

Q: What was your economic situation during the war?

A: Well as far as we were concerned, we had a fixed salary. We knew we were going to get it. We weren't affected in that way.

Q: Grandpa still worked at the bank?

A: Yes, he worked there over thirty years all told, and during those years he was working at the bank we were practically sure. That of course was during 33' when other people were having trouble. Throughout the war they needed him more because they had trouble getting people to work for them because so many of the younger boys were in the service. So, there was a shortage of working people during that era when the boys were gone.

Q: How old were you then?

A: Well what time was that? 42' or 43', wasn't it? I was born in 1888. That's 54 or 55.

Q: What about the bond deal?

A: No, I don't think we resented it at all. Jack worked at the bank you know, so we bought bonds regularly. I think nearly everybody was doing the same thing, through the people they worked for. They paid for them by the month out of their salary.

Q: You say John helped sell them for a while?

A: Well, that was when he was in training to be a paratrooper. They would send up these planes that would carry paratroops and the paratroopers would jump off and land and try to sell bonds the way I remember it. He made a lot of what they called just show. Things to show what their money might be spent for. To get planes to carry paratroopers who could drop in and get supplies and men and weapons or whatever they might need in their fighting. That was one thing that the paratroopers did and another thing, I remember when they landed in Holland that time that you read in the letter from John. So often boys that flew the planes for them would have to come down so low once in a while that maybe they wouldn't make it. The pilot would dump his plane and be killed. The fella that brought them in. I remember another thing that John did say at the time. He found that some of the fellas that he got closed to, the next thing they knew, that fella would be seriously injured or killed you know. He tried not to make any close friends with them. There were no particular pals of his really in the paratroops, because they were from all over the country. Harry, in fact, was the best one of his closest pals, that's Harry Flack, Ann's brother. They would arrange their furloughs so that Harry had John come home too at the same time. The last furlough that Harry had, John came home too, at the same time, to be with Harry. And that's why when we heard Harry had been lost on that boat just 3 weeks after he left this country, it just, oh you have no idea how it makes you feel. A boy that had been in and out of your home for two or three years. John had been dating Anne you know, and the four of them would go out on double dates and that sort of thing. Of course, they weren't sure for quite a while, whether that whole ship had been lost. They did eventually say so far as they knew, that nobody on that boat was ever heard of again. Several hundred men I suppose. It was a troop ship, sort of, carrying them. It seems to me they were on their way to Africa at the time. You know there was some fighting over in Africa too. I have a feeling that that's where Harry was bound for.

Q: Either Africa or Southern Italy.

A: Yeah or Southern Italy. They had some pretty rough going in Southern Italy. An awful lot of men were lost there too.

Q: What did you all do for fun during that time?

A: Well I remember Dorothy and her girlfriends, girls she'd grown up with, got together in little groups. They had a sewing club and a kind of what they called a sorority. What it really was, was a kind of a get together. These sewing clubs were a bunch of girls, mostly from our church, and all of Dorothy's close friends. About a dozen of them would meet from house to house and they claimed to be sewing, but what they did mostly was talk, you know, and then they started round robin letters, a certain group of them. It would go to one girl and she would add her letter and send it on to the next girl. Things like that. We'd go to shows and out to dinner occasionally, things like that. Those were about the things. And then our church, whatever was going on in church, like a church supper, church entertainment. We had things like that. I imagine the movies did pretty well, because everybody went to the movies in those days.

Q: They've really changed a lot, haven't they?

A: They sure have, changed an awful lot.

Q: I remember some of those old movies from watching them on T.V. They were all red, white a blue. Musicals, a lot of musicals back then.

A: Yes, and some of the boys that were really in the service were putting on shows of different sorts. Sort of to keep people interested in probably buying bonds and help the boys that were over there fighting. Everyone was interested in helping the boys over there. And the boys were anxious to go! They were just carefree kids you know. I don't know how many boys from our church. They had a service at our church, sort of a memorial service, for the boys that didn't come back. I think there were about thirty boys, twenty-five to thirty boys. They had a list of them hanging in the church. The ones that we lost.

Q: Just from your neighborhood?

A: Just from our church, not from our neighborhood. Just the boys that had gone to church there. We knew practically every boy that we lost, a little bit ya know, if just to say hello if nothing else. It seemed to be the ones you liked the most or cared the most about seemed to be the ones that got it. Of course, it wasn't true entirely. I think your mother lost a cousin. If not, he was badly shot up. It seems to me he was in the 82nd Airborne. I'm not sure. In their family Chuck would be the only boy. Your Aunt Margarita was in the Army.

Q: Navy.

A: Yes navy, and I remember the girls in Navy had, of course, the dark blue uniform fitted. Your Aunt Dorothy was training boys that were, was teaching boys down on Michigan Ave. They had a school teaching boys about cars or something. What was it she was teaching? What they did, they got these girls as teachers, and trained them to teach just one specific thing and somebody else would teach the

next thing that combined with it. So that in two or three classes they would get the work. She didn't know very much about anything except the thing she taught. Sort of a cut and dried thing you know. There was a man at the head of it that really knew. It was about planes, I think. Training boys who expected to fight to train for flyers. Maybe for keeping the planes in the air. You know what I'm talking about.

Q: Mechanics?

A: Yes mechanics. I forgot what she was teaching. I never thought I'd forget that, cause some of the men that heard she was teaching these things, would ask how come she knew anything about it. Of course, she's laugh and say she was trained in that one thing, and she'd learned it just like you would learn a verse of a poem and you recited it. That was about what it amounted to. The girls would do a pretty good job as far as their knowledge was concerned. If someone asked a question you couldn't answer, and you thought it was important you could go to the man who was the head of the girls, training the girls to do this, and ask him to explain it to them. They could give it to the boys. They put them in uniform too. She wore a uniform during the time she served. She wasn't really in the Army or Air Corps, but they had this uniform to make it all uniform. Each girl dressed the same. It was part of it. When they would walk down the street there in Chicago, she worked in the loop, they were in uniform, so all the soldiers saluted them when they met them on the street. The girls got kind of a kick out of it because they were not enlisted people at all. They were just in uniform for convenience. The city was crowded with people in uniform all the time, during the war. I do remember that distinctly. Met so many people of all types and kinds, in the army or navy, and you'd go down to the station where the trains came in. Why, it was just filled with people going here, there, and everywhere.

Q: What did you feel about the war?

A: While it was going on?

Q: Before and during.

A: Well, of course, we were not planning on going into the war at all. In fact, Wilson went into office saying he'd keep us out of war.

Q: Wrong Pres Grandma, wrong war too.

A: Oh, that's the first World War. The second World War Roosevelt was president and I guess we were all for him. I don't really remember. Well of course I do remember it was that Japan thing that started it off you know. The boys that went over to fight in the Philippines, they were the ones that really were lost. Lost a lot. In fact, when John came home, he expected to go over there. They were still fighting over there in some places, but he was discharged. He had enough points by then. John was in the service, counting everything five years. That's a long time out of a young kid's life! He was 20 or 21 when he first went in.

Q: You say everybody was for Roosevelt?

A: Oh yes! And the people that were against him, why, they were all wrong! Of course, I never voted for Roosevelt once – never! I voted for whoever ran against him. I never was for Roosevelt, and when

he went up for a third term, I wondered how anybody else could vote him in for a third term. By that time everybody knew he was an invalid. When finally, he died, the people that were for him were so radical they thought the world was coming to an end. There was a very strong feeling for him among the people that voted for him. I never felt that I hated him, but I didn't think he was all that wonderful at any time. I think it was Dewey who ran against Truman wasn't it? The first time Dewey ran for president, Truman beat him out. Truman was fighting for himself. He didn't even have his party with him. He went out and said he was s going to win the election and he did it. Everybody was shocked including me.

Q: You mentioned rationing earlier.

A: Oh yes, they rationed sugar and coffee and butter, and I don't remember who else. Prices went sky high. I'd like to know if prices weren't' just as high proportionally as they are now.