

NAME OF PROJECT: *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

DATE OF INTERVIEW: May 31, 2011

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Thunder Bay, ON

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE: Joseph Brescia

NAME OF INTERVIEWER: John Potestio

NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER: Maverick Entertainment

TRANSCRIBED BY: Louanne Aspillaga

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PROJECT NOTE:

Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff have not edited this transcript for errors.

ABSTRACT

Genero Joseph (Joe) Brescia was born in 1920 in Grimaldi, Cozenza, Italy, but as a toddler, he moved with his parents and sister to Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Joe recalls his early life living in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Fort William, going to school, playing sports, and having lots of friends. During the Second World War, Joe and his sister were both labelled enemy aliens and had to report to the Mounties at the Fort William Hotel. He mentions the difficulty in travelling with his then pregnant sister during their monthly reporting. Joe also talks about joining the Canadian Army and being stationed in Fort Petrie, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, despite his enemy alien status. Joe was quickly relieved of his reporting obligations, once a captain heard he was an “alien” and made a call to Ottawa. Joe says that in general he and his family got along well with non-Italians and did not face discrimination during the war period. He only recalls a couple of incidents and both were while he was in the army: the first was when a superior denied honouring him with a Lance Corporal’s stripe and the second was during his

discharge when another superior ridiculed him in front of a group of officers. Joe recalls the latter incident as “one of the worst.” Joe is married and has six children.

INTERVIEW

JB: Joseph Brescia, interviewee

JP: John Potestio, interviewer

ME: Maverick Entertainment, videographer

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

JP: This is uh John Potestio interviewing Mr. Genero Joseph Brescia at his home on 94 Rupert Street, Thunder Bay...on May 31st, 2011. Joe, as you know, this uh questionnaire is divided into a number of sections, each one uh reflecting an aspect of your life. I'm gonna start with the first one which is uh, general background. [Pause] Could you give us your full name and birth, birth name?

JB: My full name is Genero Joseph Brescia and I was born in 1920 and born in, uh in Grima-- Grimaldi...Cozenza. That's Italy.

JP: Uh tell me about uh a little bit about your family? Your parents, your grandparents, uh siblings, anything you remember about that.

JB: As a young person?

JP: Yes.

JB: Well I grew up--I don't remem--I don--I don't remember my grandfather at all. But my father and my mother, and I have a sister; that's the extent of my family. And I was...very young when we left Italy.

JP: I understand you were uh, two years old when you came from Italy. Is that correct?

JB: I was probably about thr--between three and four years old when we left Italy and came to Canada.

JP: Okay. What do you remember about your childhood?

JB: Well it was a very...good childhood. We had--as youngsters, we had uh lots of friends in our neighbourhood. Uh, my dad moved us from Italy to uh Fort William, in the south end. And uh we lived with my uncle for a short while then my dad bought a small house on McPherson Street. And uh we lived there and we had a some very good times with our neighbours and a lot of friends.

JP: Thank you. Let's move on to education, uh, did you go to school, Joe?

JB: Yes, I went to school.

JP: [Whispers] Okay. And how much schooling did you receive?

JB: Well I went through grade school at uh Cornwall School in uh Port Arthur. And uh [Clears throat]...when I finished grade school at uh Cornwall, I went to Port Arthur Technical High

School, which was later called Hillcrest. And I finished my--I graduated from there uh in my final years.

JP: Okay, can you tell me something about your sch--school experiences? Something interesting, something important that comes to your mind?

JB: ...Well--

JP: --With elementary and high school.

JB: Well I took part in a lot of sports and in elementary school, uh the only thing that really sticks out is when I was playing catcher and uh the kid that was swinging the bat let go and it broke my leg. [JB and JP chuckle in unison] And that caused me to lose one year.

JP: [Faintly in the background] Oh boy.

JB: And of course after that everything went fine. We went to high school and I played football for four years at Tech.

JP: [Says faintly] Hmmm mmm.

JB: And uh I started to play hockey and uh we had some very interesting times and very educational too.

JP: Thank you Joe. Uh, let's move on to your work experience now. At what age did you begin to work?

JB: I believe I was 18 when I s--left high school and I went to work for uh an automotive company. And uh... I stayed there for [Clears throat] a month and then I moved to another firm. Uh, which was called Gibson Motors and the owner befriended me like a father, treated me like a son, and is the best man I ever worked for. And I served an apprenticeship--I started an apprenticeship there.

JP: Okay thank you. And uh what other types of work did you do through--throughout your life?

JB: Well I been handy in a lot of things since I uh majored in auto mechanics. I uh, call myself a rough carpenter. Uh I used to weld a little bit. And uh I do a little bit of electrical work - I taught electric for two years at Hillcrest. So I'm sort of all around tradesman.

JP: But you had a fairly long teaching career at Hillcrest high school did you not?

JB: Yes, I was at uh--finished at Hillcrest there--I was there for 33 years. And I taught automotive, technology, and I would fill in and do some electrical there for two or three years.

JP: Ok, thank you. Now moving on to uh, uh to the neighbourhood as you grew up. Uh where did you live? Uh, uh, what, what part of Thunder Bay do--you mentioned the south end. Could you tell us a little bit more about that?

JB: Well when I lived in Fort William uh I don't really remember that much, I was fairly, fairly young.

JP: [Says faintly] Hmmm mmm.

JB: Uh we lived there and uh one year, our families, my uncle--oldest uncle, we took off and we went to Welsh farm and they cut birch for the winter. And came back the following spring and lived in the small house that we were at. We had some real good times there but uh the livelihood there was hard to fight. It's hard to find work for our parents. My uncle had a good job; he worked on the CN. In fact, both uncles worked on the CN. But my dad he was all round [?] and uh that was my early years. Then we moved to Port Arthur. And my dad bought a house, re--refinished it, had it moved to High Street and that's where I lived most part of my life - on twenty--323 South High. And uh of course we lived a good, lived a good life there. My mother and her garden and then my sister of course looked after things around the house. And from there we went, everyday walked all our way up to Hillcrest High School and back.

JP: Hmmm mmm. Good, thank you. Now what, what do you remember about your neighbours? Is there anything that sticks to your mind about uh, the neighbours uh or when you moved to Port Arthur? When you were a little older then.

JB: We've never had any complaints with neigh--we got along fine with most people. There's always somebody there that uh took a dislike to it because you're an Italian or something, but uh other than that we really did not--I can't say that we had any problems at all with neighbours. In fact they were all good neighbours.

JP: Wa--was it uh, um...what kind of an ethnic mix was there in the neighbourhood?

JB: Quite mixed.

JP: Was it?

JB: Quite mixed. Uh, where I'm living right now, it's the same area.

JP: Right.

JB: It's uh, very mixed. And uh they're all very uh, nice people.

JP: Sure.

JB: And always willing to help. We help each other. We get along fine.

JP: Good. Now can you describe uh eh, eh the house that your fa--father uh bought and, and then rebuilt. Can you des--describe it a little bit for us?

JB: Well he bought an old house, uh way down in the north ward - Port Arthur - uh and had it moved to 323 South High Street. And uh, there was no basement at the time and he with his skills he fixed it all up and it was quite a comfortable home with an upstairs. And uh, we had a fire one time and uh, it burnt pretty quick [Chuckles]. So we ended up--my dad built a whole new house on the same lot.

JP: I see.

JB: And all kinds of friends would come, poured the concrete, and did everything else. And he had a friend carpenter; they put the walls up. I straightened the nails they used me [Chuckles] and, and uh, uh, they had uh stucco people stucco the house and we had quite a, quite a comfortable home at the 2--323 South High. And I lived there most of my life.

JP: Very good Joe. Okay, we move now uh to uh social life. Uh what kind of social activities were you involved in? As a young man and as a, as an adult later on?

JB: Lots of sports.

JP: Hmmmm mmm.

JB: And uh [Pause] what else can I tell you?--

JP: --Maybe tell us a bit about the uh sports that you played? You were mentioning you were a good hockey player?

JB: Well I uh, I started skating when I was 14. I was rather old in those--for this part of the world and uh I played uh midget hockey for a full year. And uh then I played juvenile hockey uh two years; we won the city championship in that time. And we also played--we're called up the junior hockey to play some hockey while they had injuries. And eventually I played junior hockey for the Port Arthur junior team.

JP: Thank you that's good. Uh now did--eh Joe did you attend church services? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

JB: [Pause] When I got married--

JP: --Hmmm mmm.

JB: --we attended church services every Sunday.

JP: Every Sunday.

JB: Every Sunday.

JP: Okay, were you part of any fraternal or community organization?

JB: Not really.

JP: Okay.

JB: Not really.

JP: Alright. Uh you already mentioned uh that you played uh, for, uh, for teams, but did you belong to any sporting clubs other than hockey?

JB: Well--

JP: --You also played baseball did you not?

JB: Oh yes. I played baseball f--in the junior leagues here and uh, uh and then we played the first junior soccer team that was held in Port Author. And uh what else? Now of course, golf.

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: I remember [Unclear] going to golf course for many, many years.

JP: Good excellent.

JB: And I still golf a little.

JP: Good for you. Okay, let's move on to um, to family now. Uh, Joe when did you marry?

JB: I got married in uh New Waterford, Cape Breton on uh July the 11th, 1944.

JP: Okay. How did you meet uh your wife?

JB: Well I was stationed at Fort Petrie, which is about uh three or four miles out of New Waterford, which is outside of Sydney, Nova Scotia. And uh, uh weekly weekends the army would uh, uh would bring in a truckload of young ladies, who called themselves different names, different associations and they would entertain us, the soldiers. And that's where I met my wife, at uh, one--she came across the room and uh put me on the dance floor and we started dancing. And that's where I met her at Fort Petrie.

JP: Good. Um, Joe did you have any children? Can you tell us a little bit about your family? The children you had?

JB: I have uh six children.

JP: [Says faintly] Okay.

JB: I have uh, five boys and one girl. She's the queen. [JB and JP chuckle in unison] And uh...I was called a western farmer because uh we had three first and then a long pause in between and we had three more and that's being a western farmer.

JP: Oh! That's...I never heard that expression but that's interesting. Um, your children, uh, uh some of them live here in Thunder Bay, others they, they're moved away I take it?

JB: [Clears throat] My oldest son, Bob, we call him Robert. He's in London, England. He's in charge of doing the Olympic tickets for 2012. We visited him last year for two weeks. And uh

my [Clears throat] se--second oldest son, Ronald, he lives here not too far from here, two streets over on Ray Boulevard. And he's retired and he was a grain inspector for many years. He--and uh...of course my daughter, she's the second oldest, she's uh CEO of the Catholic School Board organization in uh, London, Ontario. My next oldest boy, Vincent, he's uh, uh he's a CEO and uh President of Fropol, in Toronto. Household people. And doing extremely well. And Joe Jr., he was in the chemical business. He was graduated from LU with a Science and Chemistry degree. And he was in charge of uh, uh [Pause] trying to think of the chemi--large chemical company US chemical--Hercules--he was manager of that in the Lakehead-Thunder Bay district for 10 years. And he decided to get out of chemical stuff, which is a good thought--things sort of closed down. And uh, he bought himself uh a Lakehead roofing company that does roofing and industrial and sheet metal work and he's doing extremely well in that. And my youngest son who was a big hockey [Clears throat] excuse me [Clears throat] was a big hockey player himself. Uh, he went to [Clears throat] he got a co--a scholarship playing hockey and he went to uh [Swallows] to a American university on a 75 thousand dollar scholarship and came [Clears throat] took up business. And when he came back here he went in the banking business and he's now a bank manager of a [Clears throat] of a B.D.O. Business Development Bank of Canada in Thunder Bay.

ME: That's it. Did you want to get a glass of water?

JB: [Clears throat] I got a hoarse throat.

ME: Yeah [Unclear]--

JB: --Yeah I think I'll have a glass of water.

[Pause]

[0:15:27.5]

ME: Whenever you're ready. We're good.

JP: Joe, were you involved in any political organiza--organizations or groups?

JB: No.

JP: Okay. [Pause] Let's move on to the next question about eh--politics and uh, it's possible that the answers could be "no" to all of these, but let's try them anyways. Uh, was the Italian government active in your neighbourhood? ...Do you remember anything about involvement of Italian government?

JB: Other than the Consul, the Consular of this area [Stutters] did some presentations, that's the only thing I'm aware of.

JP: You're thinking of Emilia Marina [?] at that time I suppose.

JB: I don't recall the names--

JP: --Yeah--

JB and JP in unison: --No--

JP: --it might have been uh Emila Marina. That's okay.

JB: The Consul now is um...uh, Cirelli.

JP: Yes.

JB: Maria Cirelli.

JP: Right. So uh how would you eh describe the influence uh of Italian government among the community? Do you have any views on that?

JB: Not really. It did--didn't seem to have any problems.

JP: There wasn't any major involvement--

JB: --Not really.

JP: Okay. [Pause] Was there any resistance to fascism in your, in your neighbourhood or anything about activities that you might recall?

JB: We used to hear about the act--not the activities but talk of people being fascist.

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: And of course my father for one was dead against them.

JP: Yes.

JB: And he said that many times over and didn't have much use for any of them that...preached that...gospel.

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: And uh other than that there was some--fairly quiet.

JP: Yes, I--

JB: --But they were there--

JP: --I talked to your father many years ago and it seems to me that he had uh interesting political views. And where as you say the opposite of uh, of the fascist [Unclear]--

JB: --Of fascist yeah.

JP: And he made it known that he was opposed to them.

JB: Nobody mentioned Mussolini in our house. [Laughs]

JP: [Chuckles] Okay. Um...

JB: The thing is he was--later--straight one thing about him. He was uh what we call today uh a strong union man. And he was always for the worker, the poor workers. He was always fighting for them and trying to get things better for them.

JP: ...Uh eh, in, in your own mind going back to--this is uh a, a fascinating acc--account of his political views, uh. How did you react with your father's views? Were you pleased with uh, with these views or not?

JB: I agreed with them.

JP: You agreed [Says while chuckling softly] with them. Good. Okay. Thank you. Now how did the Italians get along with non-Italians in your neighbourhood...prior to the Second World War?

JB: [Pause] Well they seemed to get along. There were always differences. They were pretty well mixed too, uh. The saying used to be, "If you weren't a Mc or a Mac, you didn't get a job." Or it was hard to find a job for uh an Italian, a Pollock or whatever names they were given. All the others they called them foreigners. Other than that, they got along pretty well.

JP: Okay. Let us uh move now Joe to the issue of uh enemy alien designation.

JB: [Laughs]

JP: I know this is something that uh you love to talk about a little bit. So let's begin with the first question, what evidence did the authorities provide to justify your designation as an enemy alien?

JB: Absolutely none!

JP: [Pause] Nothing whatsoever, okay. As an enemy alien, what was required of you?

JB: My sister and I were told to report to the Mounties at the Fort William Hotel once a month. And in those days it wasn't easy to get to Fort William. I spent--she was pregnant for her first child and we went there every month. To get sign--we got fingerprinted. And they were rather--their reception to us was rather cool. And we weren't happy campers [Unclear] very--they were

doing--they would look, sort of look down upon us. And that was the...feeling I got from doing those visits. [Clears throats]

JP: Well thank you. Um, were you asked any questions during those sessions?--

JB: --No--

JP: --If so, what kind of questions?--

JB: --Absolutely none.

JP: No questions okay. Were restrictions uh placed on you as an enemy alien? Any kinds of--

JB: --[Says while shaking his head] No restrictions. No.

JP: Nothing, just reporting.

[0:20:24.0]

JP: Okay. For how long did you have to report to the police?

JB: Well we reported the--I had a Certificate of Parole and they marked the dates down which I have and you will have yourself.

ME: Yes.

JP: Um [Pause] I was in the arm--I was still in the army and I still had, I still had uh--uh I had a little argument with the CEO about that. And uh, uh he didn't say very much. And uh, I stopped...when I got to, when I was joined the army, I stopped reporting to the Mounted Police.

JB: Okay. So just immediately after you volunteered in the army--

JB: --Yes--

JP: --then your reporting stopped?

JB: [Nods] That's right.

JP: It wasn't because you obviously were uh a member of the Canadian Armed Forces--

JB: --That's--

JP: --no other change.

JB: --That's why I asked the CEO about the incident we had.

JP: Hmmm mmmm. Incident?

JB: Yes.

JP: What, what was that?

JB: Well I was at the...102nd training center and uh I went there to play hockey. We were asked to go there and play hockey and that's why I went. But, my father wasn't very happy about it. That's when we joined up the 102nd and we were in the platoon; I enj--pla--platoon. I enjoyed it and we had uh Platoon Number Two and we used to do our training and uh [Pause] Billy Clem [?] and I used to be the leaders leading the marches and leading everything else and they nicknamed us the "Sweethearts of Platoon Number Two." And they had weekly orders that come up posted and they had posted Billy Clem [?] and I as to receive a Corporal's, uh Corporal-Lance Corporal's stripe on our jackets. Well when the CCO got a hold of that, he called me in his office and he went up and down me like you wouldn't believe. [Grabs paper from his right. Paper makes noise as he ruffles through it] I have it here somewhere. [Pause] "I found that moment with the C--in the CEO's office most embarrassing, derogatory, bad name calling Italian and that he would never give me a Corporal stripe." He didn't like Italians. [Puts papers down]

JP: Thank you for that experience, for uh relating it to us and describing it with a, with a little bit of passion, I can see.

JB: [Scoffs/laughs]

JP: Um...Joe were you notified when it was no longer necessary to report to the police?

JB: No, no one ever told except that incident that I, I had in uh, when I was stationed in uh Fort Petrie in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

JP: Okay.

JB: I can tell you about that.

JP: Sure, go ahead. Yes.

JB: Well, we--I played ball for the army teams and I played uh hockey and all that sort of stuff. And after a ball game one day, we were sitting around having a cold beer and we had a captain, they always used to come along with the boys, and talk over a lot of stories. And I jokingly said to him, "You know you're talking to an alien?" And he looked at me and said [Says while chuckling], "What are you talking about?" I said, "I'm an alien!" He says, "You're lying?!" I said, "Oh no." I says, "I have the certificate to prove it." So I went up to the camp quarters and got my Certificate of uh Parole, brought it down and showed it to him and he was just aghast. He just, he said, "I don't believe this." And he said, "Can I have it?" I said, "No, you can't!" I says, "I enjoy this. I keep it." He said, "Well, I'll give it back to you." He says--he walked right up to the office, phoned Ottawa, came back and he said, "You don't have to worry about that again." [Smiles]

JP: Very good, thank you. Now as a so-called enemy alien, how would you characterize your treatment by the wider Italian community? Not the Canadian society, but the Italian community. How did they treat you because you were declared an enemy alien?

JB: I don't think most of them knew.

JP: Most of them didn't know, okay. How about the non-Italians how would they, were they treat--

JB: --Never had any problem.

JP: Alright. [Pause] Now, uh how would you characterize your experiences during the Second World, World War? You--were there any uh examples of discrimination against you?

JB: Not during that--uh.

JP: Not.

JB: N--outside of the--when I got discharged that was when it came up, other than that I never had any problems while I was in the Forces.

JP: But after you were discharged there were some--you did experience some discrimination?

JB: While I was being discharged.

JP: While you were being--ooh, can you elaborate a bit on that a little bit?

JB: Well, this would be around 194--close to '46 and uh I was told I was going to get discharged. We had to take our turn [Clears throat] 'cause there were so many. And uh, I got shipped to Winnipeg, which is headquarters. And of course, at that time my wife was pregnant with my first son and uh, they were going to keep me in Winnipeg until my turn came to be discharged. So I asked if I can go and pick up my wife, drop her off at Port Arthur and then come back to Winnipeg. And when I went to the CEO office to uh, to uh...get my transportation papers for the train for my wife and I to come back, and then I'd come back to Winnipeg. The CEO and he had fi--at least five other officers in the office with him. He went up and down my side like you wouldn't believe. He--very, very...sad situation. He was...call me many names, why other people got wounded, relating to the war, war experiences and all that sort of thing. It wasn't a very nice, happy moment for me at that time. In fact, it was one of the worst ones I had during the Armed F... [Chokes up and trails off]

JP: Thank you for that experience Joe. Now, what can, can you tell me about the experiences of your relatives during this period? Uh brothers, sisters, or family? Any, any particular experiences that come to your mind? During the war years, we're talking about.

JB: All I can say is my sister looked after me well. She always sent me stuff and things and uh—

JP: --Hmm mmm--

JB: --did all the uh, all the uh...mailing letters and all that sort of thing. My sister was my keeper.
[Chuckles]

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: And uh, other than that, we got along fine with everybody.

JP: Now in your opinion, how did the Ital--the Italian community, meet the challenges of the war? Do you have any opinions on that? Or any thoughts on that?

JB: Well I never heard too much grumbling about it.

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: I mean when, when our turn came, we went. That was it.

JP: Okay. Now what, uh--in your opinion was the community - the Italian community I'm referring to - united or divided during the war years? Did the war uh damage their, their uh closeness in any way or were they still close--

JB: --It's something that I would find difficult to notice.

JP: Hmm. [Car honking in the background]

JP: Okay.

ME: Just a second. Someone's just honking down the street so...here you go. [Soft chuckling]

JP: Uh Joe goo-- moving on uh along this vein of thought uh, are there any examples of individual or group perseverance you would like to share, that you're, that you're aware of?

JB: Well I mentioned the two bad ones, and that was about it. Other than that, I seemed to have gotten along pretty well.

JP: Okay...Now uh I have a question about post-1943. Uh, tell me about your life following your designation as an enemy alien and after the war...What was your life like after the war, especially after you--the designation terminated as a, as an enemy alien?

JB: It was quite...quite good because...the...owner of Gibson Motors, Mr. Gibson, the best man I ever worked for, he uh told me before I left that that job would always be there when I came back. And that's exactly what I did, I finished my apprenticeship, put in my seven years, and uh wrote my mechanic's license, and then I was approached by the Board of Education if I would be interested in teaching automotive mechanics. And from then on, I uh, I uh took university courses and uh, worked my way up to the highest uh, the highest category rating in the school teaching profession, which was at that time it was group four.

JP: [Says faintly] Hmm mmm.

JB: And uh [Pause] it took quite a few years, going back to university, uh taking--doing lessons, going to Toronto, three years three different times and uh it was uh, a very enlightening time.

[0:30:17.5]

JP: Good. So you, you--um, you must say then that um your re-integration into society after the war was fairly easy er...or was it?

JB: Well it, it wasn't easy but it was uh, you always put your nose to the grindstone, you still had to [Clears throat] support a wife. I built this ho--same--this very house you're sitting in right now. I built that in 1949-50. [Clears throat] And uh, we kept from buying a car until we had the house was paid for. Never had a mortgage on it. So I think we did alright.

JP: [Whispers] Sure. Good. [Papers making noise] Now, eh, eh, Joe was there any change with your relationship with Italian community after you were no longer considered an enemy alien?

JB: [Laughs] I don't think they knew!

JP: Oh yeah I think you got [?] mentioned that they, they didn't know so--

JB: --They didn't. And they asked me to join the society.

JP: Hmmmm mmm.

JB: But I, I didn't. [Chuckles]

JP: Hmmmm mmm. Okay. Now how did you feel about your Second World War experiences? Reflecting on that, how did you feel about it?

JB: [Pause] Well it uh, it was uh an experimental type of uh time, away from home, which I never been away from home for very long at any time. Uh I think it was uh a good learning experience. I got smarter.

JP: [Says faintly] Hmmm mmm.

JB: I went back to school!

JP: Sure.

JP: And uh [Pause] There were no problems that way.

JB: Okay. Now are, are you aware, Joe, with the academic debates uh surrounding the internment of Italians in Canada? Have you followed uh--

JB: --Not really--

JP: --any historians are written about it or?

JB: It's just what I read in the papers.

JP: Hmmm mmm.

JB: Other than that, I didn't follow it very much.

JP: Okay...The last question, Joe, um do you know anyone else who was affected by internment? ... When the Canadian government policies towards Italian during World War Two.

JB: ...Hmmm, I can't give you any names. No. I don't think so.

JP: Okay. And do you--would you like to add anything uh to these questions, anything that I haven't asked that you think is worth knowing?

JB: Well, there's one thing that I'd like to set straight--

JP: --Sure—

JB: --is when we started the beginning, it was related to the war issue. Uh before any of this took place, uh two very close friends of mine and I, we went to the Prince Arthur Hotel and tried to join the Air Force. That was the beginning. 'Course my parents didn't know that. And uh, they got in and I didn't, because with all the accidents I had - two broken legs, sinus problems, broken thumbs - I was a B--they listed me as a minus B in category. And they turned me down. And I thought go--I wanted to be a fighter pilot. One of my chums became a fire p--fighter pilot, the other fellow became an ob--as a navigator. Neither one of them came back.

JP: [Says faintly] Hmmm mmm.

JB: ...And uh that's always sticks in the back of my mind. And then of course, the army thing came up.

JP: Okay. Well, thank you very much Joe.

JB: Well I'm very happy. Ple--pleased to do it for you. Thank you very much. [Smiles]

[Pause]

[Footage showing Certificate of Parole for JB]

[Background conversations]

[0:35:11.3]

[Pause]

[Footage showing Canadian Army (Active) Certificate of Discharge for JB]

[Pause]

[Footage showing Canadian Army (Active) Certificate of Discharge for JB]

[Pause]

[Footage showing framed black and white photo of a family, JB's family?]

[Footage showing framed black and white photo of a young boy, JB?]

[Footage showing framed black and white photo of a young boy, a young girl, and their mother,
JB and his mother and sister?]

[Footage showing framed black and white photo of a young girl, JB's sister?]

[Fades out at 0:37:03.5]



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[End of interview]