

Fort Hunt Oral History
P.O. Box 1142
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Interview with Richard P. Kleeman
by Brandon Bies, Vince Santucci, Steve Kleinman and Mark Jacobsen
September 13, 2007

INTERVIEWER: We're all set to start. Today is Thursday, September 13, 2007. This is part of the National Park Service Fort Hunt [00:14] Oral History Project. This is Park Service Historian, Brandon Bies. I'm accompanied by Park Service George Washington Memorial Parkway Chief Ranger Vince Santucci, Air Force Colonel Steve Kleinman, and Dr. Mark Jacobsen. And we'll go ahead and get started with the interview with Mr. Kleeman here at his home. And if we could just get started just by you stating your name and any information you think is pertinent for us to know about you such as when and where you were born and a little bit about growing up.

RICHARD KLEEMAN: I'm Richard P., as in Peter, Kleeman, K-L-E-E-M-A-N. And I was born in New York City, June 24, 1923 [01:00], which makes me, I guess, something over 80. I had various early schooling, so my original home in White Plains was right across the street from the school where I started out, but that was a long time ago. All Roger S. [phonetic] and school. I went on later on to prep school at Choate School in Wallingford, Connecticut, which is now also now Choate Rosemary Hall combined with a women's school, and I graduated from Choate in 1940. Went to Harvard [01:46] in the class of 1944, and all the relevant part of this story that really started at Harvard because I took a double course in Japanese [02:00] at Harvard [02:03] from Professors [Serge] Elisseeff [02:06] and [Edwin] Reischauer [02:07]. And Reischauer, you'll probably recognize as our former ambassador to Japan [02:13], great Japanese [02:15] expert. And Elisseeff [02:17], who I guess was Russian-born was also a Japanese teacher and grammarian. And they taught us the whole course, and this was the time when we were at war with

Japan [02:40], and the best advice I could get was it would be helpful to have a language and have to a well-taught language. So I did this with the two professors and then went on from Harvard [03:00] into the service, and because of my Japanese [03:07] language background, I was sent, I believe, first off I think at least to Camp Savage [03:13], Minnesota, which was a language that had -- it'd been an old folks home that was converted to a language training center just outside of Minneapolis. And --

INT: If we could just pause real quick there. When you were at Harvard [03:32] -- so your experience in foreign languages was two courses in Japanese [03:38]?

RK: Yeah, double course.

INT: Okay, but you were a double -- what was your major when you were at Harvard [03:44]?

RK: American History.

INT: Okay.

FEMALE SPEAKER: You had other languages because you grew up partly in Switzerland and --

RK: But the service sent around interviewers for language programs, and I was interviewed, I guess [04:00], at Harvard [04:02] by Commander [Albert] Hindmarsh [04:05] of the Navy and by -- who was it for the Army, I don't know. Anyway --

INT: But you were not in the service at all at this point. You were a civilian --

RK: No, I was a civilian who got interviewed as a possible service member, and I guess they thought that the Japanese [04:31] language course may be a good candidate for Camp Savage [04:37] and --

FS: Wasn't Michigan first?

RK: No.

FS: Because I thought Michigan was first.

RK: When I joined the Army, I guess I was first assigned to the University of Michigan [04:51]. Not an ASTP course, but a Japanese [04:57] language course, I guess operated by MISLS (Military Intelligence Service Language School) [05:00] under Dr. Professor Joel Yamagiwa [05:03], and you'll probably run across him because I think he is a long-time expert in Japanese and teaching it. And I thought --

INT: Do you know anything about his background?

RK: Not a whole lot, no. I'm sure Harvard [05:23] would have records. He was one of the Harvard faculty. And I assume he was a native of Japan [05:31] because I recall he's spoke pretty good English and taught a regular course. He's also written some textbooks I think and crime reports.

INT: But he was a civilian instructor --

RK: Yeah. Right.

INT: -- he wasn't military.

RK: [affirmative] So, after I -- well, as I say, I was sent first to the University of Michigan [05:55] by the MIS [06:00], and there were about 150 of us in one class, but they separated out a group of 35 who I suppose seemed to have better prospects for the language or something, and this of group of 75 went from Ann Arbor [06:26] to -- where did we go? Fort Snelling? No. I got a friend who could tell me right away because he was there, but anyway, a group of 35 stuck together as officer candidates, and eventually we were commissioned as Second Lieutenants, and, I guess that's about it except that [07:00] I went into the service and Colonel Archibald [07:07] -- what was -- Colonel -- I can't think of his name right now, but he was what we call the BIJ [07:24], I think, "the

Born in Japan.” And he was skilled in Japanese [07:29] and interviewed me and I was, I guess, assigned from, well, I guess, first from college to Camp Savage [07:40], and eventually the sequence of -- it fades on me. My wife was trying to get me to recall the sequence of posts, but I went [08:00] -- I guess probably I went overseas after Camp Savage [08:06] and after being commissioned and head of the language team.

INT: And I'm sorry to interrupt, but can we talk for a little bit about Camp Savage [08:17]? What you remember about that and what specifically you were trained in?

RK: Well, we were -- it was just outside Minneapolis. As I say, it had been a home for old men, and the Army converted it to Intelligence Service School. We were taught by either Japanese [08:38] or Japanese-Americans [08:40], and this group of 35 of us was both segregated out and we moved on a little faster than some of the others. And I'm trying to think now. We went from Savage [08:57], I guess, to the University of Michigan [09:00]. I guess that's the way it went. And we were housed together in a dorm in the Michigan Law School in Ann Arbor [09:14] and took Dr. Yamagiwa's [09:17] course, and I don't remember much else connected with the service.

INT: Do you remember what sort of things they were training you? Were they doing mock interrogations there, or was it just more studying the language?

RK: It was sort of a triple specialization: interrogation, interpretation and -- interrogation, interpretation, and translation; you know, and some of us got very, very good in Japanese [09:56]. And I would not include myself among them, but I still have [10:00] one friend who I consider a real expert, got very good at it, and I see him now and again. And you may have run across him, but he never got to Alexandria.

INT: Was he at Tracy [10:16]?

RK: No, I don't think so. I think he was at Savage [10:23]. And then he went to something called JICPOA [10:27] in Honolulu [10:29], a Joint Interrogation Center, I guess it's called, Pacific Ocean Area, and I don't know if your interest extends to somebody like that, but I consider him far more skilled in Japanese [10:45] than I was.

INT: Are you still in contact with him?

RK: Oh, yeah.

INT: Great.

RK: We have lunch once a month.

INT: So, does he live in the Washington area?

RK: Yeah, he lives in Silver Spring.

INT: Great.

RK: I'm seeing him next week. I told him about this [11:00] interview, and he had nothing to do really with 1142 [11:06], but on the other hand, there was a guy, George Totten [11:16], T-O-T-T-E-N -- I don't know if that's a name that's come up in your search or not, but he was a classmate of mine in prep school. He went to Columbia, I guess, for graduate work and then went into the Japanese [11:37] language program. His first wife was a Japanese woman, and he got extremely good at it. I've just been in touch with him, and he's now in graduate school, I guess, and still working on his Japanese [11:56], and if you wanted to see him, I could direct you to him [12:00]. But as I say, I don't think he was ever at 1142 [12:04].

INT: Okay.

FS: When did you go to Hawaii? Because that was in there. On your way to overseas --

RK: Yeah, I went to Fort Shafter [12:15] in Hawaii. This was on the way really to being assigned to a more permanent post because from there I went to the headquarters of 24th Corps [12:27]. We went overseas, we went into Leyte, the Philippines [12:34]. And all this preceded my coming back to the States and going eventually to 1142 [12:47]. The funny thing about it is I don't have much recollection of whether it's 1142 was something I sought out. Probably not. Probably something they thought I should be doing [13:00] because it involved interviewing prisoners. And all materials you sent me, I think I said this before, they talk about interrogating German [13:11] prisoners of war [13:12] at 1142 [13:14]. Well, I never saw a German prisoner of war. We did do some interrogations of Japanese [13:21]. I think, from dim recollection, I think a Japanese admiral was a prisoner of war [13:27], but as you probably know, the Japanese were not all that eager to become prisoners of war [13:35], and they would do most anything to avoid it, so for an admiral, this was an extreme shame. My only recollection is that he was not happy with his status, but I think he had a reasonable relationship in interrogation.

INT: And I definitely would like to concentrate a great deal on 1142 [14:00] --

RK: Yeah.

INT: -- but if we can just have a little bit more detail to some of your earlier experiences -- from your recollection, you went from -- you think you went from Savage [14:12] and then to Michigan [14:14] for a while, and then from there you went overseas?

RK: Yeah.

INT: Okay. And what exactly -- so you went overseas before you went to Tracy [14:24], then?

RK: I think so. Yeah, I think so. We went overseas to Fort Shafter [14:31] in Honolulu [14:32].

INT: Okay.

RK: And it was, I guess, an intelligence center there, and I think there -- we were there awaiting assignment to language teams, and finally I was assigned to, I guess, the 306 and 307th team headed by a First Sergeant George [Takabayashi] [15:00] -- oh, lord -- he became a public official in Hawaii. That'll come back to me. I'm sure I have it someplace now. But the only other person I still see besides the gent I had just mentioned to you is what's this sort of star linguist on our team. I was assigned to a team of 10, and Warren Tsuneishi [15:38] who used to be in the Library of Congress, the head of the Oriental Division, and he's still around. He's not terribly well, doesn't see terribly well, but it might be that you want to talk to Warren [15:53]. I don't know if that's a name you ran into.

INT: And he -- these are people from your interrogation team --

RK: Yeah.

INT: -- for overseas work?

RK: Yeah [16:00].

INT: So was it a mix of Nisei [16:06] and Anglos, or were you the -- were you the only --

RK: I was the only Anglo. No, there was a mix of -- I thought you were going to say Nisei [16:14] and Issei [16:16]. If you're familiar with that distinction. Nisei are the second generation. Issei are the first.

INT: Right.

RK: Some of them were more skilled than Japanese [16:28] or in translation than others, but Warren Tsuneishi [16:31] stood out because he came out of the Library of Congress. As

I said, I think he was an assistant librarian in charge of Oriental area and he could maybe tell you more, although I think his memory is probably getting pretty faint too.

INT: And so were you there -- were they all enlisted?

RK: Yeah, the whole team was enlisted.

INT: But at this point, you had received your commission?

RK: Yeah.

INT: Okay.

RK: And that was sort of the name of the game [17:00] that we were going to be commissioned as team leaders, and you probably know or recall that the time of Pearl Harbor [17:12] and thereafter, the Japanese [17:15] were still suspect, not very well treated and were sent into relocation camps [17:24], so-called. And Warren [17:29] went through that, and I guess many of the others, all the guys from Hawaii, I don't think had to go to relocation camp [17:39]. I think they were singled out especially, but Takabayashi [17:47], he was my team leader who became, as they say, a political leader in Honolulu [17:56].

INT: And when you say a team leader, he was the sergeant [18:00] in charge of all of the --

RK: Yeah, and you know, I was the officer in charge of the team. Well, then we were assigned -- that team was assigned to the 24th Corps [18:17] Headquarters headed by General [John R.] Hodge [18:19] and we went overseas to Leyte [18:22] and invasion of Leyte. And at some point not too long after that, I was diagnosed with having a case of battle fatigue, work or strain or who knows what, and was sent back to the States and wound up at Phoenixville, Pennsylvania in the hospital for a while under treatment from the psychiatric ward, but I was very soon discharged from that and returned to duty

[19:00] and sent out, I guess, to Fort Snelling [19:04]. And as I recall there at Fort Snelling I edited a newsletter for the Japanese Language Group [19:15]. And I guess my memory sort of lapses there, except that in there I'm sure I went to 1142 [19:27], and your records show better than I recall when the dates that I was there.

INT: Do you --

FS: When was Tracy [19:40]? Tracy was in there somewhere.

RK: Tracy [19:44] was in there someplace. Yeah. Tracy [19:49] was a converted hotel -- Byron Hot Springs Hotel [19:54], and we did interrogations there. In my case, all Japanese [20:00], but I don't think we had an awful lot of prisoners there or an awful lot of work there. I can't remember the steps from Tracy [20:09] to Alexandria.

INT: Do you remember that you were at Tracy sometime prior to coming to 1142 [20:16]?

RK: I think so. I think so, yeah. I think 1142 was probably my last post. And --

INT: Can you talk a little bit then about -- what you remember about Tracy [20:27] first? You mentioned it being a converted hotel.

RK: Yeah.

INT: Were there lots of Japanese [20:32] prisoners there or just a small number?

RK: No, I think there were a few. I couldn't begin to tell you how many. Nor do I remember much about interrogations there. I don't think my team was there at all. I think I joined the team when I was overseas -- 24th Corps [20:55], but this is all pretty hazy [unintelligible] [21:00]. War Department Records will probably show more than I can remember, but I'm trying to recollect what sequence happened.

STEVE KLEINMAN: Were you ever at Camp Ritchie [21:22] at all?

RK: Never got to Ritchie. Richie [21:24] was outer intelligence, and we knew about Ritchie [21:29] and we knew what went on there, but I was never there.

SK: And Camp Savage [21:33] was where they had some sort of interrogation training; the part of the interpretation and translation?

RK: [affirmative]

SK: Do you recall anything about that? How long it was or what the focus was? How they taught you?

RK: My impression is that I may have been there six months, but my friend Zaslo [phonetic] could probably be more specific than I, if you chose to interview him [22:00]. He never got to 1142 [22:03]. Is -- that list that you sent me, is Totten [22:10] on there by any chance?

INT: Say the name again?

RK: Totten.

INT: I can check it.

[talking simultaneously]

INT: George Totten [22:18]?

RK: I don't know any [unintelligible]

INT: Was he enlisted or an officer?

RK: He became an officer, and he had a good deal of Japanese [22:30] background. As I say, his wife is Japanese and they did Japanese dances and stuff, but I'm not sure he ever got into 1142 [22:41].

SK: Had he been a missionary by chance or part of a missionary family that lived in Japan [22:45] prior to the war, George Totten [22:47]?

RK: There are a lot of people who grew up in Japan who were missionaries or sons were missionaries, and I had no such background, but if I had any background [23:00] at all, it was I grew up speaking French in a school in Switzerland, and so I got pretty good in French, and I guess maybe they thought that would help with Japanese [23:12]. I'm not quite sure why.

INT: You made the comment that you knew about Camp Ritchie [23:20].

RK: Yeah.

INT: You referred to it as a counter-intelligence camp.

RK: Yeah.

INT: What exactly did you know about it?

RK: Just that it was just outside of Baltimore, I guess. And they trained counter-intelligence officers, and I guess some of our people went to Camp Ritchie [23:37], but I didn't. I never really got there.

INT: And when you say "your people," do you mean your people that went over the Pacific or your people that went to 1142 [23:47]?

RK: The people that went through the Japanese language programs [23:51]. They could well have gone from Camp Savage [23:53] to Camp Ritchie [23:54], but I don't know who did. It's just that Ritchie was a familiar [24:00] name to us. The chief guy I remember, and I've written something about it in letters, there's a Lieutenant Mort Cooke [24:13], C-O-O-K-E and I don't think he's on your list, but he and I were stationed together, I guess, in the early days of 24th Corps [24:25], I believe. Mortimer Cooke [24:31].

INT: Do you have more details about Tracy [24:36]?

INT: Yeah, just a few more follow-ups about Tracy, and you may or may not recall, but again, anything about the types of Japanese [24:45] prisoners who were there. If they were Japanese officers or enlisted; what their duties might -- if they were all Army? Any Navy or Air Force?

RK: I think they were mostly officers. I think these camps were small enough [25:00] and select enough so that they probably picked prisoners to go places like Tracy [25:09] and 1142 [25:11]. As I say, my vague recollection is of interviewing an admiral at 1142. We didn't -- I didn't see any Japanese [25:25] enlisted men that I remember.

INT: Okay.

RK: A few officers and that's about it.

INT: And at Tracy [25:33], was that -- were all the prisoners Japanese, or were there any other -- were there any German [25:37] prisoners that you remember?

RK: Any prisoners that were there were Japanese [25:42]. How many that there were, I don't know. It was probably something of a secret. They probably didn't want us to know. You'd see them one at a time. You'd see them exercising or something, but you would not deal with the whole group [26:00].

SK: Were the prisoners held near the hotel, that converted hotel at Camp Tracy [26:04]?

RK: Yeah, did they live there? Yeah.

INT: So the interior -- the staff lived in the hotel itself?

RK: Oh, I think so, yeah. Post Office Box 651 [26:18], Tracy [26:19], California and I think it was -- I think we lived at the hotel. I think prisoners were kept there in some form of lock-up.

SK: The interrogations were handled in a room within the hotel?

RK: Yeah. That's my recollection.

INT: How -- the interrogations -- and, again, realizing we're still speaking about Tracy [26:46], how would it be conducted at Tracy? Would it be one-on-one? Would you be there with a Japanese-American [26:54]?

RK: Usually, it's two-on-one, yeah.

INT: Okay.

RK: Yeah, Japanese-American [27:00] and the -- hakujin, as we used to call the white guys. I suppose that originated maybe back in the days of distrust, when they didn't trust the Japanese-Americans [27:13] but it was never experience of mine. I found them all great people and very trust worthy. But that's the way the interrogations would usually go, both for language purposes and for sort of cross-checking.

SK: So Issei [27:33] or Nisei [27:33], they pretty much took the lead on the interrogation, and the gaijin in the room would --

RK: I think so, yeah. As I recall, anyway, I think we probably got some guidance from intelligence officers in the field as to what they wanted to know, but I don't have anything very specific that I recall.

INT: Did you remember having a great deal of information about the prisoner [28:00] already ahead of time, or would you just find out this information for everything the first time?

RK: Well, I can't say I remember specifically, but my guess would be at this point, it was they come with a pretty good rundown of who they are, they interviewed various war echelons, and I assume some sort of vitae was prepared with each draft. I can't specifically recall.

INT: Do you have any sense what the turnaround time per se was -- and what I mean by that is how long it took for someone actually being captured until they made it to Tracy [28:45]?

RK: Oh. Well, my feeling would be that it would not be short. It would take quite a while for the transition to take place. And how they were selected for Tracy [29:00], I don't know, but it seemed to me they were probably people that they expected to have some valuable intelligence. But I wasn't really on that end. I found them there but I didn't [unintelligible] selecting.

SK: From your recollections of the interrogations that you participated in, did those sources appear to have information of value?

RK: Do I recall getting information --

SK: Were they forthcoming or was it difficult to get it?

RK: I don't recall any prisoners we interviewed who were not forthcoming at that point. Maybe the questions were not probing enough. I don't know, but this is pretty dim as to what we did find out except I have no recollections of unpleasantness or friction or anything.

SK: [affirmative]

INT: Any other questions about Tracy [29:59] or anything [30:00]?

INT: Do you remember any of the officers in command above you?

RK: At Tracy? Well, Colonel [Zenas] Bliss [30:13] was, I think at 1142 [30:15] and that's not --

INT: Bliss [30:19] was at Tracy [30:20] for a time period as well.

RK: Is that right?

INT: Yes.

RK: Are you telling me that?

INT: Yes, I -- yeah, he was. So you may not be -- if you remember him being at Tracy [30:27], you may be correct.

RK: Yeah. As I recall, a Captain Sullivan [30:33] seemed to be -- we worked with [unintelligible]. I thought Tracy [30:39], but I don't recall any other names. I've been trying to recall the name that slipped away from me. I told you Takabayashi [30:57] was my team leader [31:00] and Warren Tsuneishi [31:02] was not too far away. Was kind of one of the stars of our team. We had a team of 10 guys, but there was -- who was the lieutenant colonel with Japanese [31:22] background. He did some of the interviews and was very good.

FS: I'll be at my office, dear.

RK: Oh, you're going? Okay.

INT: When you mentioned this lieutenant colonel had a Japanese [31:43] background, what do you mean by that?

RK: Well, he had lived in Japan [31:47] I guess, and a lot of people who lived in Japan were also missionary families, but I wouldn't be sure of that. But I'm annoyed that I can't think of that name because he [32:00] figured quite large in our plans in those days. Colonel -- I don't know. It'll probably come back to me.

INT: Well, we may need to change the tape here in a moment. Just one other follow-up question. Do you recall -- did you tape or monitor any of the conversations of the Japanese [32:25] prisoners? Was there any monitoring -- listening to conversations that - - of the prisoners while they were not being interrogated?

RK: I don't recall any of that, no. You mean listening in on their private conversations --
[End of Tape 1A]

[Beginning of Tape 1B]

RK: -- I can't say that I was. I wouldn't be surprised if it had been, but by then I think they were all in single cells. There probably wasn't an awful lot of conversation going on. I have a dim recollection of the past.

INT: Finishing up Tracy [00:24], do you remember if there were -- was there ever any escape attempts or anything, any unruly behavior or anything on behalf of the prisoners?

RK: I don't remember any, no. I would think I would at least know about it. And I don't recall.

SK: Was Camp Tracy [00:46] ever referred to as P.O. Box 651 [00:49], like the way --

RK: Like 1142 [00:52], yeah.

[talking simultaneous]

RK: And its original name was the Byron Hot Springs Hotel [01:00] in Tracy [01:02], California. And 651 [01:04] was just the post office box, just like 1142 [01:07].

INT: So just as we refer to 1142, you refer to 651?

INT: Okay.

INT: Do you know -- did the prisoners received any mail or correspondence from their families in Japan [01:18], and if so, was that mail monitored or censored in any way?

RK: I just don't know.

INT: And are you aware of any other sort of programs at Tracy [01:31], for example, was there any programs at Tracy that attempted to communicate with Americans held prisoner by the Japanese [01:40]?

RK: I can't say there was or wasn't. I just don't know of any.

INT: The guards at Tracy [01:50], were they regular MP guards or do the intelligence staff assist with guarding as well?

RK: My recollection is that they were [02:00] regular MP guards, but again, I'm pretty hazy on that.

INT: Sure.

RK: I'm sure of that -- I'm sorry if I'm so forgetful.

INT: You're doing absolutely fantastic. This is absolutely great. To shift a little bit then to 1142 [02:21], so at some point, whether it was direct from Tracy [02:24] or from somewhere else you arrived at 1142, do you recall being told -- did you already know about 1142 [02:33]? Had you heard about this place before you got there?

RK: I don't think so. Before I got there, no. I don't think so. But, you know, once you hear about it, well, you're well aware of what's going on there, but I don't think it was something that was talked about a lot elsewhere.

SK: So when you received orders to report to 1142 [02:54], can you tell us about, for instance, from the time you got orders to the time that you actually [03:00] reported in?

RK: I went there -- I really don't. I was trying to think when I knew you were coming out how did I first arrive at 1142 [03:09] and I really have no recollection on that, but you'd think it would sort of stand out in my mind, but it doesn't.

SK: Well, I wouldn't feel too bad. Other people that have been -- some of your contemporaries, they would show up with a letter, and they would show up to the post office box. And it was just -- it was a very confusing time for everybody because they didn't know what they getting into --
[talking simultaneously]

RK: You found people that were at 1142 [03:39].

SK: Yes, yes, so it was very confusing for everybody it seemed like.

INT: We've spoken in one way or another with about 35 people who were all at 1142 [03:51].

RK: 1142.

INT: [affirmative] People on that list, we actually -- I'll leave it with you today -- that's just one page of a 12-page list.

RK: It's not terribly legible [04:00].

INT: It's -- we apologize for that.

RK: It's partly obliterated, too, the initials.

INT: We're going to see what we can do about getting you a cleaner copy of that.

RK: That'd be good, although I don't hold out much hope that it will make -- Andrew P.

Wolfson [04:15] is the name that I keep descending on, and my own, I see it shows me arriving August 4th, '45, and then it doesn't show me departing which is --

SK: Maybe you're still there.

[laughter]

RK: Maybe. [laughter] Who knows.

INT: And that time context is something that we might want to talk about a little bit, if in fact, you may have come directly from Tracy [04:40] and came to 1142 [04:44], based on maybe them shutting down operations at Tracy.

INT: Well, let me ask you this. Do you remember where you were when you heard that the bomb had been dropped?

RK: Good Lord, I guess I was in college [05:00].

INT: I mean -- I mean the atomic bomb, not Pearl Harbor [05:04].

RK: Oh, not Pearl Harbor.

INT: Then, we had dropped the atomic bomb --

RK: Oh, '45, that would be.

INT: Do you remember where you were stationed when you heard that?

RK: No, I don't.

RK: Okay. It shows that you reported on August 4th of '45.

INT: August 4, '45.

INT: Wasn't it August 3rd?

[talking simultaneously]

RK: But there's no date departed on there.

INT: And the reason for the no date departed, this list was published on or around September 10th of '45 and they stopped publishing this, so we actually -- operations at 1142 [05:42] continued for at least another year after this date, and we have no information. This report was published in September, so that's -- so all we know from this is that on September 10th when this was published you were still there at 1142 [05:57]. We know you were there even later because [06:00] we actually have -- I can give these to you now to look over, and maybe if we meet again, we can chat a bit about some of these. These are actually some interrogations that you conducted with your name on them --

RK: Oh, really?

INT: -- from 1142 [06:14]. We literally just came across those this week.

INT: We have some from Colonel Kleinman, too. We haven't shown him yet --

RK: [unintelligible]

INT: So your name is on the --

RK: I couldn't -- as I recall, my discharge was in 1946. Captain Armstrong [06:37] -- now, that's a name that I recognize as a unit -- head of a unit that I was in.

INT: I want to say the dates on those -- one of the interrogations may actually be September 10th and the other one, I think, is September 17th. They're both September dates.

RK: '45 --

INT: And they're both at 1142 [07:00].

RK: [affirmative]

INT: Now, if I recall, one of them was, I think, a foot soldier from Tinian, I believe, and the other one I thought that maybe he came from Europe, but --

RK: Office of Japanese Military Attaché [07:19] in Berlin.

INT: [affirmative]

RK: Interesting, I -- I don't recall, but obviously, I was there.

INT: The question that is, is one that's interesting to try to get the perspectives is once the war was over in Europe and once the war was over in Pacific, why did the operations continue to keep staff at 1142 [07:44] into 1946?

RK: And you know they did, huh?

INT: Yes, we know that operations at 1142 [07:51] continued at least through October of '46. Now, what we don't fully know is [08:00] what level of operations. We know a lot of them dealt with what's referred to as Operation Paper Clip [08:06], which was dealing mostly -- have you heard of Paper Clip before?

RK: No, but, I mean, all of this stuff was so classified that even people who'd been involved were not particularly informed about it. But it was weird that I actually did this -- this is -
- oh, 1986 --

INT: That's when it was declassified in '86.

RK: I see. I see. And then this is 1953.

INT: Again, don't feel -- and you can look those over at your leisure --

RK: All right.

INT: -- and we can chat about this more. I just -- we were bringing up dates, and I wanted to show that we definitely know that you were there through at least the end of September.

RK: "The war [09:00] was occasion by Japan's [09:04] greed." I guess I'm saying that. I don't think you would be saying that. Well, I will be glad to keep these.

INT: Sure, please do.

RK: You know --

INT: Speaking then specifically about 1142 [09:17], so you found out that you were -- you were assigned one way or another to 1142, and did you start operations -- did you start interrogations there as soon as you arrived? Do you remember receiving any training there or had you already received sufficient training?

RK: I don't remember any training there, no, but I also can't answer the first part of the question, is when I did the first interrogation or how many I did. It's all just so folded into the background. Have you found people who remember more?

INT: Oh, we'd say it varies [10:00] greatly. We've interviewed people from our project who were stationed there for the entire war -- for three and a half years.

RK: Really? 1142 [10:10]?

INT: Yes, at 1142. Some as interrogators; some as -- as Vince had mentioned earlier, there was a program there of room monitoring. There were hidden microphones --

RK: Oh, really?

INT: -- in almost every single room, and there would be, again, mostly German-speaking monitors who were listening to these conversations.

RK: That would figure, yeah. And I know what you said in your writing dealt entirely with interviewing German [10:36] prisoners.

INT: So, you don't recall any German prisoners at all at 1142 [10:42], whatsoever?

RK: No, not at all. That doesn't mean there weren't any there, just that I never came in contact around --

INT: Do you remember where -- the prisoners who you dealt with, do you remember where they were kept?

RK: I just assumed in the barracks, but, again, it's an assumption. I don't think [11:00] I ever saw where they were kept or visited there.

INT: How were your interrogations conducted? Was it similar to what we discussed about Tracy [11:11] where there was you as well as a Nisei [11:15] or Issei [11:15]?

RK: I think so, yeah. Because I'd come through and hear it all, but I think that's the case. It just says my name on it. I never felt, I guess, in those years that I was expert enough in Japanese [11:40], in military Japanese to do an interrogation all on my own, and this might have also been true in the Philippines [11:54] and that's why you might conceivably want to talk to Warren Tsuneishi [12:00], who was kind of the star of our team in language, both in English and Japanese [12:07], but he may remember more about the actual interrogations than I do.

INT: Do you remember -- would you work with a prisoner over the course of several days, or would it all be in one sitting?

RK: Well, I specifically don't remember, but my guess would be that it might have been over the course of several days. I don't have actual recollection of that.

INT: Thinking about the admiral, when you met with the admiral, do you recall meeting with him more than one occasion or only one occasion?

RK: I don't recall specifically [13:00]. I just figured it might have been more than one occasion, but I don't want to act as though I recall more than one. People of that rank, you know, you figure if they're any good at all, they know enough to be talked to again, but beyond that I really can't recall.

INT: Do you remember anything about numbers of either prisoners or interrogators at 1142 [13:38]? Did it seem larger or smaller than Tracy [13:39] or similar?

RK: I can't draw a comparison. I just don't know.

INT: Okay.

RK: Things were kept pretty separated and segregated there so you didn't do a lot of seeing crowds and counting heads and what not. So I really don't have an answer [14:00] to the question.

SK: With regard to, like, when you go to chow, you know, for -- at the end of day, would there be people that you didn't recognize, other officers enlisted that were a part of the program and you didn't know who they were and what they were doing?

RK: I doubt it. I just assumed that they weren't, but again, it's such a dim memory, I have no recollection of going to chow even. Yeah.

SK: [affirmative]

RK: I assume I did.

INT: You stayed on base though. Did you stay in the barracks on 1142 [14:41] base?

RK: Yes, I think so. I think so. Because obviously, I'm very close to Washington, and I think we would go in every once in a while, but I don't recall living off base at all.

INT: Just in general, I mean, obviously [15:00], we're interested in 1142 [15:04], but can you -- what details do you remember about how a typical interrogation would go? Could you remember -- I mean, can you run us through what an actual interrogation session might have been like? And, again, even just general details, not specific questions.

RK: Obviously, -- find out who he was, what his rank was, what his duties were, and then we'd then ask questions, I guess, we would pass them along. I don't think they'd volunteer an awful lot, but I think there was mostly like just asking specific questions.

SK: If they didn't volunteer the information, did you try any sort of tricks or different ways to flatter them?

RK: I was never involved in anything like that [16:00]. Tricks or whatever else you want to call it. Just didn't enter the work I did. Whether other people did or not, I couldn't tell you.

SK: I mean, in cases of like, the admiral --

RK: Yeah.

SK: -- obviously, there was a disparity of rank there. Did you wear your rank? Did the admiral -- would he have known what rank you were?

RK: Would he had known what mine was? Oh, I think so, yeah.

INT: So, you didn't hide your rank. You were --

RK: I was in fatigues with the rank on the collar; possibly bars, but I don't think I -- anything about me impressed him by my rank since I was never above a first lieutenant.

INT: Do you feel that you were ever intentionally misled, or did you feel that you could recognize when you were being intentionally misled [17:00]?

RK: By a prisoner?

INT: By a prisoner, yeah.

RK: I don't recall that I feel that I was or that there was any evidence that I was.

SK: When you conducted these interrogations, were they -- the Nisei [17:15] or Issei [17:19] listed, after it was over, who was responsible for actually writing up a report?

RK: Obviously, I think I must have assumed that responsibility at least as an officer, but I'm just assuming that the Japanese-American [17:45], whoever it was, would either check over what I seemed to recall or perhaps [unintelligible]. You're asking things that are so faded in the background that I can't tell [18:00].

SK: Can I ask a couple of unrelated questions? Just for a little bit of a change of pace -- I'm fascinated -- you were discharged in October of '46, did you say?

RK: Some place --

SK: Sometime in '46.

RK: Sometime in '46.

SK: What did you do the next couple of years after that?

RK: I think I went to work for the paper in Minneapolis because I know I worked there a long time, and I think the idea was I was discharged I think at Fort Snelling [18:34].

SK: [affirmative]

RK: So I went downtown to look for a job and got it.

SK: Did you remember working with a gentleman with last name Carter [18:44]?

RK: Carter?

SK: Yes. That name familiar at all? Who might have been in publishing industry or his family might have been?

RK: It's one of those things, you know, the name is common enough [19:00], so I have a feeling that I do, but I don't remember specifically. Philip Carter [19:04], is that --

SK: I don't think we know his first name. It was mentioned by another gentleman that we talked to this morning that he was from a family that apparently owned several newspapers. He was involved in 1142 [19:16].

RK: Oh, he was? Several newspapers -- do you have any idea where? It doesn't ring a bell.

INT: [unintelligible] Possibly Texas.

RK: Oh, really?

SK: Possibly. This gentleman has declined rapidly the last few days.

RK: No, I really can't say I do recollect it, although with that kind of name it's easy enough to recognize.

SK: So you went into actually, the newspaper business?

RK: Yeah.

SK: So, here's a question. Were you familiar or did you know anything about 1142's [19:56] use of newspapers as a rouse with prisoners [20:00]? Like, for instance, having a newspaper that's 99 percent the true thing that's being published and distributed to the population, but they take and they may change one article just for use at 1142 [20:17] to try and convince a prisoner that things were going badly.

RK: I don't recall anything like that. The only thing I do recall even close to that was when I got back to Fort Snelling [20:27]. I think I was editing some kind of a news sheet --

INT: [affirmative]

RK: -- but I don't think it was necessarily for prisoner consumption. It was an in-house military thing.

SK: You didn't by chance keep any of those?

RK: I was wondering the same thing myself. And I don't think so. I've look through a lot of files because we were trying to pare down on our contents of the house [21:00], and if I find any, I know where to find you guys, but I don't -- I haven't found any yet.

INT: Getting back to the questioning and talking with prisoners, you kind of mentioned this a little bit earlier, but can you get into the questions you were asking. Did you come up with almost all of the questions, or were there certain key questions that maybe somebody from higher up said, "Oh, try to find out this, this, and this?"

RK: Oh, my impression would be that probably the latter approach just because I think that was the point of our being there and having any liaison with [unintelligible] but if I were to have to remember specifically what and who asked it, I can't do that. I just think all of our interrogations probably had some steering from someplace [22:00].

INT: [affirmative] Examples like -- I know we -- from the interrogators that were working with the Germans [22:10], it looked at questions regarding order of battle, weapons, weapon technologies, some of them that worked with scientists looked at trying to find different types of scientific technology that perhaps the Germans [22:27] were working on. Anything like that in your training, looking at order of battle, weaponry?

RK: Well, I think we learned a lot about order of battle and what it consisted of and what you would try to find out. I assume some of the questions we asked people that were that kind of question, but I don't recall it specifically. It rings a bell -- order of battles.

INT: How about document analysis or maps or anything like that [23:00]?

RK: Well, documents, of course, went to sealed individuals mostly, I guess you say. Any of the others would look at them and appraise pretty quickly what they were, but again, I have no specifics to tell you.

SK: You recall that document exploitation? Do you recall when you were at Camp Savage [23:33] with the interrogation, translation, interpreter training kind of all melded, do you recall that as being the subject matter that --

RK: I think so, yeah, to the extent that we were still learning military Japanese [23:46], and I learned what it was and what it looked like and stuff like that. So order of battle information, I think would be -- it would have been part of our training [24:00].

INT: When you -- Vince was talking a little bit about questions and specific types of information, getting to -- let's say there was a prisoner, and this could be at 1142 [24:13] or anywhere else that had specific technical information, maybe they were a pilot or something like that, would they try to have them interviewed by an interrogator who had a background in aeronautics?

RK: Generally speaking, I think so, yeah. I mean, I know I for one was certainly aware of my own shortcomings in the technical field and I'm sure that if that's what we ran across, that's what we did, but again, if you're looking for specifics, I can't really help you.

SK: So when you were in the Philippines [24:53], you conducted interrogations out there?

RK: I think so, yes.

SK: I just wondered [25:00] if you remembered well enough to compare how those were done versus at Camp Tracy [25:06] and then, again, at 1142 [25:06], if there's any differences or --

RK: Obviously, in the Philippines [25:11] we were closer up to the enemy, it's was more tactical stuff. But, again, I'd rather hear Warren Tsuneishi [25:20] on that subject, if he actually recollects it. He was, I think, one of the principal interrogators.

SK: Was he ever at 1142 [25:32]? Did we ask that question?

RK: I just don't think so, no.

INT: And he would have been an enlisted man? He was not an officer?

RK: He was not an officer at the time that I worked with him, no. I think my team leader, George Takabayashi [25:48], I think became an officer, but long after the team was dissolved, and I think he got a commission later on [26:00]. Very bright guy, very impressive guy.

INT: I may be mispronouncing his name, but you may -- it just suddenly looks familiar, and I might be making this up, did you mention a Hajime Takanishi [26:16] or am I --

RK: Takanishi?

INT: Takanishi, does that ring a bell?

RK: Is that a name that [unintelligible] --

INT: That's actually not on your list, but we're going to leave this list with you. What I brought with us -- we have a list of all the enlisted men, and that list is just the officers who arrived when you were there. There's a number of Japanese-American [26:37] names on one page of this list. I'd like to leave it with you and see if any of these names ring any bells. These probably would have been the Nisei [26:49] or --

RK: It might have been at 1142 [26:51]?

INT: These were definitely at 1142.

RK: Oh, they were? I see.

INT: Yeah, and if you like, I can read through some of the names, if you'd like.

RK: Go ahead.

INT: I'll certainly leave this [27:00] with you, and these were all arriving all the same day.

Every one of these people arrived on the August 5th, 1945, which I think is just one day after you arrived. It started off as Joe Akiyama [27:18].

RK: That's on your list here. I noticed that. I don't recall him, no.

INT: Hitoshi Kanemitsu [27:27]?

RK: No.

INT: Mickey Kuroiwa [27:31]?

RK: No.

INT: And these are all staff sergeants. Masato Masuhara [27:39]?

RK: No.

INT: Let's see. Schiichi Asada [27:47]? Thomas Imori [27:50]?

RK: Vaguely familiar. No.

INT: George Yamaguchi [28:00]?

RK: No.

INT: Jimmy Morimoto [28:05]?

RK: No.

INT: Takeshi Tanaka [28:11]?

RK: No.

INT: [unintelligible] There's several more. I won't go through. But it's interesting, all of these gentlemen arrived on all the same day. And I was curious if you recognized any of their names. And then there's about another 10 or so.

RK: Oh. Have you run across them or --

INT: No, we've been trying to locate a number of them and unfortunately have not been able to.

RK: I see.

INT: Some of the names, like George Yamaguchi [28:40], are fairly common Japanese [28:43] names, and so it's been difficult to track down. Other ones, we found they've already passed away; other ones, we haven't been able to find any trace of. I don't know if they moved back to Japan [28:55] after the war or if --

RK: [unintelligible] Maybe some did [29:00]

INT: Right. So --

SK: What day did they arrive?

INT: I'm sorry, they all arrived on August 5th. There's a group that maybe arrived [unintelligible].

RK: They arrived at 1142 [29:08]. That's U.S. enlisted men?

INT: Yes, those are all enlisted men. They were all staff sergeants. A couple of corporals, a couple of regular sergeants -- no privates.

RK: No.

INT: And there is --

INT: We're coming up on the end of this tape.

INT: Okay.

RK: Is there a Saito [29:26]?

INT: Saito?

RK: S-A-I-T-O, no?

INT: I don't see one, but again, we will leave this list with you.

RK: Okay, I know where to reach Vince, but I'm not quite that I'll know any more than I didn't know today. But --

INT: We are about at the end of this tape.

RK: Okay.

INT: So maybe we'll call it quits for right now and then figure out what we want to do from here on out.

RK: Well, I have his number [30:00], and if I think of anything -- not very likely -- I'll call him. It's not that I'm trying to conceal anything, it's just that my memory is not great on things that happened before yesterday.

INT: Before we start the next tape, we're going to bring these lights over and put them in your face, and we'll start asking the questions harder [laughs].

RK: [unintelligible] and the waterboarding, that's next? [laughs]

INT: There you go. And one question I hope to get to the next go round would be, any thoughts about perhaps Japanese [30:35] interrogators at 1142 [30:36], primarily set up for the European theater [30:39], having to do with trying to understand the relationship between the Japanese and the Germans [30:46] and what their communication was. So, for example, U-boat 234 [30:51], you know about the story of U-234, it was being sent from Germany [30:58] with scientists [31:00] with technology sending it to Japan [31:03], and there were Japanese [31:03] officers on board. And so the question is, 1142 [31:10], did they send Japanese interrogators there to perhaps help to try to understand what communication was going on between Japan [31:18] and Germany [31:18], particularly late in the war.

RK: Well, the only thing that, that prompts me to think about and say -- are you familiar with the story of the 442nd combat team [31:29]?

INT: Yeah, sure.

RK: Japanese-Americans [31:33] [unintelligible] --

INT: [unintelligible]

RK: -- and they did all kinds of great things in the European theater [31:37] --

INT: Why don't we -- why don't we catch this on tape, if you have time? Are you okay with that?

INT: We're literally at the final seconds of this tape, but we can very quickly put in --

INT: Is that okay with you?

RK: It's fine with me. I'm not sure if you want to --

[End of Tape 1B]

[Beginning of Tape 2A]

INT: Introduction again. This is Tape 2 on September 13th, 2007 of an Oral History Interview with Richard Kleeman, part of the Fort Hunt [00:19] Oral History Project. This is National Park Service Historian Brandon Bies as well as National Park Service George Washington Memorial Parkway Chief Ranger Vincent Santucci, also, Air Force Colonel Steve Kleiman, and Dr. Mark Jacobsen. And we're going to go ahead and pick up where we left off. You were just getting ready to talk a little bit about the 442nd [00:41].

RK: Well, when you started bringing up the European Theater of Operations [00:46] as regards to the Japanese-Americans [00:50], that's a whole subject in which the Japanese-Americans are both very proud and full of memories because there was [01:00] something called the 100th Infantry Battalion [01:02] that was recruited in Honolulu

[01:05] and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team [01:08], all of which had very outstanding accomplishments in the European Theater of Operations [01:15], and I think it's the 442nd [01:20] that rescued the so-called Lost Battalion [01:23], but, again, I don't know the details on it and the Japanese-American [01:30] organizations would. I would suggest that you go and talk to the Japanese-American war veterans, and I can give you a name there, and Japanese-American Citizens League [01:47] which is the national organizations of Japanese-Americans who would all know a lot more about this than I do. But you'd want to ask them about the 100th Infantry [01:59] and the 442nd RCT [02:00].

INT: At 1142 [02:06], do you remember there being -- would you characterize -- try to, I guess, ignore the list I just read to you. Do you remember there being lots of Nisei [02:16] and Issei [02:17]? Were there more Nisei and Issei than Anglo interrogators?

RK: I doubt it -- I doubt it. I think mostly they served as the interrogators or translators, but again, I have no overall view.

INT: But in terms of the numbers --

RK: No, I really don't have --

INT: Okay.

RK: -- numbers that I could say I recall. I think you could find those numbers from some of the organizations that I mentioned to you, but I just don't know them. I wasn't at that level of responsibility.

INT: Do you remember [03:00] who or to what level you reported? Where did the information from your interrogations go? Did it go -- did it stay within 1142 [03:12]? Did it go to the Pentagon [03:14]?

RK: I guess it probably went to the Pentagon. I'm just thinking in proximity, geographically and what not, but I don't think I have any proof of that. I think you'll find plenty of people to talk to. I don't know whether they'll talk to you or not, but probably a General Bissell [Clayton] [03:42], B-I-S-S-E-L-L, is that a name at G-2 [unintelligible] --

INT: For sure. Yeah.

RK: -- and Colonel Sinclair [03:52] [phonetic], I think is one of the people. Almost any of them knew more about [04:00] the broader picture than I did.

INT: Do you -- excuse me. Did you remember any dealings with a Colonel Thomas Van Cleve [04:10]?

RK: I saw his name on the thing. Really, no.

INT: Okay.

RK: [negative]

SK: What about a Major General [George] Strong [04:18]?

RK: Strong? Sounds familiar, but I didn't have specific dealings with him. That was a familiar name is all. Kai Rasmussen [04:38], you run across that name at all?

INT: No.

RK: He was a colonel -- full colonel and he was an expert in Japanese [04:45]. He came out of Japan [04:47], and he was very sort of presence in the Japanese language for --

INT: What was his last name again?

RK: Rasmussen [04:57], R-A-S-M-U-S-S-E-N [05:00].

INT: Great.

RK: He was one of those that interviewed me for these various assignments. Commander Hindmarsh [05:10] was a Navy guy you've probably run across because I think he became an admiral.

INT: You don't remember any names of enlisted men that maybe were working with you at 1142 [05:26]? Since the names that we've given you, you don't remember, are there names that you might remember of individuals?

RK: Well, as I say, I called my friend Tsuneishi [05:34]. He said he was never at 1142 [05:38], and off-hand, I don't remember anything else.

INT: Had your friend heard of 1142 [05:50]? Was he familiar with it? Had he ever heard of it?

RK: My friend [unintelligible]?

INT: No, Tsuneishi [05:56].

RK: Oh, Tsuneishi. When I called him and told him about this interview [06:00], I think he said, no, that he had had --

INT: He had never heard of it?

RK: No.

INT: Okay.

RK: There's an awful a lot of back and forth among the Japanese-American [06:11] community though. I'm not sure that -- Terry Shima [06:14] is the sort of executive director of JAVA [06:19] here in town, and I can put you in touch with him if you want. And I think he knows a lot of people, much more than I do probably.

INT: Outside of our communication, at that time during the war, did you know the name MIS-Y [06:37] as far as the name of the program?

RK: No, not MIS-Y. The name that I knew and used for years is MISL, Military Intelligence Service Language, and -- MISLS [06:52] actually, Military Intelligence Service Language School [07:00], and I don't know --

SK: How about MIS-X [07:04]?

RK: X?

INT: [affirmative]

RK: No. Again --

INT: Did you have programs that your group worked in that were top secret programs that were given a code name, like Manhattan Project [07:18], Operation Paper Clip [07:22], any sort of programs that you were aware of that Japanese [07:26] interrogators had involvement in?

RK: I honestly don't recall any. There may well have been some, but I would have thought they'd stand out in my memory, and they obviously don't. Others you talk to might try to say that [unintelligible] who was at the Joint Intelligence Center [07:51] in Honolulu [07:52], which is an Army, Navy, Marine Center might talk to you. I don't know, but he had nothing to do with 1142 [08:00]. I take it that's where you are concentrated.

INT: Our focus has been on 1142, but we found ourselves wandering off -- I shouldn't even say "wandering," but looking in many directions. We have to understand so much about Ritchie [08:17] and Tracy [08:18] and other locations just to understand how 1142 [08:22] worked and functioned within that.

RK: Well, going back to where we started out, I think that you're looking for some sort of central base of operations, the Library of Congress Veterans Project [08:35] has probably a lot of stuff, and they got a lot of it, I guess, from Japanese-American [08:42] war

veterans, and you might find tapes and things there. But, you know, that may be beyond the scope of what you're interested in.

INT: Have you ever attempted to pursue your military service records?

RK: No, I have a file [09:00] here someplace in my discharge, I guess, and a couple of things like that, but that's about all. I think Camp Savage [09:07] issued a certificate that I completed the course there.

INT: [affirmative]

RK: But beyond that, no.

INT: If they are out there, they probably would have your orders relative to going to 1142 [09:22] and your departure from 1142. Those are things that you know you can obtain.

RK: Yeah. But do you have access to them as a general thing?

INT: Brandon can help you through that, the process --

INT: A lot of those records -- almost all of those were housed in St. Louis. The unfortunate thing is there was a very large fire, and your chances are probably something like one in five if you're an Army veteran or Air Corps veteran, that you'd be able to pull your full service record. They'll have something there on you, but it may be extremely limited, but there's a chance that they -- you can pull your entire [10:00] service docket and where you were located, where you were -- any awards you were receiving.

RK: Have you gone to this Library of Congress Project [10:10], not on me specially, but I mean in this whole field?

INT: We actually -- I actually had the opportunity not quite a month ago to present a paper on this topic, and the presenter for the talk before mine was the chief historian for the Veterans History Project [10:27] through the Library of Congress.

RK: Really?

INT: So, I'm in contact with him. He knows -- his name is Tom Wiener [phonetic]. I may actually -- actually I may have his card with me. But I can get you his contact information, but he's a historian with the Library of Congress, and we are working very closely with them. They knew what we're doing, and when this project is completed, which could be a while --

RK: Yeah.

INT: -- because we keep finding -- again, we just found you, what, two weeks ago, so who knows --

RK: How did you find me [11:00]?

INT: How did we find you?

RK: Yeah.

INT: Basically, what we've been doing is somewhat systematically, these boring lists of names, we've been going down every single name --

RK: Is that right?

INT: -- and trying to track down, find out if the veteran is still alive or not, and then if they are --

RK: [unintelligible] or something like that.

INT: Well, we actually -- there's a number of things we can search, but in the end what we use a lot is simply the White Pages. You can go on the computer and type in whitepages.com --

RK: Light Pages?

INT: White -- just like the White Pages, the phonebook, and it's an electronic version of the phonebook that searches the entire country, and some people have fairly unique names. Other have very common names. So people with common names, we've had no luck finding whatsoever, but we --

RK: You sounded so surprised when you first called me.

INT: [Laughs]

RK: You found me, and I felt like a treasure, and I never had been before.

INT: You are a treasure.

SK: Actually, what they do is they'd drive around the neighborhoods and look for a big sign on the front yard [12:00] [unintelligible]
[laughter]

RK: Well, I don't know what that would get you in this neighborhood. I don't think there are many people. I can think of a lot of names, but --

INT: The one question that's always fun to ask is that do you feel that your experiences during World War II influenced the rest of your life, and if so, how have they done so?

RK: Well, I'd be foolish to say that they didn't. I still retain a little knowledge of Japanese [12:39] and a lot of interest in Japanese-Americans [12:42] and some friends, as I mentioned to you, so I'd say, the answer would have to be, yes, it did, but I don't think it had a huge influence. I think I'm glad I had it because I thought it was useful [13:00] at the time. But that's about as far as I could go.

INT: Anything else?

RK: I'd appreciate you sending that schedule of the events, and as I said, we have to leave town the next day, but I think we're going to try to get that Friday afternoon thing.

INT: Great.

RK: And will there be parking at the fort? Is that the address --

INT: Yes, there will be plenty of parking there.

RK: Yeah.

INT: So, you'll be able to attend on Friday, but not on Saturday.

RK: I think that's right. We're going to Minneapolis on Saturday.

INT: Because Saturday, we can get you all this information as well. Friday is going to be the opportunity for the veterans to see one another, to chat more informally. We're going to be making some presentations, but it'll be for Fort Hunt [13:52]. The Saturday -- that's Friday -- the Saturday event is going to be more of a research symposium [14:00] where we're going to have a number of guest speakers, both Park Service speakers. Colonel Kleiman's going to be speaking. Some archivists, historians and then we're going to end the day with a panel of veterans who are going to be speaking there. I'll be moderating and talking to them, kind of 1142 [14:24] in their own words, and so we'll have some naval folks, army folks, room monitors, interrogators just to kind of cap things off with them.

RK: I'll be sorry to miss that, but I think I'll have to miss it unless the Minneapolis, it changes, because it's a big family obligation.

INT: Of course, that will be taped, we'll make those available. It'll be likely be [unintelligible] but you will also be on our mailing list for, but the veterans are the VIPs and that's what it's all about. So, whatever we can do for you to make it up [15:00], we'll certainly do.

RK: Oh, that's very nice. Thank you.

INT: Is there anything that we forgot to ask you that you think's important?

RK: Well, no. I just want to make sure that you're in touch with the Japanese-American [15:14] organizations, and I think I've pointed them out, the JACL [15:19], Citizens League; and JAVA [15:23] and Terry Shima [15:24] who's the executive director of JAVA; but beyond that, I can't think of anything. No, I can't really -- [unintelligible] me out.

SK: I just have one -- I have two more questions. How did you end up deciding to go with the Army and not the Navy?

RK: How did I decide?

INT: [unintelligible]

RK: I think -- there was a story to it. I don't know if it's very important. I opted for the Navy. I just figured I was probably good either way, so on and so forth. And Admiral Hindmarsh [16:00] -- Commander Hindmarsh, I guess, took the information, and I was ruled out, turned down for vision, I think. So, after I was in the Army at Ann Arbor [16:21], I got a notice from the Navy saying, "We've changed our vision requirements, and we now would be glad to have you accepted." It was too late.

SK: Yeah.

RK: So --

SK: But you didn't just show that to the Army and they said, "Oh, you can go now"?

RK: Excuse me?

SK: You didn't just show that letter to the Army and they said you could go now?

[laughter]

RK: No way.

SK: They just -- I think you mentioned [unintelligible] that you had one of your -- your uniform jacket --

RK: Yeah.

INT: Could we get a picture? Could we get your photograph in that?

RK: In my jacket?

INT: If it's readily available.

INT: Do you have your uniform? Or were you just joking about that?

INT: Were you kidding on the phone [17:00] that you have --

RK: I think I have it, but it's up in the attic in a trunk someplace --

INT: Oh, okay, got it.

RK: -- and I never dragged out it sooner.

INT: Do you have a photograph of you in uniform, World War II, or do you have any photographs from Tracy [17:13] or 1142 [17:16]?

RK: I don't think so. We've been going through a lot of old files and throwing away a lot of stuff, but probably my sisters would have one because I sent letters in which they were sent in, and an old girlfriend may still have it, although she's no longer [unintelligible]. But I don't have -- is something ringing?

INT: There was a siren outside.

RK: Oh, that's a siren, okay. You would be interested in finding it.

INT: From maybe of the veterans that we've been able to talk with, they tend to have available [18:00] and pull out photographs, and some of them are wonderful photographs of people and buildings within 1142 [18:09]. In fact, we'll be able to share some of those with you at the event.

RK: Well, let me look in the files upstairs. I don't want to keep you now because I'll just be rummaging, but I have a couple of files I could look at. And if I see anything, I'll send that to you.

INT: Great.

INT: Great.

RK: I have your card here, don't I? Yeah, there we go. Okay.

INT: Fantastic. Anything else?

INT: No questions.

[end of transcript]

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