

Eric Walz History 300 Collection

# Gerald W. Jeppson – Life During WWII

By Gerald W. Jeppson

February 24, 2004

## Box 4 Folder 17

Oral Interview conducted by Seth E. Shaw

Transcript copied by David Garmon & Luke Kirkham

April 2005

Brigham Young University – Idaho

SS: My name is Seth Shaw. I'm here interviewing for History 300. It is the 24<sup>th</sup> of February at 3:32. I am interviewing...Can you state your name for the recorder?

GJ: Gerald W. Jeppson, Sugar City Idaho.

SS: Thank you much. When were you born?

GJ: August 7, 1930.

SS: August 7, 1930, ok. What do you remember about the day Pearl Harbor was bombed?

GJ: It was Sunday and my little brother, a couple of friends and I were fooling around in our front yard. We lived in a company house behind a creamery where my father was manager. And a porcupine had come down from the creek up east from our town and we had, put a pieces of rubber hose on the end of a couple of big poles. And just as Dad came out of the house and told us that it had been announced, it was Sunday late afternoon or evening, went back in the house one of the boys took some quills out of that rubber radiator hose that we had been collecting from the porcupine and jabbed Nelson Cordon in the rear-end with a quill, and he screamed. And mother came out of the house and thought he was screaming because of the war. And then that night when we went to sacrament meeting, they used to be held in evenings, everybody was talking about it. The thing I really remember was the next day: we gathered in our elementary school, I was in the sixth grade, and the whole school together in this one foyer back up in the entry way and in the upper classes and back up on the stairs leading away form that foyer and we were able to listen to the address of Franklin Delanor Roosevelt our president, to congress, giving that famous "day of infamy" and that was very great impression on me, his talk.

SS: What impressed you most about his talk?

GJ: Well, his emotion and the crisis that was impending, and America was threatened but we would protect ourselves, and we weren't giving up until we were done.

SS: How did your dad first find out about the announcement?

GJ: It was on the radio.

SS: It was on the radio? Did, what was the immediate reaction of the people around you? You said you were feeling a lot of emotion...We will hold off for a moment because of the phone.

[Recorder turned off for the phone call, then resumed.]

GJ: I believe your question is “what’s the reaction of the people of the community?” Well it has been a lot of years; I remember a lot of things. The draft, how it affected people and so many of the young men were just going down and joining up not waiting for the draft. And it wasn’t very many weeks until it was a noticeable difference in our, on our street and the congregation at church. A certain age group was noticeable absent. And it was kind of a sad thing because of course many of those boys, I was in the sixth grade, and those were just the young men that were my heroes. And to have them gone was quite a pain. I was thinking after talking to you the other day that I’d share a couple of collections. We had a neighbor named Bowman that father had been in World War I. And they had a boy who when I was in the first grade, he was an eighth grader. And he was my hero. He was really a sharp lookin’ kid and he took his...he took his pilots training to fly B-24s. And Frank R. Bowman early in the war was ready to go overseas. And he came back to our home, and it was just after Christmas in the spring of the year maybe, probably ’42 just after Christmas, early ’43. But he was going overseas and we got word that he was in a famous air raid from North Africa to the Polesty oil fields of Romania to try to cut off Germany’s oil. And then the word came that he had been shot down. And that broke me up because he was a great guy. Missing in action for many weeks everybody was praying for him and finally the word came that he was a prisoner. And so all through the war we heard very little from him; about once a year there would be a letter from him that the Red Cross would be able to obtain through the Germans from him and send it home. And he was one of the things that we held our breaths for all through the war. Would he make it? And he was marched across Germany about three times. As the Allies advanced into France they marched him over to the east part and when the Russians start charging in that direction they marched him back across and three times he went across the country. Didn’t get much to eat, he came home he was a bundle of skin and bones. But he got back on his feet; it took him about a year or so to recuperate. And he’s now a retired gentleman out in Twin Falls area. 1998, on the year of my 50<sup>th</sup> high school graduation he and his two sisters were the hosts for all the graduates from Teton High Schools and then Driggs. They do their alumni deal different there. Every year all of the graduates come in and they just highlight a certain class. But the Bowman boys and girls were the hosts. And that was one of the greatest impressions of the war, was worrying about that guy. Another thing: my mother had been the trail builder teacher. And during the war as the young men would come back to the community it was quite an exciting thing for me, some of those young men would come to our place almost before they went home. And they would come in and, I thought I had them in this book [flipping through an old photo album] but I had a whole series of pictures that my mother took, must be in another album that I salvaged, those young men in uniform come in standing on the front lawn together with my mother getting their picture taken. And I often thought that was quite a tribute to one of the mothers of Zion to be one of the first people they thought about when you came home was to come and see your old primary teacher. I will never forget that. How proud I was of her.

SS: I bet you were. What was the general feeling before the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

GJ: Well the big thing that I remember is that this part of the country went through a number of depressions. They started before I was born in the twenties. That was when

my father left the farm. After his mission he couldn't get a job. So he worked for six months for nothing for Nelson Rich Creamery to learn the cheese-making trade. And then he and a couple of others were sent in the Teton Basin to build a plant in Driggs and a man named Blaine Broil ran that. And Dad and John Burnside the company's maintenance man, they went to Driggs and built the plant. And Dad stayed there then for, gosh, twenty-five years or so, as manager there in that plant. And as a boy growing up in the thirties it was a very common thing to see drifters, hobos, bums, whatever they're called, drift into town and hang around and wondering if there wasn't something they could do, some work, and times were tough. And they were hungry, and no place to stay. And of course you can't have someone just off the street come in and help you make cheese. Health regulations would forbid that. But my father was always interested in trying to find some wood to chop or some ashes to clean up or something that they could do for an hour or two to make them feel like they had earned something to eat. Then he would give them some bread and some cheese and a big drink of milk. And I remember the gratitude those men would have that someone takes things to heart and befriend them. And that's the thing I remember about the thirties: how hard everybody was working and nobody was making much money. I remember in the mid-thirties some of these guys would bring a wagon full of grain in to town and sell the grain and it'd be about enough to buy a pair of Levi's. And consequently few people had much and everybody didn't even drive cars in those days. A lot of people still using horses and wagons. My dad was making pretty good money but his philosophy was: you don't make people feel bad by flaunting what you got. And you share it and ya treat everybody the same. I remember the war when rationing started; he qualified for a sticker of his windshield for quite a bit of gas because of his executive position, needing to visit a few farms to help farmers with their production. And he felt like that he would limit his use to gas just as tight as he could because if other people couldn't drive, he shouldn't drive. I remember there were certain emergencies where families, the passing of someone, that Dad would arrange to share his rationing stamps with someone who had to go to Rexburg or Idaho Falls, who didn't have any. And I remember the scout master we had was also our bishop. Clarence Murdock, great man, he was half Indian, a tremendous teacher, and he had all the scouts learning how to march and how to do the manual of arms and the close order drill and how to identify enemy airplanes from their silhouettes...he kind of got the boys involved. Everybody was thinking about the war. Kind of got them involved with some of the things that people were doing in other places. People were encouraged to save the drippings from their bacon and ham, the fats, they put them in cans and there'd be drives to go around and collect that. And the government would use that, to make soak for ammunition, I am not sure what, but they needed all the fats they could get. And metals, I remember kids around with wheelbarrows and their little red wagons going picking up scrap metal and taking it to a place where it could be picked up. So there were a lot of things going on.

I had a cousin, Thomas Jeppson, from Utah that was kind of a hero of mine. Came in and when I was five got me started collecting stamps and during the wars as I'd get, we'd see the mail coming from all over the world, it was kind of exciting because that was the first time that this isolated place in Idaho would get mail from everywhere. And my cousin Tom came in and then I remember the war was on and he was getting ready to go over seas. He had joined the Marine Corps like his father did in World War I. And I

remember he came up and brought us some toys. And I could show you one down in the basement that I've saved it. Because of the war there was nothing very fancy. It was made out of wood, it was painted. And yet little kids through the years have gotten a lot of use out of it. And things were just different. There wasn't much fresh fruit up there. An orange at Christmas time was a big deal. And there wasn't much shipped in or shipped out. Another thing I remember a lot is when I was twelve I became the janitor of the show house. And I would have to clean that everyday. I could to all the shows free. But I remember before every movie is usually the previews for the next coming shows, a comedy, and what they called short subjects, a little interesting travelogues, and the news reel. And it would have the latest war news. And even though in the show house there would be a little confusion during the comedies or some things, but when the news reel had started, it was usually deathly silent. That was always quite an impression on me. How people were excited about that. There wasn't hardly any candy or gum for sale. Because of sugar, it was rationed. And when the delivery man would come into town, my boss, ran the pharmacy and the drug store kiddy-corner from the drug house, they wouldn't get more than a basket or two of goods for a month. To sell. And because I was an employee, I could have whatever I wanted, and I would usually buy a carton of gum and maybe a whole handful of candy bars. And share it with my friends, where some of them would never get to see anything like that, and a stick of gum was a big deal because the day that they put on the shelf it was sold out, just in several hours. And that would be all they would have for a month. The rationing was quite a thing. They issued us some books. They were about oh, five by seven and there was a section, certain stamps were numbered, and certain numbers were good each month. So each family got as many stamps or books as they had kids. And there would be only so many stamps per month and when you had eaten up that meat or that sugar, that's what you got. And they had some, each stamp's worth ten pounds and you didn't always buy ten pounds at once, so, when you turned your stamp in they'd give you your change in little tokens. Red ones for meat and blue ones for sugar. And that's what you'd use, one of these little points per pound. The booklet also had stamps in there for shoes and a lot of other commodities, but the government to my knowledge never did ration anything more than just the sugar and the meats. The other stamps had just been put there because they didn't know how bad the war was going to be getting. They wanted to be prepared if low circulation.

SS: So just in case...

GJ: But, I remember another thing... When I started high school I wanted to buy a wristwatch. And they were very expensive and not very many of them were available, and some of those ones available were not worth buying. And my dad said, if I remember: "Son, yes, a few of your friends have watches. But, on the other hand the war is not going to last forever. Save your money. I'll let you have grandpa's old railroad watch if you can get by with that. And some day, when watches are more plentiful then you will be able to buy a good watch, and it won't cost you so much." And he was right. After the war then things loosened up and they put more of their production in to consumer goods and more effort. But that's one thing I remembered. Another man named Ralf Wilson; he was the son of my high school general science teacher. We got word that he was a prisoner of the Japanese. He was captured in the Philippines. And he

spent the entire war as a prisoner of the Japanese. Of course there in the Philippines, but later he was transported to Japan. And he had a hard time too. But he's still in good health and his son is living in Rigby and he moved there to be close to him. And Ralf and his wife are both officiators down at the Idaho Falls temple. And so I, some of these people that had wartime experience, they're still a few around. They are getting to be fewer and fewer of them every year. Another thing I remember very much was a thing called V-mail. They were little pieces of paper about, oh five by seven. And persons would write on a special paper, and then it'd be photographed. So the paper was kind of like a photograph. With the message being in black in the photograph. I had a couple that I saved for years and during the Teton dam flood I found that that black stuff was soluble in water so my V-mail letters are now just plain sheets of white paper. The black washed right off of 'em. Another thing that was very, well, evoked a lot emotion: in many, many homes there would be a blue star hanging in the window. Some families, there'd be two or three blue stars on the same flag, indicating that they had sons or daughters in the military. And occasion you would see a star that was a gold star, that meant that there was a killed in action. And there were far more of those than we'd like to have seen. Ah, might just show you a couple of copies of those rationing tokens that I saved. [Shuffling some coin collecting binders around] Meat one...

SS: So the red ones were the meat and the blue ones sugar?

GJ: Yes, and that was the change you'd get when you turned in a ten pound stamp and you didn't buy ten pounds. And another interesting thing during the war was: Copper that was in the pennies was more valuable for the war effort than for coins. And so the 1943 makes some pennies that were steel coated with zinc. And they're a little different alloy than we're used to seeing. That was a one year deal. And the next year some places where the men were fighting they loaded up a couple of ship loads clear full of the brass, the shell casings from the rifles. And shipped 'em back to this country and 1944 pennies were all made out of those shell cases.

SS: That's an interesting way to go about it.

GJ: You read in the coin magazines about this, a lot of people who used them didn't realize where they come from. The foreign countries, many of those like France, or Germany, had money made out of aluminum during the war, which was very, one of the cheaper metals. And in America, during the war, nickel was needed very much for the war effort. So, the nickels that came out during the war were a silver alloy. A little different color than nickels today. But the way you really noticed them is on the back, the mint mark is a large letter above the dome of the President Jefferson's home. Whereas before the war, they were just a small emblem down in the corner by the corner of the house. So you can spot those nickels by the big mint mark. And of course the dimes and the quarters in those days were all ninety percent silver, so they're different than the ones we're using today too. Today when you buy something, you pay five cents for every dollars worth of goods you buy. But back in the thirties and forties, the states that had a sales tax, weren't charging that five percent. They were charging so man mills per dollar. A mill is a tenth of a cent. So for a penny you could get ten little aluminum

tokens, and you'd have to turn in some of those aluminum tokens and you'd spent your money. You carried tokens in one pocket and coins in another pocket I guess. But during the war they came out with plastic ones, because aluminum was more valuable than the plastic. Some states even had paper tokens, or pressed paper.

SS: How was the rationing effected once the European front was closed down?

GJ: Well, there were a lot of things that were in short supply. I mentioned candy and gum. But meats, we were lucky here in the farm area. In some of the towns meat was pretty dear. Now they're consumer goods. A lot of the chocolate went into C-rations. Cheese, the government bought up an awfully lot of the cheese. There wasn't much cheese around. There were a lot of commodities that were in short supply. There's been a lot of memorials given to the war. During the war certain stamps came out to commemorate the different things that happened. I have a list here. This, probably twenty, thirty stamps came out to commemorate the different branches of the service, and different battles, and after the war, leaders like Marshall and Patton and General Eisenhower were all memorialized. On the fiftieth anniversary of World War II the government issued each year a set of stamps [pulling out a set of books on the commemorative stamps] that showed where the fighting had taken place that year, and different aspects of the war. And, there's ten stamps on each sheet...in a strip across the top and the bottom. Each year there was a different, and then they put out a little commemorative book that you could buy that explained why each of those images on the stamps were chosen. But I myself, being a part of my youth, I'd always been interested in the war, and each year they did the same thing. It was just a matter of ...you've got the beginning of the war...getting geared up for the war...getting into battle...turning the tide on them...43...44...getting the road to victory...1945, victory at last. And so, you can tell, what you're looking at there, those things always have been quite important to me.

SS: It's in beautiful condition too.

GJ: When my boys were little, we used to do a lot with model airplanes. I still have a couple left here. My two favorite ones, I remember once...that's a P-51 Mustang, and a P-38 Lightning. A couple of the better planes. They didn't have stuff like that at the beginning of the war. This one [P-38 Lightning] had a twenty millimeter machine gun right down the nose. Two bodies, and one cockpit. The 51 was a very fast fighter. Sit down and I will show you a couple of other things here.

SS: Oh, wow!

GJ: That's a German bayonet.

SS: How did you get a hold of the bayonet?

GJ: A guy brought it to me. And here's a Japanese one.

SS: Oh, wow!

GJ: This is a Japanese army rifle. Six point five millimeter.

SS: The bayonet fits right there.

GJ: Yep. That rifle was liberated in the Philippines by a neighbor of mine, Ray Clements. Brought that home to me. A teenager. You don't think I was proud? Beautiful thing. When I first received it of course it had been handled a lot. It got beat up a little bit from transport but, a Japanese lady in the government plant where it was made had inscribed here on the stock red writing, Japanese, script, a good luck note to some soldier that might receive the...of course this particular weapon wasn't very good luck to the guy that had it.

SS: That's amazing. So did the men from the war often bring home items like this, or was this...

GJ: A few men did. But they weren't encouraged to do much of that because of... you get messing around with souvenirs you might do something stupid and live to regret it, if you lived. [Takes out World War II ammunition from a box].

SS: Like ammunition?

GJ: Now those have been shot.

SS: These have been shot?

GJ: That's fifty caliber machinegun. This one's thirty caliber. That is a hand grenade that's been deactivated. Powder has been drained, and the cap has been taken out of it. But it's still impressive.

SS: Even that's still heavy.

GJ: Yes... this is a bayonet for the carbine that the officers carried. This is a knife that the British commandos carried. You think the war meant a lot to me?

SS: It must have.

GJ: What weapon do you think killed more Japanese than any other weapon?

SS: Single weapon?

GJ: Yes.

SS: [Thinking aloud] Single weapon alone...that killed the most Japanese...



GJ: Well, there was a project that was a secret weapon really. That was called operation flare pistol. They were looking for something that could be dropped behind the lines to partisans. Natives on the islands. And this weapon is, flare pistol [retrieves a "flare pistol" from a box]. This was dropped behind the lines with a little instruction sheet. It wasn't in English, just a diagram here on how to cock the weapon, pull back and turn to the side, lift up on the gate. These would shoot one round, forty-five caliber ball, and you lower the gate, line up the pin in the back, one shot. There would be six or seven rounds in the butt, covered by a little plate. And the psychology behind this was, a native would have to, this would not be very accurate, this is made out of a piece of pipe spot-welded to a piece of steel wrapped around it for a handle. If you'd get close enough, to inflict an injury on the enemy, then you could have his weapon. So these were dropped by the thousands. And yet it's not good enough for a Japanese to use against us. It is just so slow to operate, and so inaccurate, that it really wouldn't be a counter offensive weapon in the hands of the enemy. But many veterans never saw those. Of course the officers carried side arms, forty-five Colt. And this is the M-1 bayonet that our boys carried. That is a brand new, never been used model. That finish is called parkerized, it is kind rust proof.

SS: You can see where the finish is off on the edge, from going in and out of the sheath.

GJ: Yep, it's been...had another cousin in the war that nobody's ever heard much about. Everybody's heard of the atomic bomb. A young man named Morris Jeppson, From Utah, his father, and my father were cousins. And he was a bright young man. As the war stated he was a college student in physics. And he was sent to, was going to school at Harvard, and when he finished he got into the service. They sent him on to MIT. A famous Massachusetts institute in technology. And then from there he went to Chicago where he was part, one of the lesser technicians leveled physicist on what was called the Manhattan Project, where the atomic bomb was developed. And he was with that project clear through the development and the testing. There was a famous airplane called the Enola Jay. And in the book by Thomason Witts, this was a big best seller back here right after the war, he is mentioned, in his role in the army is spoken about in that book. He had, they didn't dare arm the bomb when they put the bomb aboard the aircraft. When they sent it towards Japan. Other bombs are armed and prepared to explode. But they didn't know how the ride over would effect the bomb. Or there is a phenomenon in aircraft that are flying called St. Elmo's fires, it's kind of static electricity or electrical charges, how that would effect the bomb. They didn't arm it. And when they got so many minutes from ground zero when that bomb was to be released, somebody had to leave the warm surroundings of the fuselage and go down into the bomb and where it is many, many degrees below zero, and take off their gloves and arm the bomb. And Morris Jeppson was the last human being to touch that bomb before it was dropped.

SS: So he physically went down and armed the bomb.

GJ: He's the one that went down before it was dropped. That is something that a lot of people have never even heard, but in the military archives. That's the guy that rode it from the testing station to the island where it was stored to where it was ready to drop,

and drove it to its... signaled to the bombardier that it was time for bombs away, he's the one that touched the bomb last.

SS: Was he able to talk about the project much after the war?

GJ: I don't know. I have never met the man personally. I have a family record book that explains that after the war he opened up his own consulting firm, and worked for the government back east. And to my knowledge he's been living in the east ever since.

SS: What was he consulting?

GJ: I would imagine... nuclear energy... he's a physicist. But I have met some of his relations, but I've never met him personally. It has always been kind of interesting to me: I was too young to go to that one. So I didn't ever get to meet him. There is another little aspect of the war that was interesting to me. Of course in Germany, after World War I, they had so much inflation, that instead of having bills, one mark, an ten, and fifty marks, they had bills for ten thousand and five thousand marks, and they were still worthless. That it would take...a...

SS: Use them to start fires...

GJ: That's right, light cigarettes with, and it would take a wheelbarrow full for a loaf of bread. And even the bills they had were superimposed with, or surcharged with a higher amount over the original amount. To bring them up so they were worth a little more. And then in North Africa, the British had their own currency. There is always a problem in war that if our money gets in the wrong hands it could be used for the wrong things. So each government had their own invasion currency. So the British armed forces had a special currency they used that is areas where they were living. Nobody would accept British money. The same thing happened in India and Burma. The Japanese put out a special issue of rupees, for the use in the area where they had been [showing various examples of the different currencies in a binder]...Malaysia, here is the Dutch [unintelligible]...and that's a Japanese currency...and that's a Japanese currency for the Philippine islands here...these three, pesos...and when we took over Japan, this is some money my cousin Thomas, a marine, he picked up in Japan. And as we took over countries, here is the money we used in France the occupational currency that the troops would use. Here is the money we used in Germany. And in Italy, Japan, that's our occupation money.

SS: An interesting little square bill there.

GJ: And these ones, these were used in Korea by us. This is a famous one that never did get used. Japanese government even had dollars printed to be used in Hawaii and the United States when they invaded here. But they didn't get that far.

SS: So, how did you get most of your knowledge about what was happening in the war?

GJ: Newsreels, papers. They didn't dare write much. If mail falls into the wrong hands...

SS: Loose lips, sink ships?

GJ: That's right, and they weren't encouraged to even talk about it, telephoning or anything. Some of the stories weren't even told till after the war was over. And it's an ironic thing, some of the men that were in the heaviest fighting will be the least talkative. A lot of those memories were things that some of the men would rather not think about.

SS: So how did this affect you, this experience when the war was over, seeing these young men come back, when the Korean war broke out?

GJ: Well, I graduated from High School in 1948. Then probably the best legislation in this government ever did, was called the GI Bill. And that meant that young men, and women, returning from the service were entitled to so much schooling, and certain moderate expenses paid by the government. So much for the amount of time they had put in. And as far as the benefits of this country being paid back for their expenditure, there had probably been no other legislation ever passed that benefited the country as much as that. Because after the war, thousands of those young people came home and went to college. And I know when I was student at Ricks College in 1948, many, many of the class people there were veterans. And the high school boys, some of us were just graduates, felt like kids because here's these, we thought "old people" going to school with us. Nowadays, now that I'm the age I am that doesn't seem very old. But at the time those guys seemed old to me.

SS: How much respect did they gain, as a whole, from the younger class?

GJ: Well, respect is a thing you kind of earn, you give them the benefit of the doubt. But the people you respected were the ones who were patriotic, and pleasant to be around, and willing to be of service to people. The war made some men a little coarse, a little bit loud, made other men just the opposite. A little bit humble, a little bit friendly. A good example of this latter would be a man named Decker who was an English teacher at Ricks College. He came home at the end of the war. When the war was over there was three hundred of them survived. So he was one of the minority that came out of that alive. And very few of those men wanted to, have much to say about the war. It was a tough experience. Their best friends, few lived to tell about it. Brother Deck came home and went to school at BYU and he developed a friendship with a famous man named...the old fellow now who talks about the Book of Mormon...what was his name...Hugh Nibley. Hugh Nibley's a genius. He knows many languages, many foreign languages, and many dead languages, that nobody else knows about any more these days. But, Brother Decker and a couple of other young men. And Brother Nibley took him under him under his wing and would have him in his home as guests. And you might stay, sit up and talk about religion and values and morals and what the world needed and very deep philosophical discussions. And here's a man that's tough, one of the toughest trained killers in the world, became an English teacher after the war. He came to Ricks

and I've never talked to anybody that was a student of his that didn't love him. He was a great man. He died climbing the Tetons. Fell off the mountain. But, his boys were classmates of mine when I served in Sugar City. He lived out in Plano. And he was one of the great men of this world, as far as I'm concerned. So it depends on the person, how you respect them. What they did with their lives. There were some great ones. There's a fellow in our community here now...Burtman, flew B-17s, he's still alive. He taught school here, taught shop as I remember here in Sugar-Salem. And he later went over to Ricks College and was in the welding department. Taught that for many years. His wife was a math teacher here. He's still around. Good old guy. Great man. So there's a few of the old crowd still around. That made an impact of this world.

SS: How did these, do you remember these men when the Korean War broke out, how they reacted to the conflict?

GJ: Well, nearly every one of my buddies to a man joined up, went...I wanted to go so bad, I could taste it. I tried. I had got as far as Salt Lake for the Navy. I had had the dubious privilege of having cancer when I was a teenager. Three operations in ten months, and the inclusion on the last operation I went into shock and hemorrhaged. They brought in hot water bottles on their arms and the nurses put those around my legs to promote circulation. But when you're in shock you don't have much circulation and my legs baked third degree from the waist down and I have massive scars. That's something a lot of people don't know because I usually wear my pants. But, when I went down for a physical when I dropped my drawers the Navy just laughed and told me to put 'em on and go home. And then later, and none of the services would take me and then I was called up for the draft and went on over to Boise I got the same reaction and was classified 4F. And I was always somewhat envious of the men that were—I thought it was a privilege to get to go serve your country. Some of the men that went weren't so sure it was a privilege, but...In our part of the country, we didn't see the draft-dodgers and the men running off to Canada. Ya got into more populated places and certain name like Jane Fonda cam up or this dubious character Kerry, who was in the Army but after the war was over, I've seen some pictures taken of his with Jane Fonda and some unusual rallies during the Vietnamese War. So I question if all the veterans had the same spirit about the war, even though at a later day, when it is an asset for 'em, some of them suddenly remember how "patriotic" they were.

SS: Selective memory loss?

GJ: Well, you can tell I'm not a fan of certain democratic candidates.

SS: I can see that. So, did, I imagine you kept track of the Korean War as it progressed.

GJ: Oh, I'll say! Oh, I'll say it...We had some of the boys come back from that at Ricks. I had dropped out for about five years and went on a mission. And when I cam home in 1952 some of the Korean War boys were coming home. One guy that I met that I'll never forget is, I can't remember his last name, his name was Fred, strange looking kid. I think he joined the Church. And heard about Ricks and came, and he said that over there

some of the men were talking about guks this, and guks that, and putting the Asian people down. Our OK troops, or Republic of Korea troops. And didn't have much respect for them. But he always felt like they were doing the best they could with the training and background that they had. And one winter it was really cold over there and it was so cold that we had men dying of frostbite every night. And Fred said that one morning he woke up in the hospital. Some of these so called guks that the other men didn't appreciate had found him and he had treated him in a fair, friendly manner. And they, as carefully as they could, freed him from the ice that he was frozen solid to and got 'em to a hospital. Consequently one side of his face and neck were scarred as badly as if they'd been burned from the frost. But he expressed a great appreciation of those ethnic peoples of Korea. Because they had saved his life. And I thought that was a pretty good object lesson. Ya better learn to accept all men as brothers and time might come when your life might depend on it.

SS: What was the general attitude towards the Japanese at the end of World War II?

GJ: Well I think it depends on where you lived. Now in this part of the country there's some really good Japanese people. I was a teenager the last part of my high school down in what's called Rexburg third ward. Southeast corner of town, down where the Fantastic Inn is, was there our building was. That was called German Town. Most Ricks, Cowers, Steiners, Buchmillers, Becks, those were all German names. And up till World War I, they spoke German in the Mormon Church. But it became out of fashion, so they switched over to English. But in that same ward we had a number of Japanese families that had come over as laborers. And they were so industrious. Many of them got wives sent over from Japan. And there's a family named Hikadie, and Matura, and Sakoda, and many of them had been families here now they're in the third and fourth generation. And because of those people living here with us, they were excellent farmers, very conservative with their funds, and at school they some of the best students in your class. Anytime you had a Japanese-American kid there they tended their business, never riotous, they were always cultured, and courteous. And I think that people around here saw that side of the Japanese. Maybe if you were in California or Hawaii, you might be a little more scared of them. [Speaking sarcastically:] 'Cause they might be spies. But the ones around here they were not interned some of them had relations that were. But the ones around here because we're because so far inland, and so far from military bases, I don't think many of these were ever interned. In Madison County, the most decorated veterans, well the most decorated one, was a Japanese soldier.

SS: What was his name?

GJ: I can remember where he lived...Hikadie. And he lived up in Teton city. I don't know if he's still alive or not...I remember his, Tob and Calves. There was three or four of them Hikadie boys. Pretty good men. Pretty good men...And he was the most decorated veteran of World War II from this country.

SS: You mentioned you served a mission during the Korean War. Where did you serve?

GJ: California.

SS: What were the feelings there in California while you were on a mission? Was the work harder than you would think in a peace time or...

GJ: Well, we got word just before I left that because some people might be a little envious of some of us being on missions instead of in the Army, that the Church was discontinuing its practice of traveling without purse of script. So there was some concern that people might ridicule us or put us down because of that, but when I got to Salt Lake they said: "Well, there's one mission that's still doing that. It's California. And when we got down to California, I remember the first day that we were there checking in, having intake interviews with our President, David R. Stoddard, he said that there was one district where we are still doing it. It is over here in Arizona. And that's where I was assigned. Well in Arizona there was an old couple from Ehrenberg. There were two Elders in Baghdad where the community, the mining supported that town, furnished their housing. And two Sisters in Prescott. The other two of us, the supervisor and myself were the only two Elders in that district, and for about four months we traveled without purse of script. To my knowledge we were the last ones in the Church that did. And they finally told us to discontinue.

SS: How receptive were people?

GJ: In Arizona there had been missionaries there for about sixty years. And we had some success. My companion and I did a lot of traveling between branches and wards, and looking for people's names that had been lost. Some proselyting, and we were supporting a Baghdad Branch, of course it's a copper pit out there. Because there was no Priesthood to run that branch. So we were the branch officers. And after about a year, transferred to California. It was the highest producing mission in the Church at that time. Now's that was during '51 and 2. A famous man that you've probably heard of, named Hinckley, was working for the Church during those years. His job was to, in the public relations, in charge of microfilms and pictures, and recordings and the publications of the Church...he and one of the Presidency Steven L. Richards, came down and we were invited as a mission to come up with a standard missionary plan for the Church. They decided which...there was a hodgepodge of plans being used all over the world. And they said, you must be doing something right, you come up with something we can use in the rest of the world. And so they came up with a number of lessons that they wanted to have. And topics they wanted covered. And then each week, in each of the districts of the mission, two Elders (or two missionaries) be assigned to prepare a lesson on that topic, and two more in the same district. Now Saturday, the district would get together and those four that had prepared the lessons would be separated. Two would be out studying in another room, and two would present to the district, and sit down, and the blackboard would be covered and the other two would come in and on a different blackboard they'd present their lesson. And then the district would decide which points of those lessons should be included in a forty-minute lesson. And then those notes and visual aides were taken by our district leader to the mission office the next day. And dos the best lessons from the whole mission would be brought in, and they would be

presented by the group leaders. And they would come up with one plan for the mission for that topic. And by the time we got to the whole list of topics, those were sent to Salt Lake, and in the fall of 1952, we had another conference and they had these published. And it looked just about like a half of a Sears-Roebuck catalog. Pretty heavy. And they presented that and congratulated us. Knew, we had gotten a lot of growth out of it. But they said, now here's another proposition... Since we gave you this assignment, another mission has passed you on production. The Great Lakes mission. And they've got a gimmick out there where six or eight meetings and they would challenge them to baptize, and they'd baptize the. And that's a little bit more the approach they're using now days. And that was the birth of the concept that they're still kind of using today. Fifty some odd years later. And we think that is working so well that we would like to have you hear a demonstration of that. And so they brought two boys up on the stand, who were just recent returned missionaries from the Great Lakes, and had them present the door approach and the first couple of lessons to our whole mission. And then they passed out a copy of that and said, you use whatever one you want. Which one do you think would be the most effective? And so that's about the time they went away from these twenty-eight, thirty, thirty-five lesson approaches. Sometimes you'd get people converted and then you'd talk their leg off, and almost talk them out of it before you got them in the water. Or be transferred, two of three sets of missionaries be transferred before you ever got 'em to the point that you ever talked about baptism. And that was not very productive. Made lots of friends for the Church. But it didn't do the thing that they wanted done.

SS: Well, thank you. Is there anything else you can think of?

GJ: Well I think the Lord's blessed this world. And he's preserved us. Sometimes I worry about when I see things like the recent halftime show at the World Series [the Super Bowl], where our country's going. And I think in the Book of Mormon, when the people were prosperous, and happy, they, how they forgot their promises and commitments, and how they were punished. The only thing that we've got safety in now is the gospel. And we've been told the gospel will never be taken again till the Second Coming. If it wasn't for that, I'd be a little worried. Because I see some things happening in America, and in the world today that are about as deviant as could be. That's...it's been a great time...I think of my lifetime, and my father's lifetime. That's this entire century now, what's happened. Airplanes, motorcars, electricity, nuclear power, going to the moon. In one life time of my father all of these things happened. So the blessings of the Lord have been showered on the earth. If we can just...gotta know what we're supposed to do with 'em.

SS: Thank you very much.

GJ: Sure, no problem.