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Gettysburg College

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Interview with Edward Bulleit, January 7, 1997

Description

Edward "Ted" Bulleit, Class of 1935, was interviewed on January 7, 1997 by Michael J. Birkner & David Hedrick about his time at Gettysburg College. He discusses his experiences of attending college during the Great Depression, the political science department, fraternity life and the administration of Henry W.A. Hanson. He also describes his years as a law student at Duke University, his time in the US Air Force during World War II, and his return to Gettysburg as a lawyer.

Length of Interview: 72 minutes

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Disciplines

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Birkner: I am sitting in the Lincoln Square offices of Bulleit, Schultz, and Thrasher with Edward Bulleit, also known as Ted Bullet, who is a long time attorney in Gettysburg and a graduate of Gettysburg College, class of 1935. The main purpose of the interview today is to talk with Ted about his Gettysburg College connection. I wanted to start though, a little bit before you go off to Gettysburg College, and get the circumstances of your growing up, Ted. Could you tell me where you grew up?

Bulleit: Yes, we only came here to Gettysburg in 1927. I was born in Indianapolis, Indiana. I have almost no recollections of that. I spent a lot of time on the banks of the Ohio River opposite Louisville, Kentucky. My family sort of gravitated to New Albany, Indiana from the regions around what we call Corydon, Indiana, that was where my father was from. My mother was from New Albany.

Birkner: What was your father doing for a living . . . ?

Bulleit: Well, my father had finished high school and went across the river for two years at the University of Louisville into law school, no college and got his certificate in Indiana as a lawyer, but he didn't practice. He started out in the newspaper business with the Indianapolis Star. That's where he grew up. [This is a] long story. He was almost at death's door when World War I began. He wanted to take some part. He moved up to Canton, Ohio with the Red Cross. I think he was the Chapter Executive, you know they have a paid man. There he met a man who was a millionaire, interested in the Red Cross, and went to Congress and asked my dad to go with him as his secretary.

Birkner: The secretary in those days would be the equivalent really today of the administrative assistant.

Bulleit: Yes, I think they probably would call him that today. They didn't have much. I think maybe they would have perhaps one or two stenographers, that was about all That's where I spent most of my cognitive childhood, I think.

Birkner: Your father wasn't secretary for this Congressman for more than one term?

Bulleit: He was secretary, but the Congressman lost out in the second term. He was a fine, influential man. But, what's interesting about it, he came from New Oxford, PA. His name was Joseph Himes. He married this lady, who had the Timkin name, which was a big name, which you don't even know about. We lived on Roller Bearings with her in the early days and the Timkin Roller Bearings was where people had lots of money.

(something inaudible in background)

Birkner: How would you spell Himes?

Bulleit: Himes? H-I-M-E-S. The name is known. I think there are still some Himes down there in New Oxford. When the Congressman was defeated, my father got another job as Special Assistant to the Attorney General. I told some folks here today, in the Office this morning, that the Government Accounting Office, the GAO, and I told him what my father had been, but not to be too stuck up about it, I also told him that my brother years later and only a few years ago, looked it up and found that he was making 2,000 dollars a year in Washington. But, he was entitled to the term honorable, because he was the Special Assistant to the Attorney General.

Birkner: Right, but 2,000 dollars went further then, obviously.

Bulleit: But because of his connection with Joe Himes, he came up here to Gettysburg in 1927. We came up then. I entered high school here.

Birkner: He actually decided to set up a law practice in Gettysburg in 1927?

Bulleit: Yes, we came up here. Joe Himes was related, I believe, to John D. Keith, his office is down the hall here. John D. Keith took Dad in and they really got along very well. There was never a thought that Dad would be a partner there, but he took him in and helped him get his clerkship, which you needed in Pennsylvania and also he took a course down in Philadelphia to bring himself up to speed so he could pass the bar examination.

Birkner: Did your father actually wind of working for Keith or did set up his own single?

Bulleit: I don't know what arrangements, I think even Joe Himes kept him on a retainer for certain things for a while, because he had a family. My brother he was about ten years younger than I.

Birkner: How old were you when you moved to Gettysburg?

Bulleit: Thirteen.

Birkner: What was your reaction, if you can remember it, moving to Gettysburg at the age of thirteen?

Bulleit: Well, I came in there one night, woke up the next morning, and was kind of startled. I remember riding out, we lived in what we called the Tipton Apartments, which were on East Middle Street, right at the entrance of Confederate Avenue there, you know.

Birkner: Yes, I know.

Bulleit: I rode my bicycle out, I was quite impressed by the battlefield there. But, it was pretty hard being an utter stranger. I had graduated actually from the seventh grade in Maryland, they

only had seven years then, but I entered high school here.

Birkner: It was a more rustic experience for you than it had been in Maryland, right?

Bulleit: Oh yes, absolutely, absolutely. I can remember being rather amused and my family would make jokes about how people talked. Pretty soon, we got to the place where we wondered what we were wondering about. But that was funny, because we talked that way, too.

Birkner: Did you immediately pick up on the Civil War reverberations of this town?

Bulleit: I don't think so. I wasn't hip for it. I regret to say, but I haven't been a real student as much as I really should be, of history. Of course, you're bound to be influenced by it.

Birkner: Were you and your brother the two children in the family or were there more children?

Bulleit: Just two. Just my brother and I.

Birkner: What was your brother's name?

Bulleit: Thomas Bulleit, and he's also a graduate of Gettysburg College, Class of 1943. He attended the ROTC program. He came along just about the time that World War II was coming on, you see. I remember in the car with him someplace, he was just bound and determined to get out, because I had been drafted early almost a year before Pearl Harbor. He was gung-ho, you know, when the war came along and I begged him to stay and finish his ROTC program, which he did and he got his commission at Louisville, some camp out there near Louisville, Kentucky.

Birkner: Then, he went off to Europe?

Bulleit: Yes, he went to Europe. I went the other way.

Birkner: Now did he survive the war?

Bulleit: Yes, he did. He's not in very good shape physically now. But as I said, he was a graduate of Gettysburg College, too, and he is living in Washington, D. C., Bethesda, Maryland, actually. [He died in 1997.]

Birkner: Well, I am glad to know that. Now, were you a good student in high school?

Bulleit: Yes, I often have to confess that all the girls either got pregnant or one got St. Vitus Dance and so all the eligible girls for the high honors sort of became ineligible, so I became Salutatorian. I wasn't Valedictorian.

Birkner: Okay. When it came time to think about college, was it, first off, assumed that you would go to college or was that something you had to argue for?

Bulleit: It wasn't a question of my arguing for. My father would have done anything and my mother, too, to get me in college. But there was a real question in my mind whether I could make it. I often tell people today, that there wasn't a question of where will you go to college, it was can you go to college anywhere. If you did, you went to Gettysburg College.

Birkner: Why was that?

Bulleit: Because it was too expensive to live away from home. You lived at home and we were the townies. I don't know if you have heard that term. I don't suppose they use that much anymore.

Birkner: Oh, it's still heard.

Bulleit: We were the townies, and that's, I think, a disadvantage. I made Dr.[John] Zinn mad. I don't know if you remember Dr. Zinn?

Birkner: Well, I certainly know about him. I never met him.

Bulleit: Dr. Zinn was in the Chemistry department for many years and very highly respected. He was a very good supporter of Gettysburg College. He got a little annoyed at me when I sent my children away from here, away from town, to go to school. My feeling was just because, I think, I had been a townie, that you miss so much, if you don't get into the college environment.

Birkner: I agree with your philosophy, even though I am a supporter of Gettysburg College.

Bulleit: I am, too.

Birkner: I want my kids to go away to school. I think it's part of the experience. Let me ask you, in those days I suspect that it wasn't a very complicated process, but do you remember the process by which you got admitted. Did you have to be introduced to the registrar? Was the registrar "Hips" Wolfe in those days?

Bulleit: I think "Hips" Wolfe was still registrar. Dean [Wilbur] Tilberg was the dean and I became very close to Dean Tilberg after college.

Birkner: Let's start first with the process of coming to Gettysburg. How did your father or you initiate the process of getting accepted to Gettysburg?

Bulleit: You know, I have no recollection, I don't believe it. After I was in Gettysburg for a while, I would work at the college in the summer for a little while, on the staff. Summer jobs for kids were awfully hard to come by.

Birkner: Sure.

Bulleit: I remember the staff, Dr. Henry Hanson, Dean Tilberg, and I didn't know him as well, but "Hips" Wolfe and how we all just hung around until we got that 500th student, because then we thought we could break even.

Birkner: You were waiting through the summer for this student's enrollment to come in?

Bulleit: They were waiting right up to the fall, for that to come in.

Birkner: Of course, you're talking about the Depression.

Bulleit: Any body who was warm.

Birkner: Actually, it was in the [19]20's, it wouldn't have been a depression year.

Bulleit: I finished high school in [19]31.

Birkner: Okay.

Bulleit: The depression was really on at the finish.

Birkner: You're right, it was very much on-

Bulleit: It took a little while to get out to the country really, so we were hitting some of the worst times.

Birkner: Now, when you enrolled in Gettysburg College, Ted, you enrolled in 1931?

Bulleit: 1931, and I don't know when. I guess in the fall. You know, there wasn't much of a program as there is today. There was no such thing as an orientation week.

Birkner: Right. You obviously knew the campus well, because you played on and been on it as a kid?

Bulleit: I used to play tennis on Lincoln Avenue, opposite of there now are some dormitories, but there were some tennis courts right behind the Science Hall. I played tennis there vigorously for several summers.

Birkner: Did you feel excitement, though, about being a college student or how did you feel about it?

Bulleit: Frankly, I felt gratitude that I could go. I remember going to my father every semester and saying, "Dad, do you think we can really handle this," and let me tell you it was tough going. Then, I got a break, because I didn't tell you, Mike, I don't believe, but I regard myself as a very

special person at Gettysburg College. I think I'm one of the few student teachers emeritus.

Birkner: No, I didn't know that.

Bulleit: I was given an assignment as a student teacher and a colleague. Professor [Joseph] Larkin, I served for two years and that gave me my tuition and I want to tell you, I am grateful to the college.

Birkner: Was it because he had had you in class?

Bulleit: Yes, I took a course with him sophomore year.

Birkner: He recognized you had some skills?

Bulleit: Evidently. I mean, it surprised me, no question about it. He taught the classes, I think there was about four of them and then we would have the lab sessions in the afternoon and I would preside over the lab sessions. He was never there. I was in charge of that. Monday fellows thought I was the most stupid person in the world, but the Friday fellows thought I was brilliant, because I could sense the errors before they even asked me about them, by that time.

Birkner: I understand Let me ask, if you haven't talked about this, what would be your generalization about the student body at Gettysburg, when you became a student? Was it heavily Lutheran? Heavily Pennsylvanian? What other characteristics would you spit out?

Bulleit: I think you realize that you don't think about things at the time, now this is going backwards and reversing your direction of thought. I was impressed by the fact that there were a lot of students of our small class, who went on to the seminary or other Lutheran activities. It was largely Pennsylvanian, but quite a bit of New Jersey.

Birkner: Even in the [19]30's.

Bulleit: In the [19]30's, particularly. I have never heard the expression, I think they have used it some time in recent years, sort of the minor Ivy League, you know what I mean. What term do they use, sub-Ivy or something?

Birkner: Sure.

Bulleit: I never heard that. We just didn't even think about that. In fact, we didn't know too much about other colleges. There wasn't the dialogue that there is today.

Birkner: Right. Absolutely. I follow you. Was your family Lutheran?

Bulleit: No, my father wasn't much of a church-goer. I think he was, oh, I forget what

designation they called that in Indiana, and he got irritated with the church somehow and he didn't go to church. My mother was a Presbyterian and I went to the Presbyterian church in Washington and in Gettysburg.

Birkner: My understanding of President Hanson's attitude on things was that he wanted very much to mold Christian gentlemen. He wasn't concerned that you had to be Lutheran necessarily.

Bulleit: I think you're right.

Birkner: He wanted Christian gentlemen among his students, right?

Bulleit: He put his arm around me one day, I believe I was either a junior or a senior. I was walking along the lawn and he came along. It's a small town. I never will forget, he put his arm around me and he said, "my boy, . . . have you ever considered the ministry." I nearly died laughing when I told my folks that, because I had never had. But, my father said to me, "I always thought that you might be a minister." I didn't get to be a minister, but I thought that was kind of interesting that Dr. Hanson evidently was trying to make recruits wherever he could.

Birkner: That's very interesting. It shows us his priorities. Tell me a little bit more about Hanson. How would you describe him as president of Gettysburg College? I don't know whether you want to talk about something physical or do you want to talk about his philosophy, it doesn't matter.

Bulleit: Henry Hanson was bigger than life. Of course, I didn't call him Henry Hanson, obviously. He was quite something. He spoke in a very solemn voice and talked about lifting your eyes to the heavens. He sounded like the voice of, at least, one of the prophets, not higher than that. (Both laugh) He really was a very wonderful man. His family were fine. I saw Bob Hanson just not too long ago at a seminar.

Birkner: He's still active with the college on the Trustees [as an emeritus trustee].

Bulleit: Yes, I know he is.

Birkner: He comes down from Harrisburg when he can.

Bulleit: He was a fine boy. I think T. Painter has died, if I'm not mistaken.

Birkner: Is that the older son?

Bulleit: Yes. Well, there were two, weren't there. Was there three sons? I believe maybe there were. There was Bob, T. Painter, and I think there was another one, that I didn't know as well.

Birkner: It's interesting, you say there was a T. Painter, because someone had just appraised me of the fact, but that one of the most distinguished historians of Abraham Lincoln was a man named James G. Randall and he was married to a woman named Painter and it was indeed the sister of Mrs. Hanson, who was a Painter.

Bulleit: Isn't that something. I never knew that.

Birkner: That's where the name came from.

Bulleit: . . . If I'm not mistaken, I thought that T. Painter, or one of them, had married the Muller Organ daughter over in Hagerstown.

Birkner: That could be possible.

Bulleit: Bob was a little younger than I. T. Painter was a little older.

Birkner: Okay. Did President Hanson have very much engagement with the undergraduates, the college students?

Bulleit: He spoke once a week, at least. We had compulsory chapel back in those days. I think it was 8:45. You'd have your first class, then you'd go down to the chapel. That would be the shift over. There was a fifteen minute chapel and you'd shift over to the hour for the rest of the classes.

Birkner: He would be, at least once a week, speaking at that?

Bulleit: At least once a week.

Birkner: Of course, the other ceremonial occasions, he was there?

Bulleit: "Prick the skin of a Gettysburg man, and you'd find the true blood of a gentleman."

Birkner: That was what he would say?

Bulleit: Something, maybe a little variation from that. And we all kind of kidded about that. But everyone had a high regard for him.

Birkner: Was he visible, working in the garden outside of his home, or anything of that kind, or taking walks on the campus?

Bulleit: I never saw him. I saw him occasionally as I told you, walking, strolling on the campus. It wasn't much of a walk over to Brua Chapel, I guess you don't call it Brua Chapel anymore. Kline, I think it is.

Birkner: Yes. But, it's still the Brua building. Did President Hanson smoke cigars?

Bulleit: You know, I believe you're right. I think he did smoke great big cigars. I wouldn't have known, if you hadn't suggested that. I believe he did.

Birkner: That was probably a commonplace for a person of that era.

Bulleit: I don't say that he did it coming down to chapel or anything.

Birkner: No, but he liked to smoke cigars?

Bulleit: I think he did. We saw Dr. Hanson a lot. I believe for a while he may have been in the Rotary, Mike.

Birkner: Oh.

Bulleit: I really can't be sure. And more or less an honorary status, you know. We've often had presidents of the college in Rotary.

Birkner: Was [Charles] Glassick in Rotary?

Bulleit: Glassick at one time, I think, was in for a while. And Hanson.

Birkner: Arnold Hanson?

Bulleit: Arnold Hanson. I knew him fairly well.

Birkner: That's interesting. I wonder if we'll ever have a day where we get another president who joins again. They're so busy, they seem to be right now, running over here and there.

Bulleit: Mike, one of the sad things I think about the colleges today, and I don't blame Gettysburg any more than any other, you had a teaching faculty of maybe ten, and a promotion faculty fund raising of about 100. That's the way it looks to us.

Birkner: It's perception, but perception is difficult to overcome.

Bulleit: Yes. I think we almost went too far.

Birkner: The college is in a situation as many colleges are.

Bulleit: No different than other colleges, right.

Birkner: They've got to go out and beat the bushes, and it can get frustrating if you're one of the

bushes they're beating. Let me ask you about the move. You came to Gettysburg. You had been a good student in high school. What was your impression of that first year at college? Did you get challenged in some of your courses? What do you most remember about the courses and the teachers you had? Did you have Dr. Zinn for Chemistry?

Bulleit: Yes, but now I have to stop and think. I'm pretty sure I didn't have him the first year. I'm not too sure. I took Physics under Dr. Cheney and he was a merciful man, I'll say that. I think he passed me with a D or something like that. I certainly didn't catch on to Physics. He was a very scholarly and a very gentlemanly man, I always liked him.

Birkner: Did they teach there at Breidenbaugh hall?

Bulleit: Oh, yes, yes. The Chemistry building was also Physics.

Birkner: How about on the English side. Did you take some English?

Bulleit: Yes. I think one year finally, I had Dr. Mason.

Birkner: Francis Mason?

Bulleit: Francis Mason? Very courtly Southern.

Birkner: Did he used to read poetry?

Bulleit: Read poetry and things like that. I'm sure I had him. [John] Ostrom, I believe I had the first year.

Birkner: What did you think of him?

Bulleit: Oh, he was a nice fellow. I don't know anything about him since then. He was very popular and we all liked him. But, obviously a young professor. I don't know what happened to him.

Birkner: Neither do I.

Bulleit: Johnny Ostrem. I think his name was John.

Birkner: Were there any courses that you took your first year that really stood out as being particularly weak or particularly good?

Bulleit: If I took Physics the first year and I'm a little mixed up about that, that nearly floored me. I was lucky to get by with my skin. Chemistry was a little better.

Birkner: Chemistry seemed a little better. Did you have a niche outside of the classroom for yourself? Were you either an athlete or an thespian or anything like that?

Bulleit: Oh, I wouldn't call it a niche, but I joined a fraternity. It was then called Theta Kappa Nu. It's now called Lambda Chi Alpha.

Birkner: Lambda Chi Alpha.

Bulleit: I'd forgotten my Greek. I've lost interest, because I was in the old Theta Kappa Nu, you know.

Birkner: Yes.

Bulleit: I valued that, although you miss an awful lot of the fraternity life. It did help me. I think I came from a negative background, in that I hadn't been here all my life. I hadn't gotten into the swing of things as you would if you grew up with the crowd. The fraternity helped me an awful lot. They insisted we have two activities. So I wound up with the stage. I had been a little bit, you said thespian, I wouldn't dignify to that. I went in for the stage crew and finally became a stage manager and worked with Dr. [Richard] Arms and appeared in one of his plays as the stage manager. He loved that sort of thing. He wrote a play, which was a play within a play.

Birkner: You performed a play that Dr. Arms had written?

Bulleit: Yes. That was one of them. We did an awful lot of Shakespeare and things like that. I was only the stage manager the last year. It tickled me. He wrote this and I would be working on the stage and somebody would say, "hey, it's about time to go on." I'd walk on to the stage. I got quite a kick out of that. I don't believe it was a play that would go down in history or anything, but Richard Allen Arms was something to remember, I'll tell you.

Birkner: What was it that was distinctive about him?

Bulleit: Well, my wife thought he was about the sloppiest looking man in town. He was just a thorough-going thespian, if you will. That's not quite as esteemed of the theater, is what I want to say. He would take time off every year and always go to New York and go to all the latest plays. Then he'd come back enthused to present plays. We had a little tough time. Another thing, Mike, you can make the most of it, they had girls at Gettysburg College until the year I came, then they stopped taking girls. They started admitting girls the year after I left. I make no judgement about that, but I've always been a little suspicious (Birkner laughs). At any rate, Dr. Arms had a hard time getting ladies to fill the parts. There were some finishing up, you know, and I think he even got some young ladies in town to serve as characters for his plays. The one who was good about that was married to Johnson.

Birkner: Mrs. Johnson. Mildred Johnson?

Bulleit: Mildred Dimmerling.

Birkner: Yes. She knows about that.

Bulleit: She knows about that.

Birkner: That's good to know.

Bulleit: Yes. Oh, she played in plays. She was a very good and hardworking actress.

Birkner: Well, that's good to know.

Bulleit: She was also married to one of the nicest fellows. He died, very prematurely. (inaudible) Johnson.

Birkner: Lester Johnson, right?

Bulleit: You know, I believe it was now that you mentioned it. I know he was very popular and died very young.

Birkner: He was still alive when I was a student.

Bulleit: He was a young teacher when she was in school.

Birkner: Now, you enjoyed your theater experience with Dr. Arms. What were your other activities besides-

Bulleit: Newspaper. Gettysburgian. I was again, the fraternity took me in. That fraternity wasn't the big newspaper, they were the Phi Sigs. They're not now I think, but they were the literary paper. Herb Stare and some of the fellows in our class. He was the editor of the Gettysburgian and I was the literary editor and that is a misnomer. I don't deserve that. But, that's what I was. I think it was a little campus politics. They had to give one job outside of the fraternity.

Birkner: Well, I've seen some of the papers from the [19]30's and they're not bad.

Bulleit: Yes, Herb Stare was a natural.

Birkner: Did he go on to a career in journalism?

Bulleit: I think he did. I think he stayed in journalism. I didn't see much of Herb afterward. I possibly ran across him at one or two alumni meetings.

Birkner: I think the idea that you just mentioned of the fraternity mandating members to go out and do activities, is a good one. (inaudible)

Bulleit: Oh, listen. We had things like the house mother. You know you don't even have those anymore, I don't think.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: We had a sort of a home-like atmosphere, because of Ma Eberhart. That was the one at the Theta Kappa Nu, which was torn down for that colonial motel.

Birkner: That's what it was. Are you talking about the corner of Lincoln [Avenue] and Carlisle [Street]?

Bulleit: Right. Not Lincoln and Carlisle, but Water Street and Carlisle.

Birkner: Oh, (inaudible). I'm thinking of the other one.

Bulleit: Yes. I'm sorry.

Birkner: (inaudible)

Bulleit: I think they tore it down and they built that motel right on the corner, didn't they? I don't get down-

Birkner: Yes. I have a fix on it now, on the corner of Water Street and Carlisle. You didn't live in the house, so you just ate your meals there?

Bulleit: Actually, they cooked. Ma Eberhart cooked. I think later they did get a house mother, but we had a house mother just already built in, because it was their house and I think they leased it to us, or some arrangement, I'm not quite sure how that was.

Birkner: Now when you were getting yourself established at Gettysburg, at some point, somebody had to say to you, "Ted, you've got to focus on something here, major in something," right? How did you gravitate?

Bulleit: I think I just heard people saying, "well, you're going to be a lawyer, because your father is," and I didn't deny it. I kept on that way. I guess the influence of my father was the greatest thing about it. So, I took Political Science with Dr. [Rasmus] Saby, who was head of the department, and Professor-

Birkner: Larkin?

Bulleit: Larkin. Professor Larkin.

Birkner: Tell me a little bit about those two men?

Bulleit: Well, Professor Larkin had spent some of his younger days, I think, in the missionary in Japan. That gave him an interesting, I'd say, sort of an oriental flavor. He was very philosophic, I think, in his ways. He was a very quiet man and I think he was very fondly regarded by all of us. Irreverent as we were, of course, a lot of the fellows called him "Little Joe," because he was small in stature. He was the kind of fellow who took part in the plays in town. He would appear on the stage. He was just that kind of a fellow. I knew his children a little bit and his wife, she eventually died not too long ago over in Quincy, the home over here. Professor Larkin was I thought, a very wonderful person. It wasn't because of his overpowering height or anything of the sort, but just his quiet and I think, the little oriental flavor gave him a good sheen, if that's what you want to call it. I had a tremendous affinity for him, because I guess the fact that he chose me was enough to inspire quite a bit of gratitude.

Birkner: He chose you?

Bulleit: To be a student instructor.

Birkner: Now, your other professor in Political Science?

Bulleit: Dr. Saby.

Birkner: Yes.

Bulleit: Dr. Rasmus Saby was, I'd say, almost a typical professor. Not meaning to be, but a little bit pompous in his delivery. He taught these courses and he would have his little jokes. I took most of his courses, you see, because he was Political Science. Professor Larkin was Economics.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: One course in his department. I think he always did this in class. "Now what is the most important thing to remember about being a politician in a political party." Of course, you know, somebody would come up with some ideas, but he said, "no, the ability to get yourself elected."

Birkner: He liked that.

Bulleit: He liked that and so did we

Birkner: Did you notice any particular Southern complexion in the faculty at the time you were a student, or was that not something you would have picked-

Bulleit: I think maybe Dr. Hanson was from Virginia if I'm not mistaken.

Birkner: I get the feeling that a fair number of the department chairs, who would have been-

Bulleit: Dr. Mason was certainly Southern. He wasn't the chair. Dr. Klein, (inaudible) department, I think he had a more Southern orientation.

Birkner: I think if we track down- the chairs of the departments, I think we'd find that there were a fair number of Southerners.

Bulleit: Is that true in your day? I don't know.

Birkner: No. But, I think Dr. Hanson had a Southern tilt in his orientation.

Bulleit: Well, he probably knew people from down there.

Birkner: He knew people from Roanoke and so forth. But that's interesting. Now, you took a lot of Political Science along with Economics. What things in the four years that you attended the college, what things do stand out? There was Dramatic Arts. There were your professors. Any particular events occur in those years?

Bulleit: I don't know. You said something that stands out. It isn't necessarily the studious things, is it? Well, I got a kick out of doing this. I weighed 130 pounds. I was a skinny kid and not much of a social person. But, I began to take care of the lighting and run the lighting organ, you could put it that way, for dances during the, I guess, last two or three years that I was there. They even paid me for a while to get the fellow Platt from over in Harrisburg to decorate the Old Gym. That's the one, I guess the ROTC was in there. They moved too, I think. You know where it is.

Birkner: Are you talking about the Eddie Plank gym?

Bulleit: Yes. The Eddie Plank gym, that's right. Platt would come over and bring decorations to hang. It was not an auditorium in the sense of a theater, but it was a basketball court and everything else, and it was turned into a dance hall. So, they hanged draperies to bring the ceiling down, and make it low. He would hang lanterns. I get those lanterns over and get the electrician to plug them into the stage receptacle, so we could put them on dimmers. [We would] run those dimmers up and down and the spotlight. I wasn't the electrician, that was the funny part about it. I was the stage manager, but I was primarily in electricity. We did that. We decorated with light changes that we could make depending on the mood of the band. We used to have some very good dance bands come, I enjoyed them.

Birkner: I understand there were some famous ones.

Bulleit: Yes. I don't know if I can think of any just now, but there were good ones back then.

Birkner: How about friendships?

Bulleit: Oh, yes, good friendships in the fraternity, in the activities, and in the classes. I met some of the fellows I know- I've sort of stopped going to the Alumni meetings, just a twist of fate and some things that were going on in the administration. I didn't really think too much about it, I just got out of the habit of going. -But, I knew fellows. Carl Cronister [?] was practicing law as far as I know, but I don't know if he does anymore. Sam Schreckengost.

Birkner: Who was very active at the college for many years.

Bulleit: Yes. He was with McNeese, Wallace, and Nurick, I believe, and also was counsel for the Hershey people, which was quite a feather in his cap.

Birkner: Sure.

Bulleit: Yes, I had good friends. They were college friends and we didn't keep up the friendship along the very direct basis.

Birkner: I understand. Were you a good student at Gettysburg College?

Bulleit: I think I was, except for Physics. I did get taken into Phi Beta Kappa. Also, and I'm sure you don't know of this, but I'll have you know that I carried the spoon.

Birkner: Meaning what?

Bulleit: The old library, I guess you still call it a library, the old building, though, and then you built a new one out, I think right, didn't you. The old building, I think it was the old building, maybe I'm wrong about that, each class would plant ivy and there was somebody who was the bowl, somebody who was the spoon, and somebody who was something else. We go out with a bowl and plant some ivy along there and I was one of the officials. I think it was the spoon. One was selected for his academics, one for his activities, and something else.

Birkner: I see. Were you selected for your academics?

Bulleit: It must have been for my academics. I don't think it could have been anything else, but athletics, and it wouldn't have been that. I'm not sure-

Birkner: To be a part of that ceremony.

Bulleit: Yes.

Birkner: (inaudible) That was beautiful ivy, but I gather that they decided that it was bad for the building.

Bulleit: They stopped the practice some years later, but that was just the tradition, planting the ivy.

Birkner: Did you participate in such other traditions as the customs, where you had to have the tug of war?

Bulleit: I wore the hat, took place in the tug of war, and the great big ball that they used to have, a fight between the frosh [and] soph, with a great big ball tossed around.

Birkner: Yes, that still was going on in the [19]30's.

Bulleit: Was that so?

Birkner: Well, yes, you were there.

Bulleit: Oh, yes. I thought you said it was still going on?

Birkner: Not today. I said it was going on in the [19]30's. I got here when they stopped it. They started it many years earlier.

Bulleit: Yes, and you're right. I don't know how long after that. You see, when I left I went to Law School away from here. I practiced law for about two years before I was drafted. My father was the government appeal agent on the draft board, but they accommodated me by picking me on an early number. I went in in February of 1941, before Pearl Harbor.

Birkner: Now let's just clarify, you graduated from Gettysburg College in the spring of 1935?

Bulleit: Right.

Birkner: You were a Phi Beta Kappa graduate. Did you immediately choose to go on to further education or did you work for a while?

Bulleit: I have always thought that I would like to go to Michigan. My father's brother attended the University of Michigan. That was quite a popular school around here. I know Don Swope, for example, one of my classmates, he and I were always very close, he went to Michigan.

Birkner: Is he still alive?

Bulleit: No, Don died about fifteen or ten years ago. Dr. Saby spoke to me one day and said, "I think I can maybe get you a scholarship at Duke." Given our financial condition, my father, you could call him a crazy man for trying to practice law in a community where he wasn't born. In those days that meant something, but he did. I got a scholarship, fought for two years after that to keep it, and kept it for three years.

Birkner: What do you mean by fought? You had to work hard to keep up?

Bulleit: . . . I think I knew I had to keep that scholarship and I worked like a dog, because they cut it down. We had a class of only about 20 a few to start with and they had quite a number of first year scholarships, then it came down to three, and I had to get one of those.

Birkner: To stay in school?

Bulleit: To stay in school.

Birkner: You say that Duke only had about twenty first year students in law?

Bulleit: It was a little more than that. We graduated about 19.

Birkner: Wow, that's a tiny class.

Bulleit: It is. They were building up. Duke is an interesting subject as you might know. I was there at the very early part. It had just been taken over from Trinity.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: They built this one university out of the woods and they called it the West campus, and they just made the old campus, the women's college. They were trying to get these departments up to speed. The medical department for example is well known. I think they have a reputation.

Birkner: Richard Nixon graduated from Duke.

Bulleit: A year ahead of me. He was in the student body when I was there.

Birkner: Is that right. Did you ever bump into him?

Bulleit: Oh, yes. 82 people on the campus, oh yes. He was a year ahead of me and so we weren't close associates, but we knew each other, and talked to each other occasionally.

Birkner: No kidding.

Bulleit: He and I worked in the library. They had a federal program that paid for students. I forget what they called it, youth education or something like that.

Birkner: Probably the National Youth Administration.

Bulleit: Yes, something like that. I had a job, and so did Nixon at the library. We worked in the back. . . . It was a very enjoyable task.

Birkner: Did you ever have to deal with him?

Bulleit: No. I don't know that I ever did. If I did, I don't remember. It might have been when I was finished. In fact, my greatest claim to fame, is being on a national magazine and somebody from Alaska said, "hey, I saw your picture in the paper." That's how I found out about it. They used to have Life. It wasn't Life, I think it was something like Life, but very popular.

Birkner: (inaudible), Saturday Evening Post, Look?

Bulleit: It might have been Look. That sounds like it. They had taken a picture of the group apparently and he was in that group, but so was I.

Birkner: But, why did they take the picture?

Bulleit: Somebody way up in Alaska spotted it.

Birkner: Why did they come to take the picture?

Bulleit: Oh, he was becoming famous then by that time.

Birkner: Oh, so they found this picture (inaudible).

Bulleit: Found this picture. Oh yes. They didn't have me pose.

Birkner: That's very interesting. Did you feel that you had had a good enough college education that you could do well right in a major setting?

Bulleit: I certainly think so, though, I felt very stupid. I remember the first day in class of Contracts, which was one of the sub-courses really, taught by Lon Fuller [?]. He went on and became a Harvard professor. I think it was the very first day and he asked questions, and he spelled my name and I sat there, I didn't even respond. He didn't even know who I was. Before the year was over, I was arguing with him, and that he liked. I got good grades. So, I felt I did as well as anyone else. It's an astounding thing. As small as that class was, I remember people from the state of Washington, California, Colorado, Mississippi, and everything in between. You can't get too many names of states.

Birkner: How do you think Dr. Saby was able to make contact with Duke?

Bulleit: Well, I think he had a reputation among Political Science leaders. I think they looked to them. Now, he never told me that I had the scholarship.

Birkner: Okay. He may recommend one or two of Gettysburg College students[?].

Bulleit: He gave me the recommendation.

Birkner: Dr. Zinn had a great influence that way.

Bulleit: Oh, Dr. Zinn had a tremendous influence. Of course, I wasn't a Chemistry major.

Birkner: Right. (inaudible)

Bulleit: Oh, yes. He was the top[?]. If you could get a recommendation from Dr. Zinn, you were practically in, in most of the East coast schools.

Birkner: Right.

(End of Side A)

Birkner: Did you see people like Swope or Charlie Wolf?

Bulleit: Yes, I'd admit that I was never very close to Charlie Wolfe. I knew him. I knew his father. His father had been the commercial teacher[?] at the high school and I'm not so sure that my wife didn't have him. She was later than I was, about seven and half years later. But, Don Swope was one I got to know. See, Charlie was a little head of me.

Birkner: Right. He graduated in [19]32, I think.

Bulleit: Something like that. I was [in the class of] 1935. Was he three years ahead? Maybe he was. Somehow we didn't have much contact. There were those fellows [that] I remember. I remember Dr. Sheely and Dr. Stoner. But, they were ahead of my year. But, I got to know Don Swope when I first came here. He and I were very good friends. I remember going to his cabin, . . . and spending a little time one summer there. We did things together.

Birkner: You could write pretty good stories about your Law School experience. Could you, out of your Law School? . . .

Bulleit: Well, it was a funny thing. He stayed out of Law School for a year to help his dad, who made an unsuccessful bid for judge.

Birkner: Okay.

Bulleit: Don felt he and I were out of sync. Most of my acquaintances would have been from high school. Don was a very personable fellow. He joined the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity and they were the socialites. That was out of my league.

Birkner: . . . Did he come back like you and practice in Gettysburg?

Bulleit: Yes. I'm not sure just how his timing went. Well, I took the cram courses down in Philadelphia, then came up here, and was admitted in December of [19]38. I graduated in the Spring. Don was obviously not yet there and I don't have any particular recollection of him, because by the time he got in, I was just getting out to be drafted.

Birkner: I follow. While you were getting your feet wet as an attorney in Gettysburg, he was still at Michigan.

Bulleit: He was still finishing up at Michigan, yes.

Birkner: Did you immediately then go to pass your course into the office here to work with your Dad?

Bulleit: I started practicing with him. I believe we started a partnership after about a year or so. He was very kind, of course, to take me in.

Birkner: Now, was this his choice or your choice-

Bulleit: We didn't have this section here at that time.

Birkner: Did you want to come back to Gettysburg to be a lawyer?

Bulleit: I was drifting, I must say. I knew nothing else to do. We didn't have such a thing as, in the education field-

Birkner: Career counselors?

Bulleit: Career counseling. They have another name for it, too. We didn't have that. Because, everybody said I was going to be lawyer, I thought well, probably so. I had worked up here. When I say work, I mean painting the floor one summer. Reading from these old books, I nearly fell off the chair, reading some old things. We have some of the honors, predecessors, in England, for example, I'm trying to think of one particular name.

Birkner: You mean Blackstone?

Bulleit: Blackstone, yes, trying to read Blackstone

Birkner: When you worked for Mr. (inaudible), you were highly ambitious and highly focused, did you want to go see the bright lights of New York City or any of that?

Bulleit: No, I just didn't think of that being a possibility. I was very skinny, I told you that. I really didn't think much of my capabilities and I don't why. I was sort of startled when I'd win a prize.

Birkner: I understand.

Bulleit: That even carried into the army. I remember I got to be a Sargent down at Fort Eustis in Virginia, because I was working at headquarters. As such, I had to drill the squads. I had no training for that except ROTC, which I had for two years.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: I remember getting the squad going and some great big fellow back in the back rank said, "Oh, Searge, have a heart," and I couldn't get over that. That guy couldn't take it, and I could. You're a wiry type, but I got a lot of confidence in the army, I really did, probably over-confidence.

Birkner: You mentioned marrying a Gettysburg girl.

Bulleit: Yes.

Birkner: Did you marry her before or after you went into the Armed Services?

Bulleit: We became engaged, and I went off to Candidate School, that's the way I got going. I was in the army when we were engaged. I went down to Miami beach and took the Officer Training School at Miami, and joined the Air Corps. We were shipped out to Salt Lake City and then to San Francisco, so we didn't get married until after the war.

Birkner: Tell me, when you said Gettysburg girl, was your wife a Gettysburg towns-person, or a Gettysburg College graduate?

Bulleit: No, she didn't go to college. She was a towns-person. Her name was Thelma Warman. Her father was the Assistant Postmaster.

Birkner: You met her in town?

Bulleit: Yes.

Birkner: Did you go out with her when you were at Gettysburg College?

Bulleit: No, indeed. I don't think I went out with any girls at that age. You just couldn't keep up the pace. As I said, I never thought about going to the dance. I loved to be a part of it by working that light thing.

Birkner: You actually waited until after the war to marry her, which in some ways you could say, was uncommon. Many people rushed to marry their sweethearts, because they would get benefits if they married?

Bulleit: We might have. But as I say, all this came up, down I went to Florida, which is a long, long way. You wouldn't think about going down to Florida. I think I went on the Silver Meteor. Then, I had to live in Miami for a couple of weeks, and we had to go check in everyday at the golf course over in Miami Beach to get orders. Finally, my orders came through, and I got on a troop train, and drifted across the country for a week or more out to a little east of Salt Lake City. I forget the name of the little fort that they had there. I was there for about a month. Curiously enough, they ran a picture in the paper that said, "this is Salt Lake City, the hardest place to get living accommodations." We figured that it just wasn't worth trying.

Birkner: You mentioned a few minutes ago that your brother wound up in ROTC, and going off to Europe. You said you went elsewhere. Obviously, you went to the Asian theater?

Bulleit: I went to the Pacific, yes. I was at New Caledonia first, and to Guadalcanal. I got to go out of the canal to the ribbon, that was kind of a farce. I got there just in time to get the ribbon, and the place was vacated shortly after that. I got to see where some of the Japanese were lying dead. The only Japanese I saw in uniform was dead.

Birkner: What was your specific responsibility as a soldier?

Bulleit: I was a Lieutenant at that time, and I was a Personnel Officer assigned to 13th Air Force, 13th Fighter Command, and the squadron was the 68th Fighter Squadron. Shortly after I got there, the old adjutant, who was waiting to get some relief, he left, and went to Group headquarters. I became Adjutant. Before I left, I was the Executive Officer of the squadron. At the highest non-flyer rate that you could have, the squadron was about 220-some enlisted men, and about 20 officers. It was a P-38 Fighter Squadron. Fighter P-38 had other planes, too. You heard me talk about that at the Rotary [Club].

Birkner: Unfortunately, I was in Kansas at the Eisenhower library on the day that you spoke, so I didn't get to hear any of those reminiscences. That's one reason why I am glad to have a chance to talk with you now. Let me do a little bit of the circumstantial (inaudible) here. If you were drafted before Pearl Harbor, and you didn't marry until after the war, can I then put two and two together and guess that you spent a lot of years in the Armed Forces? Did you get five years in?

Bulleit: I was exactly five years at my term, but I was really home on leave for a couple of months. I had built up time. I was overseas for three years. They gave you R&R, rest and recuperation. I went down to New Zealand, and to Australia, for respite. But they didn't charge you any relieve time, so you had your relieve time accumulated, and then you came home.

Birkner: I assume you were at the top of the list of the boys when it came time to getting the leave?

Bulleit: Well, I was pretty well up there. Of course, I didn't get over [there] right away. Some of the fellows in my squadron had gone over to Brisbane, I think it was the Queen Elizabeth, on a

very early troop ship. But, they just filled up with whoever they could get. When the thing broke, it was just frantic.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: We certainly weren't prepared for this war in any way that I could think of (inaudible). Those fellows missed chances. One of them, I remember, talked to me about going to OCS, and I thought he should. They just were thrown into this real quick. They had time. Some of them didn't get home until the war ended. They were way ahead of me. I had about three years over there.

Birkner: That's a pretty substantial service, though. Were you in contact with your brother during the war years? Did you write to each other?

Bulleit: Well, I don't know that we ever did. Our family was not very good at writing. Our wives usually do the writing. That's still true. His wife and my wife keep up pretty good correspondence.

Birkner: When the war ended, you came back. Did you know you were going to come back to Gettysburg, marry, and be a lawyer in Gettysburg?

Bulleit: Yes. I think I came into Portland Oregon, and Vancouver Barracks. I made a phone call on Thanksgiving Day, and we set the date. She was sort of surprised that I willing to get married so soon, but I figured we might as well get married. We did. We went to New York for our honeymoon.

Birkner: You were married when?

Bulleit: December 9, 1945. We went to New York for our honeymoon.

Birkner: You have been married 51 years now?

Bulleit: Yes, 51 [years]. I started practicing law then at the same time.

Birkner: Did you pick the same spot you had? Was it still warm for you, the seat in the Law Office? Or had someone taken your place?

Bulleit: Well, it was just my father, you see.

Birkner: So, he didn't replace you?

Bulleit: No, he kept the fire going. Of course, he was just as kind to me as he could be.

Birkner: You married, and did you use the GI Bill to buy a house?

Bulleit: Yes, we did that. We used it for other purposes [as well]. One of which, was education. I'll never forget that. We went over, all of us from this area, to Harrisburg, to the new Court House building, which was right on the river. The old one was farther in town. They gave courses there in the court room, I think it was every Wednesday night. We sat there and studied to bring ourselves up to date for some period a week. That was the ideal.

Birkner: You could get up to snuff on the legal stuff. You could use the time to go through those cram courses.

Bulleit: Oh, that was a tremendous help to me

Birkner: I don't want to rehash fifty years of practicing law, but I do want to just ask one or two brief questions if I can. One of them I asked you in one form or another already and that was whether you used your law practice as a springboard into politics? You said not.

Bulleit: Yes, I shouldn't have said that. I used it to spring into politics. I served on the School Board (laughs).

Birkner: Chet Schultz [Bulleit's law partner] is on the [Gettysburg] School Board.

Bulleit: Yes, he's now president of the School Board. That was my politics.

Birkner: You didn't run for legislature?

Bulleit: My father was interested in politics. He actually ran for district attorney when he first came here, and knew very well that he was going to lose. But, he did that to get acquainted. He had some very good friends, who were just heartbroken when he lost. He wasn't, because he knew he was going to lose.

Birkner: Right.

Bulleit: I didn't have the political bug

Birkner: You did something that perhaps in your generation wasn't as common. You just stuck to law, and you made a life of it. Did you buy a house in town, or did you move out of town, I assume?

Bulleit: Well, we lived in an apartment for some years, and then in 1950, we bought a house near the Holiday up on-

Birkner: Hillcrest Place?

Bulleit: Yes, Hillcrest Place.

Birkner: Do you still live there?

Bulleit: We live there.

Birkner: It's nicely tucked away, nobody really even knows about that place.

Bulleit: Even my wife thinks it is an old-fashioned house. It doesn't have a second bathroom. We would have done a little better, and we would have liked to have made some modifications, but it didn't lend itself to that. But, she hates to leave the neighborhood, and I do, too. We'll probably die there.

Birkner: Do you have children?

Bulleit: Two.

Birkner: They were born when?

Bulleit: Temmie, my daughter, was born in 1946. November 1946. She is married to Charles Tipton, and they live at Twin Lakes. He's an engineer for Northrup Grummond.

Birkner: Your other child?

Bulleit: Bill Bulleit. He went to Duke [for] undergraduate school.

Birkner: When was Bill born?

Bulleit: He was born in 1949.

Birkner: . . . He went to Duke [as an] undergraduate. Did he become a lawyer?

Bulleit: They thought he might. I would have done anything for him to be a lawyer. In fact, when Chet [Schultz] came aboard, I warned him that I wanted to keep a place for Bill if he came along, but he didn't show any interest. The more I think about, the more I think he was right. Accidently, he got in the military service, but he sat over there in Italy. He got a graduate degree from Boston, I forget whether it was Boston College, or Boston University, the satellite. He always complained, after he got back from the military service. He applied for a job, and they'd say, "well, you're too well educated." He busted me for that. He's not busting these days, because when he landed a job with Digital, (inaudible), after fifteen years, he became a product manager. That was considered a pretty good job, and it was well-paying. [It was] more money than I ever made. Then he lost out when they were down-sizing, went down to serve with one company that just made a change to another company. They're called Bell and Howell now,

down in the research industry, right next to the research triangle. The triangle is between Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh.

Birkner: Did your daughter go to college?

Bulleit: Yes, she went to Lycoming.

Birkner: Is she a professional now-

Bulleit: She took a graduate degree in Illinois at the University of Illinois to become a librarian, and became a librarian here. She is no longer a librarian. She had been traveling around with Charlie on his military service (inaudible), in Vietnam, in the navy.

Birkner: What about your Gettysburg College brother? What did he do with his life after he got out of the Armed Forces?

Bulleit: Because, he was an ROTC officer, he stayed in after WWII, and he was working for a shoe company down here in Littlestown for a while. He got married, and had a child Tom, let's see, he was caught off guard, and had to go into the Korean campaign. He had front line service, in both WWII, and in the Korean conflict. When he came home, he found that his marriage was gone. We took him down to Washington, and it broke my heart that we had to leave him there in Washington, but he did very well as a dispersing officer, a department, which is a non-political, and non-civil service job

Birkner: It's both non-political, and non-civil service?

Bulleit: Yes, you don't expect that, but he was serving in that. He retired. He also has a retiring military status as an officer. I don't know what Tom became, whether he was a major or not. I was a captain when he was a captain

Birkner: You're remarkably helpful, really.

Bulleit: You just paid for the interview (both laugh).

Birkner: Good, good. Well, that's pretty much what I wanted to cover. I just wanted to check with you to see if you ever served as either an officer in any way, or in some activity with alumni affairs at the college, in the time that you've got.

Bulleit: I never did. I have always been very faithful to my high school alumni, even there I've never had any officer's position. I'm just not oriented that way, I guess.

Birkner: Did you go to your 50th reunion?

Bulleit: At the high school?

Birkner: At the college?

Bulleit: No, I didn't. That's a shame, isn't it.

Birkner: It is.

Bulleit: I got out of the habit.

Birkner: I was going to say it would be nice to get you back in the habit, but they're not going to have that many more events.

Bulleit: I know that's true.

Birkner: I mean, people are going to travel less.

Bulleit: Well, I don't go to my law school reunion either. I don't know what it is.

Birkner: Well, we take pride in you, I want you to know that.

Bulleit: Well, thank you very much.

Birkner: On that note, I'll close the interview.