didn't have a choice. You learned as you went. I'm a firm believer today that is the youth of today should have one or two years of service and experience. You'll learn so many things you know when you get into the service.

**Q:** You go through your maneuvers and what that was Tennessee. And are you assigned to a unit at that point?

**JR:** [Unclear] . . . I was assigned to a unit right after that. 14th Armored Division, and we went from there to Camp Campbell Kentucky, assembled New York overseas.

**Q:** What was your speciality?

**JR:** I was with the, with the 14th Armored Division, 94th Reconnaissance Battalion. I ended up in the headquarters company because I could type . . . I took up typing in high school because my handwriting was terrible so I could type and I could I went in there, and then from just being in there I went to more or less as an adjutant to the Commander because they brought in other typists, fast typist and so on. But I got in it because I could type.

**Q:** So you were with a headquarters company?

**JR:** Headquarters company, throughout.

**Q:** Your general duties were?

**JR:** Well, actually for the Commander of the battalion I was like his aide go for more or less and traveled with him, around him, so on I was not at a desk.

**Q:** When did you, where did you go when you went overseas?

**JR:** We were headed for Anzio beachhead and in the middle of the Mediterranean, the boat took a U-turn, no not an U-turn, a full turn. And we could see it turning, we didn't know what was happening because we're headed for Italy and when we, we did learn because we turn around and landed in Marseilles France . . . because Anzio beach had already been secured and so the boat with us was one of those Liberty ships you know, cork on a bathtub you know.

**Q:** What was life aboard on, like on the Liberty ship?

**JR:** It was tight a lot of us, I think the boat held something like eight or nine hundred and there was twelve hundred on the Liberty ship so it was tight.

**Q:** Food okay?

**JR:** Food was very good. It didn't bother me but it did bother some of the soldiers. And you know, they're up [unclear] . . . on deck throwing up all over the place so eventually it got to you. Everybody was throwing up all around, but [unclear] then and now, I survived it pretty good, food is good, food is good. Fantastic thanksgiving dinner I remember that because there was so much that you could eat because maybe at least thirty percent of the soldiers were sick so they didn't eat . . . [unclear] . . . it was quite a feast.

**Q:** You arrived in Marseilles . . . what did the unit do when it arrived?

**JR:** Well we stayed in Marseilles for about three weeks, with some combat training more or less. And getting acquainted with the country and the facilities, and overseas and then we went right up the Rhone Valley. Right up Rhone Valley all the way to where we hooked up with the Third Army and we crossed into Germany and far away across Germany north of Bavaria.

**Q:** What was the general mission of your unit?

**JR:** Reconnaissance for the 14th Armored.

**Q:** What kind of equipment were you using?

**JR:** Small tanks, real small tanks.

**Q:** Stewarts?

**JR:** Yes Stewarts. Small tanks and you know we traveled light because we were reconnaissance, always ahead of the heavy artillery. And of course you sent back signals to the artillery, the heavy units [unclear] . . .

**Q:** What was it, what was the experience like being out front?

**JR:** Scarey, you prayed a lot. Anybody that come out of the service who was in the front lines claimed that they didn't pray lied, everybody prayed, because you know it's scary. Shells falling all around you.

**Q:** What was your biggest concern?

**JR:** Safety, watching the enemy then we'll get into Germany, snipers you know. France wasn't bad there was no snipers in France. France was, actually I don't know if I should say this, but my impression of France was dirty, it was dirty really quite dirty. But we got in Germany and they were much cleaner, but it was much more dangerous in Germany because of the, the Germans you know we were, they were attacked in their, we were in their home, their country . . . destroying their country.

**Q:** What is your Commanding officer, who was he?

**JR:** Lieutenant General [unclear].

**Q:** Who was the Battalion Commander you were with, you were an aid right? And that was to a Battalion Commander?

**JR:** [Unclear].

**Q:** [Unclear], what was he like?

**JR:** He was certainly an Army, he was a Regular Army guy and he was strictly tough, he was strictly army. There was two types of people in the Army, the people that were enlisted for the duration and there were Regular Army people. The Regular Army people were sophisticated you know, they were the big guns Regular Army, you're just a visitor.

**Q:** Did [unclear] treat you well?

**JR:** Pretty good pretty good, but strictly to the code. All Regular Army were code people.

**Q:** Now going through France was, wasn't too bad?

**JR:** No going through France, fighting was not too bad at all. Not bad at all, it was winter and muddy and, you really got acclimated you know, you're going from United States you're on a ship and then all of a sudden you land in France and you're in the mud area and front lines and going through a war. You got acclimated real quick like going up to Rhone Valley and France and going across.

**Q:** On the move what were your general duties?

**JR:** We were doing the same thing we were taught to do. We were participating in advance reconnaissance work and we did that all the way up the Rhone Valley, and it was more or less of a practice because there was not much fighting in France if you remember. It was very little fighting in France, but the minute we got over the border of

France to Germany, then it was strictly if there were seven to ten miles ahead of the heavy artillery that you send signals back to. Tanks, artillery, long [unclear] . . .

**Q:** Your job as the adjutant, what the . . .

**JR:** Following him around to the various, see the 94th Battalion was made up of companies A, B, C, and D companies. So we know, traveled through the companies and take reports, see what, inspect them, answer questions, tell them where they are, how much they should know how much they shouldn't know [unclear]. Each company had a First Lieutenant who was in charge, and then a Staff Sergeant and then a Sergeant and so on. So it was, I was with him and most of the time more or less by his side. We get into Germany we separated a little bit and I got into the company's, company worried because we were in the heat of the battle more or less.

**Q:** You're assigned to the Third Army, what is your impression of Patton?

**JR:** Oh he was a hero, Patton he was a hero. You kidding he was a hero, you admired him because you read about him, I never did see him. We admired him because you read and hear the things that he did and he was quite an individual. And the word is that, when he finally got across the Rhine River he got on a bridge and took I, urinated in the river. And that's definitely a true story, you know things like that made him a real cowboy type of a general, respected highly, gutsy guy.

**Q:** Well I guess he liked spick and span [unclear] . . . Where did you cross into Germany, remember?

**JR:** No, because there's no big city all of a sudden we're in Germany. There's no city per se.

**Q:** Then the complexion of the war changed?

**JR:** Yes very much so, we went from more of less rehearsal into battle. And battle was in Germany [unclear].

**Q:** Can you remember your first engagement?

**JR:** Our first engagement was really shocking and very devastating. The inner core did a pretty good job and then with the times we went through this small town called Darmstadt and I'm riding in this jeep and it's this very small village like type of thing. I'm driving through and turn round the Jeep and look back and saw nothing but rubble, was nothing standing in the way of homes or buildings and I thought my god they're going to have to start take, another location and start Darmstadt all over again because it's nothing left of it. So when you saw that, if you weren't frightened before that you're frightened because of what you're going to be seeing, what you see and what you're going to be seeing, it was quite an experience seeing that. And then from then on, that's all you saw.

**Q:** What was your experience first time under fire?

**JR:** Scarey, under fire is hearing and almost feeling the sound of weapons and I'm not talking about the shot, I'm talking about the whistle a weapons. And that was scary because we were the reconnaissance and way up, we had to look behind us all the time and sideways [unclear]. Some pretty tough experiences there, really really tough experiences.

**Q:** Any amusing times?

**JR:** Amusing times, yes there was some amusing times believe it or not even in Germany. I don't know what I can say on camera here but I will tell you we're talking about amusing times. We were very close to the front lines, you could hear and . . . hear the whistle, hear the guns go off and so on. So we were in front so it was in the evening, it's more or less dark and you're going from you know, not foxhole fox hole, but trees and houses and shelter and protection. And all of a sudden I tripped over a fellow soldier, he was on the ground I thought he was hurt and I was what are you doing. He says get out of here, I realized he was having sex with a [unclear]. My god what are you doing I said, get out cannot you hear . . . kiddo go away go away. That's amusing if you want to call it amusing.

**Q:** What were you concerned about the most when you're in a combat situation?

**JR:** You're concerned about the artillery coming your way, you could just hear the whistle and then the bang. You see, you wouldn't hear it when it went off, you hear the whistle and the bang. That was the biggest fears, the artillery coming at you because you couldn't hear it until you heard the whistle and then it was there.

**Q:** Were mines a big concern?

**JR:** No, we didn't have any problems with the land mines, not at all. I'm talking about we're just a little north of Bavaria, there was heavier fighting north of us Luxembourg and through there. Our fighting was not nearly as heavy, and Bavaria is in south of Germany, and wasn't the heavy fighting that was up there so mines no mines.

**Q:** Snipers were a problem.

**JR:** Snipers were a terrible problem very much so.

**Q:** Was there any way you developed to deal with them, or just . . .

**JR:** No you didn't deal with snipers. We are talking about snipers now, people that were not in the service.

**Q:** Oh really, oh . . . civilians?

**JR:** Civilians of course. Yeah there would be, because the soldiers were in the front lines, you're worried about the civilians that are sniping at you, oh sure. You're invading their land, their women, their way of life, where they going to blame except the soldiers that are there.

**Q:** Do you, get involved in taking many German prisoners?

**JR:** We took yeah, we took prisoners.

**Q:** How is that generally handled, how were they treated?

**JR:** The Germans, what we didn't have it, we took them and send them back. We didn't do much with them, we just took them. We ran into youth, real youths you know at that time . . . I was getting near the end of the war per se because we were, when we were get into Germany we started to take prisoners of war they were young, there were young kids. Carrying weapons since, scared to death. They were more frightened than we were.

**Q:** Yeah, we usually billeted in buildings?

**JR:** Wherever they told us to billet, in Germany we billeted in buildings that we took. But the people that were in the building we let stay in the building . . . not put them on the street no.

**Q:** How that generally work out?

**JR:** Well they take a certain section of the building or house or whatever, and we take the other separate from them. And of course you ran into some experiences and situations to you know.

**Q:** Such as?

**JR:** Well, you know you're under tense situations like I say snipers and then even the people your living with didn't know if you were safe you know. [Unclear] . . . o'clock guarding and so we got into some German wine and this one particular building. The house that we were in and the, one of the Sergeant's got a little carried away on wine and the people that we were, the Germans we were staying with, there was a girl in there about 19 years old and he got [unclear] . . . fresh with her and he took her and I heard him taking her out and outside against her will and heard his name was [unclear]. And I said you know Eddie you know, what are you doing? That's all right, the hell what do you think we're going here, and he was all number one wined up, nerved up, no sex and who knows how long, stuff like that but anyway make a long story short I'm proud of this, I was able to save the girl from being raped. I got, I got to [unclear] and he let her go.

**Q:** He could had been shot for that?



**JR:** Oh yeah, but who is going to turn him in? To be shot by the German people easily you know, again like I say snipers so, you couldn't take their food you'd have to, they'd have to eat first and so on yeah.

**Q:** You were, you dealt with German civilians fairly frequently.

**JR:** Oh sure we did, all the way through and then after the war ended we were waiting for the boats to go to Japan and the war ended, and we still were waiting for boats to go home so we were there for a good six seven months, so we lived with them. Very scary . . . well sure you got snipers stuff . . . after the war? . . . more so after the war. Angry . . . we ruined their country.

**Q:** Were there a non-fraternization policy at that point?

**JR:** Absolutely.

**Q:** Did that work?

**JR:** Somewhat you know, but if you could cheat you, you'd do it and so on. I've got, we got a little more familiar with the German people because we gave them things, soap, chocolate, they didn't have food of anything. C-rations, an example is [unclear] after the war ended while the [unclear] got on and shot a deer, what are we going to do with it. People were billeted with, of course their separate from where we are, but [unclear] . . . they will cook it for you. So the small, small deer is a [unclear], they cooked it and of course they had to eat it first so, but it was the most delicious meat that we've ever had. Really they did such a job. Another cute story I'll tell you, along the way this is, now I've been probably five six or maybe, maybe a year since we had fresh eggs, all powdered eggs you know. So we get into this town is in this house and down the cellar one of the guys found what they called an hourglass, which was an egg preserver. Some kind of solution with fresh eggs preserve them, so oh my god they brought it up and then you know there's probably five six dozen eggs in there, so we started cooking, this one kid ate ten eggs.

**Q:** Were you assigned to this [unclear] for most of your tour?

**JR:** Yes right to the end.

**Q:** Once you're in Germany now, when you went between the companies were you basically passing information?

**JR:** On where they were, where their battalion was, where the Army was, how far back they were, where the location was, that was strictly what the Commander was doing . . . Passing back information from the companies from whatever they gather, and I mean when you went to the companies, it wasn't like a street walk you know like a Sunday walk. You creped around to where they were because again you know, your reconnaissance you're at the front lines.

**Q:** I understand from some recon guys, often they had no idea where they were. Just moving so fast and, that must have been a little unnerving.

**JR:** Sure it was unnerving, I said I'm lucky I'm here. In one incidence I was scheduled to go back and get some gasoline with two trucks and I was going to go with the jeep to guide him back to get some [unclear] on gasoline and the last minute the Commander said no he says I want you to do this. Let so and so take the jeep and they'll go. Well they were ambushed, and about half of them were, were killed and I could had been right there. You don't, you don't want to talk about those things because it's close call but it did happen so you're lucky, [unclear] . . .

**Q:** So you feel you're fairly, pretty luck during the . . .

**JR:** Oh no, lucky. Half of them didn't make it, they were ambushed. Now mind you, we're in the front lines and they were going back for gasoline and this happened in between, they were ambushed in between so the Germans were like the, whats going on right now in Afghanistan, they would hide in places and they're just plain, they had two machine guns and just ripped them apart and half of them were gone. That was the worst, you say what was your worry, you're scared you know.

**Q:** What was your general opinion of the German soldier?

**JR:** German soldiers mean. Very very mean, arrogant. Very arrogant, they were ego, high ego people, cold. After the war the reason that the American soldiers did so well with the German women was because the German soldier or the German men were a cold-blooded people evidently. Well the women they know that the GIs went in there and they romanced the girls, told them how beautiful they were and so on. They romanced them so they made out with all kinds of women after the war. We'll always with an eye behind you even with . . .

**Q:** What was your equipment like, your sidearms . . .

**JR:** Yeah sidearms, M1 rifles.

**Q:** Pretty good equipment?

**JR:** Yeah updated, the latest that there was. The M1 was the best rifle at that time, P38 sidearm.

**Q:** You usually traveled in a jeep?

**JR:** Yes.

**Q:** How was that on?

**JR:** There's a small machine gun in the back of it.

**Q:** .30 cal?

**JR:** Yeah.

**Q:** Mounted?

**JR:** Yeah.

**Q:** What they use a two or three guys per jeep?

**JR:** Three . . . two in the front and the machine guy.

**Q:** So there's a driver . . .

**JR:** A driver, passenger you know, sort of a shotgun, then the machine gunner.

**Q:** What was your general duty in the jeep?

**JR:** As a, shotgun.

**Q:** Okay and that person generally over was running the operation?

**JR:** No no, the driver was running it.

**Q:** And the, was he usually a Sergeant?

**JR:** Yes, Master Sergeant.

**Q:** You were a Sergeant at that point?

**JR:** I was Sergeant at that point.

**Q:** About how many engagements were you in or because the nature what you're doing it . . .

**JR:** Countless you know, what's an engagement. When you see small fire, major, semi-major?

**Q:** As a reconnaissance unit, your general mission was to find the enemy . . . and then what did you do once you found them?

**JR:** Radio back. You radio back to the artillery, the Air Corps the. What do they call those planes, the spy planes, the small planes, Hell Fires or else . . . (spotting planes). Communicate between them and the artillery, and tanks [unclear] . . . eight ten miles like I say seven eight miles back.

**Q:** Usually when you ran into the enemy were you to engage them or just . . .

**JR:** No, only for protection, only to defend yourself. As a matter of fact, were definitely not supposed to know that we're there so we didn't engage unless we had to. Of course you had, once they spotted you, you had to fire back but that was not our position to fight. That's what it says reconnaissance.

**Q:** Do you run into German armor much?

**JR:** No, [unclear] . . . they were back further. We heard it, we didn't see too much of it. See I did most of our travel at night . . . oh sure. Because like I said there's no mines so we had to be careful and quiet and , but during the day you'd study the maps where the companies would be going and the Commander would taken, the Battalion Commander would had assigned each company to go this way, go that way. So that in the evening, we made those and then take positions for daylight so you could really see what was going on. But you found your position at night, and then you would be able to send the spotting back to the artillery, tanks, planes.

**Q:** What was it like operating at night?

**JR:** Somewhat very scary because you didn't travel on the highways, that;s the worst place to be. So you know you have to be careful about getting lost and getting away from your battalion . . . that was the worst thing but they kept in touch with the radio and the radios worked great, they were great.

**Q:** Was there a radio for each vehicle, or . . .

**JR:** There was just about a radio for each vehicle yeah , had to be yeah. There was a radio for each vehicle.

**Q:** Navigating at night was kind of tricky?

**JR:** Definitely tricky, as well as reconnaissance.

**Q:** Get lost very often?

**JR:** We got lost but with radio contact you know, you could find your way and most of the time. There was lost, there was some loss of personnel because they got lost and ran into ambushing.

**Q:** The jeep that you were in, did you work together for most of the campaigns? Were you with the same two guys in the jeep?

**JR:** Yeah, stayed together the same jeep yeah. We went all through, all through Germany. The war ended and we pass on Austria and I was still with the same jeep.

**Q:** What were the other two guys like?

**JR:** What were they like? You'd got along because you have to look out for each other. Their excellent.

**Q:** Do you have any close friends in the unit?

**JR:** Everybody was a close friend . . . The one kid was from New York City, Bentley his name was, and of course he never been out of New York City so a New Yorker doesn't

know anything about the world except New York, as a matter of fact he had never seen a real cow . . . That's right never seen a real cow, Bentley his name was . . . So it's entertaining because he was strictly a New Yorker period.

**Q:** How were replacements treated, guys coming into the unit?

**JR:** We welcomed them, they were welcomed. We didn't get too many of them but when we got them in, they were very welcomed in. Of course they were scared to death you know, [unclear] . . . when they were we got replacements until after the war, they knew that we're in the heat of battle so they were frightened so they depended on our direction very heavily.

**Q:** You didn't have a high turnover of personnel in the unit?

**JR:** No, fortunately.

*Tape is changed*

**Q:** Did you get into any of the concentration camps?

**JR:** We saw some of the atrocities after the war . . . Terrible memory terrible. Saw some of the, saw one concentration camp after the war, terrible.

**Q:** What was your impression?

**JR:** Cattle, people living like cattle. Filth, terrible. You wouldn't, you don't believe that human being were in these barracks type of thing.

**Q:** Did the, in that you lived with German civilians for a while, were they aware of what was going on in terms of the concentration camps?

**JR:** No, no they didn't. See, the average German person they didn't want the war, they wanted no part of it. So that's what was difficult, your invading some innocent people that didn't want you there, didn't know what you're doing there because the war was really with Hitler and his army. Well the farmers were not the army, and that's what made it difficult. The German people were, they were bitter because they didn't want this, they didn't want any part of the war.

**Q:** What was your general impression of the German people?

**JR:** Easy going people, [unclear] . . . they were arrogant even the farmers, they were arrogant. And well you know, they were the, Hitler had them believing in that they were the world. That's why they went to war because of him thinking that Germany was the world.

**Q:** Do you think that your training back in the states was good training for what you encountered?

**JR:** Not bad not bad not, not not the best because it's a different ball game you know. Maneuvers are trial and error type of things, there was no trial and error for [unclears]. They learned a lot from that war.

**Q:** What did you learn?

**JR:** I learned to stay out of the war, war that we should not be in wars, overseas. Now we're looking for war here, I learned that you know let them live their lives, as long as they don't bother us just let them be. [Unclear] never going to happen, never going to happen.

**Q:** When the war was over, you stayed in Germany for how long?

**JR:** About eight nine months, occupational force.

**Q:** What was the general duties of the occupational forces?

**JR:** Actually nothing, you kept peace. You still had your weapons and waiting, we're waiting for to go home. I was there for [unclear] . . . first we're waiting to go to Japan and war ended and now waiting for the boats to take us home so I really was not there that much as occupational force because we'd already been in for four years. They were bringing in all the new occupational people, so they didn't have too much experience. Nine months it was during the summer small, very small [unclear] . . . yeah [unclear] is this name of this small town like actually like a little bigger than East Rochester, a little twice the size of Camp [unclear]. So was easy going but you still had to be on guard, you had to be on guard . . . oh sure.

**Q:** Were the German soldiers coming back?

**JR:** No I didn't experience that, [unclear] . . . was strictly these civilians at that time. See maybe you'd invaded their peaceful life . . . there was quite a bit of sniping.

**Q:** Really, even after the war?

**JR:** Oh yeah, oh hell yes. It was where we were anyway.

**Q:** Did you catch many of the snipers?

**JR:** No, mostly at night.

**Q:** The town was with small farming?

**JR:** Small farms small town, about eighteen miles north of Munich, which was a big city. So it's just a small town, small town [unclear]. And Bavaria you know is in this mountainous and farm and so on, I got to I had this experience of going to Obersalzberg.

**Q:** What was that like?

**JR:** Which is the crow's nest of the mountain and in Bavaria where Hitler built. And this was, it's amazing because this man built an elevator right in the heart of the mountain, stone all the way up. We had to walk it and it's about a mile and a half up there, a tough walk. But when you got up there, you see the sleigh out because that this whole building here Obersalzberg they called it, and you could see that this man felt that he was on top of the world because it was clouds beneath us and you could see as far as the eye could see. And if this guy had put his mind to the benefit of humanity rather than what he did, they would have had a leading leading country, you should see what he did there in this mountain. Amazing and up there were officers men and we had these meetings and so on, it was beautiful. It's so high up and elevator is still going you know, tourists still want to see it.

**Q:** Did you experience any problems being Italian in the Army?

**JR:** No, no or with blacks none. I'm talking about overseas.

**Q:** What about stateside?

**JR:** Stateside there was, really not too much because there was no time. Your training you know you're going to go over. In our outfit, there was no animosity toward religion, nationality, or color, not at all. Mind you now, you're in the front lines with a guy that's looking out for you, you're looking up for him, so you know bullshit on what color he is or nationality he is, never entered the picture at all, absolutely none at all. Again front lines now, know about the states after the war before the war, no experience with it.

**Q:** They were in the point system weren't they? To get out you had to have so many points or you weren't . . .

**JR:** That didn't bother me because I was in for four years so my points were [unclear] . . . those Liberty ships were not a joy ride you know.

**Q:** You took a Liberty ship back too?

**JR:** Sure.

**Q:** Where were you discharged?

**JR:** Fort Dix.

**Q:** You came right back, [unclear] . . . once your time was up you just shipped back to Dix

**JR:** Ship went back to Dix yeah.

**Q:** No parade?

**JR:** No, no . . . glad to get out.

**Q:** Your discharged Dix, and then would you go come directly home?

**JR:** \*nods head

**Q:** What did you do when you get home?

**JR:** Got back in the golf business?

**Q:** Right away?

**JR:** Oh yeah, immediately. That's my profession, [unclear] . . .

**Q:** You stayed professional golfer to retired?

**JR:** Since then, say that again?

**Q:** You stayed a professional golfer till you retired?

**JR:** Yes yes yes. I played golfing in France during the, right after the war they had a [unclear] . . . in Paris at the [unclear] . . . country club.

**Q:** Oh really what was, tell us about that.

**JR:** So we, well it was after the war and they, well we're still there as what they say was . . . occupation with occupation they started to hold events to entertain us and so if your a golfer they knew I was a golfer so I qualified. Took a jeep up to Paris from Munich and played at the ETO Open at the [unclear] . . . country club in Paris, and that was quite a treat.

**Q:** Really, they treat you pretty well?

**JR:** Oh yeah.

**Q:** How'd you do?

**JR:** Just fair you know, and didn't hit a golf ball for four years so it's. You didn't get three days for practice either.

**Q:** Do you remember who won that tournament?

**JR:** Yeah Mangrum, Ray Mangrum, Lloyd Mangrum. Lloyd Mangrum with a little mustache, short guy . . . [unclear] . . . he'd be the guy from Pittsburgh.

**Q:** They're both Army?

**JR:** Yes, well wait a minute no wait a minute no wait a minute . . . Lloyd Mangrum was not Army . . . no no no, he was, he was in the Air Force. Yeah he was in the Air Force. [unclear] . . . he was a gunner in the Air Force, the little guy. I don't know what the other fellow was from Pittsburgh, but Ray Mangrum was telling us about his brother Lloyd, I mean Lloyd Mangrum is telling us about his brother Ray, whos back in the states and could play in tournaments and he didn't, he couldn't had made a lot of money and his



brother was fighting in the war and he was really teed off at him. He says they get a lazy brother won't play in tournaments he could win them all. And so he, he was a professional golfer Ray Mangrum and he won that tournament in playoff. Nice experience yeah.

**Q:** What was the course like?

**JR:** Not bad, it wasn't [unclear] season, France wasn't [unclear]. The center of France far as we could see was not hit by the war, just the beachhead you know, the landing up North. But Paris wasn't hit at all, you know.

**Q:** So that was quite a nice experience, that is the golf tournament. Any other, did you get to do, was that the only time you were able to golf while you were . . .

**JR:** Only time we ever golfed. We saw a couple of golf courses that were well, murdered by the Air Corp, murdered by the Air Corp. Had another very pleasant experience, born in Italy Reggio Calabria which is on, on the toe of Italy and so we changed Commanders by this time known as this Commander [unclear]. And he and I told him you know we're waiting for the boats I'd like to go down to my, where I was born. And he says well I don't know you know, we're so worried about sniping and so on but I talked him into it and me and Chester, Chester [unclear] . . . got a jeep, loaded it with gasoline, food, and some ammunition and we took off from Munich, drove all the way down to the Brenner Pass, and it ended right there. The Air Force murdered Brenner Pass, couldn't get back, had to go back home.

**Q:** Oh dear, so you never got to Italy at that point?

**JR:** No, well Brenner Pass you know, they just destroyed it the Air Corp destroyed it.

**Q:** What was your, what's your general impression of your military experience? Or is it what you earlier . . .

**JR:** Just what I said earlier I wouldn't do it again for a million dollars or I wouldn't take a million dollars for it really. Especially [unclear], I didn't have much military experience . . . You know enlisted at Camp Camp, Fort Smith Arkinsaw (Arkansas), off to Fort Campbell overseas. So my four years I would say I've had probably less than a year of service experience per se. But they wanted us to stay on it, and stay on as and join, enlist this Regular Army . . . I didn't do it.

**Q:** Did you go in the Reserves?

**JR:** A lot of them did, a lot of them did, some of them did.

**Q:** Did you take advantage of the GI Bill at all?

**JR:** No, I was offered it, was offered it.

**Q:** You went right back to the golf, so the job was waiting for you?

**JR:** Yeah well, sure it's still, golf was starved as much as any other industry during the war so there was that the competition and golf professionals better there is now. So I went right back into Monroe Country Club and I went to get my own job at the [unclear] Country Club in [unclear] New York, stayed there twenty-four years and opened up another course in a small town up here and [unclear] for five years and then I retired.

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**Q:** So golf's been pretty good to you.

**JR:** Golf was very good to me.

**Q:** Well thank you very much sir, we appreciate the interview.

**JR:** -

**Q:** Okay hold it up or just like that I can zoom in on it . . . Now tell us what this is.

**JR:** I'm being awarded the Bronze Medal from the General Smith.

**Q:** Wow what the, why did you win the Bronze Star?

**JR:** Active duty, front lines.

**Q:** Very nice.

**JR:** Yes, quite an honor.

**Q:** You still have it I hope.

**JR:** Well sure.

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