

WORLD WAR II ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS SPENCER RESEARCH LIBRARY, KANSAS COLLECTION

Interviewee: Frederick Temple
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Location: Temple residence, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Interviewer: Deborah Dandridge, Field Archivist

TEMPLE INTERVIEW NO. 1

Tape 1, side 1 begins.

DEBORAH DANDRIDGE: This is October 3, Sunday; an interview with Dr. Frederick C. Temple in his home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Thank you very much, Dr. Temple, for willing to take your time and share your experiences with us. First just let us know, where were you born and where did you grow up?

FREDERICK TEMPLE: I was born in Topeka, Kansas and March 26, 1922. And I grew up in Topeka in the Quinton Heights area. That's where had lived all my life, actually, until I went into the armed forces there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you enlist in World War II or did you—you know, volunteer or were you drafted?

TEMPLE: I was drafted in World War II, although I thought very seriously of volunteering. But I was drafted.

DANDRIDGE: What—Do you remember the time that you were drafted?

TEMPLE: Uh, that was in August. I believe it was about August 21, 1945 that I was drafted.

DANDRIDGE: Okay and when you were drafted, where did you first go? To a training camp or enlistment area? Where did you first go?

TEMPLE: First went to an enlistment area in Leavenworth, Kansas and stayed there for a few weeks before we got our assignment. And with a few others from there, went to Camp Whitside, and Camp Whitside is located very few miles from Fort Riley, Kansas. And it was at Camp Whitside that I got most of my training and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: During World War II, what geographical areas did you serve? Where were you—where did you reside, where were you stationed in the various places?

TEMPLE: Well, after Camp Whitside, of course, we found that we would be going overseas. And I went to Fort Devens, Massachusetts and in Fort Devens, Massachusetts spent a month and from there, of course, overseas. And, far as overseas, first went to North Africa and from North Africa in ____ (??) and North Africa moved there to Algeria, North Africa. And while in North Africa we served as an MP, with an

MP unit and that unit was known as the 743rd Military Police Battalion. And as far as the service there, it was doing patrol duty in North Africa and the service consisted of taking the flag down and then patrolling overnight. The flag would come down at six and then patrolling in parts of North Africa and with me was an individual of the French police and we patrolled together until around six in the morning and after that put up the flag and it was every other day off. And that was service in North Africa, for an MP unit there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you serve in any other places aside from North Africa?

TEMPLE: From North Africa we went to Italy and arrived in Italy in, at Naples, Italy. And in Italy I was in a military unit it was the 743rd there in Naples, Italy for a while. And, course, we did patrol duty there and so forth. And our main duty there, of course, was actually protecting certain areas in North Africa, still an MP unit and there it was more of just a guard unit. Have certain areas of the base that you have to guard. As a matter of fact I remember the area where bombs were actually stored for bombing the Germans and in this area there were large towers and, of course, you were on guard there. A person would be on the tower there and would have all night for his guarding. So, there was at that time I was patrolling around, checking on these whenever I was on duty of course.

DANDRIDGE: Were you in the towers?

TEMPLE: No, I never did unless they have a problem. I would post the guard and then, of course, check through the night to see if there was any problem or anything.

DANDRIDGE: So you were checking on ground?

TEMPLE: Right. And, if there was a problem or something, I would actually want to go out and want to experience that during that particularly next day, next evening. To just see what did occur and so forth, because you did have some problems at night occur there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever encounter any problems?

TEMPLE: Encountered at one place a person was seeing lights and a lot of noise in the distance and so forth. He seemed to have a little fear over this, so that I decided to stay along with him and see and, sure enough, around daybreak I say these lights and so forth. And 'course fired into the distance and seems as if the light scattered and so forth. And found out later that it was a work camp there, farm, and they were workers getting up early, going out to work, and, of course, the person saw these lights and all and wondering. So there was one other experience there I had. Another experience when we were on the road travelling. The truck broke down before we got to a particular camp there and it had a lot of equipment so forth. And that truck had to stay there until the next day. And, once again, I volunteered to stay and watch that truck, so forth. Heard the coyotes and it was kind of what you'd call pitch dark; and by pitch dark, I mean when you don't have any lights, anything, it's really dark there. And that was quite an experience. But the next morning the truck was repaired and went on.

DANDRIDGE: Were you by yourself?

TEMPLE: I was by myself at the time, and with an M1 rifle.

DANDRIDGE: Now was this in Italy or North Africa?

TEMPLE: This was in Italy. North Africa consisted of patrol duty, mainly, but in Italy it became more guard duty.

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm, right. Did you ever serve in a combat unit?

TEMPLE: Never did get to that real combat, always wanted to serve in a combat unit because it looked like, coming up as a kid, the games and so forth that we played they involved combat and adventure and so forth and it was something to look forward to, just being into the Army and all. And at that time had heard the experience of others that had volunteered, so forth, so I was really looking for combat and looked at this more as a service unit so—One incident I applied for combat and that was for the invasion of Europe and they were seeking out soldiers that were willing to go in and help on that. So I had my physical exam, so forth, and applied for that and was looking forward to it. And in a few weeks I received a letter, mail, and opened it thinking, This was it, but the letter mentioned that they regretted that there were no facilities for the training of colored troops in this theatre. And it was just kinda hard to think, here I was fighting for freedom and rights and so forth, but I was not good enough to go up and help for the combat. So, still wondered(??) far as combat and found actually when I like to go on—well, pass to see different areas and so forth of the country and all, and one thing I always liked to go, they could—you could visit combat fields where certain battles were fought and so forth, and this even happened in North Africa. And one of the experience there, there was a pass and in this pass there were two tanks and the two tanks were out of action of all and the story in back of that, one was an African tank and the other an American, and the story back of this was that these two tanks met at this pass and fired at each other and knocked each other out. And they were just there as a, people would come by and see what could happen and imagine of the battle that in this particular area.

DANDRIDGE: And this battle was rather recent?

TEMPLE: Yeah, this was in North African and, of course, the Americans had run the Germans out of North Africa and they went on to Italy and, of course, we were following later. And, as I said, into Naples, and then into __(??) near there. So, still wanted to join a combat unit, and in general they were just looking for soldiers that wanted combat. And I volunteered for that. And I was selected for that. And—

DANDRIDGE: Did you get a letter or something that said—

TEMPLE: A letter was saying, you know, that I was selected and so forth. And a truck picked me up, took me to the camp and all, and it was in—oh, I guess it was about a three or four hour ride in Italy, cause

the war was going on, at the time, it was just I think, Rome had been won, the war was just above Rome, between Rome and Florence, Italy. So, arrived, everything just seemed strange. And the camp I went, this was just sort of an area where individuals were withdrawing from the front and other new ones were coming in and so forth to it. And everyone was very nice and so forth, but they—I got just long looks and so forth. There were guard duties there and other duties, but I never was asked for that, and I just couldn't understand it. But after about a week, took a long time, I found out that it was a camp for whites, and I found two Indian—American Indians in there also, but it was a camp for all white and, I assume, Indians too. (chuckles) So, it seemed that I was ____ (??) anything because of it being this white camp. But later I got a chance to go into combat because it was a black unit that I was transferred to. And spent a few weeks there, and so forth, and then I was supposed to go into combat. And before you go into combat there's an additional training and, so, actually we went in a truck and then to this camp for this additional training. And make a long story short, before—just right after I completed the day before to leave was informed that they had selected me to assist in giving combat training there, ____ (??). And so that's where, as close to the front that I got. And we would, there were once again black soldiers because of the segregation, they would come in vans, they would line up, soldiers would get out and take the additional training—and I think it was about a week or ten days—and, of course, I assisted in this. It was sort of a, going through a—learning how to crawl towards the field, so forth, while they were shooting overhead, there was explosions and you had to get around that, and so forth. We just—A lot of the things that you would come up with while in combat. Then after you'd finished there, you'd get new clothing, blankets, supplies, and you'd look in the distance, out in the distance and you'd see trucks lined up, and you'd completed this additional training, loaded into the truck, and on the way to the front. So that's as close to the front that I actually got.

DANDRIDGE: Do you know where these people that you trained, do you know where they were sent? Or did you ever know specifically where—

TEMPLE: I never did know. Well, it was still in Italy, they were fighting had passed through Rome, Rome had surrendered, and it was near Florence, Italy. And they were sent up there to—So that was about—And, too in the area that it was at one time that we were in a combat area, like, and, of course, did get credit for being in a combat area, but it was further up that they were sent.

DANDRIDGE: So you were one of the trainers for—

TEMPLE: That's right. I mean to give additional combat training—I can't think of what they called this training, but—

DANDRIDGE: And this is right, immediately, before they entered, actually entered into combat?

TEMPLE: (overlapping) Right, before you entered. You had your basic training and all, and then this was an additional training in, I guess to get you used to a battlefield and so forth. Because, I said, you'd crawl through a—I forget what you'd call it, and all explode this and that and so forth. And we were nearby where you could see air raids in the distance and all. So it was enough to get you used to make

that final step there. And this had come to a period when black troops were being able to see combat to a certain extent. A little different than when it started. But now that it was known that we were needed also, more than just a service unit and all, so you had—don't recall the infantry unit, but there was a black infantry unit also fighting on the front. And, of course, you'd get reports too, uh—since there was more integration armed forces coming on and you had—I think it was the 99th Pursuit, which was a combat unit for ____ (??) so forth, and I met a few of those while on leave during the weekend and so forth. And they were getting credit, too, of helping win that battle. So it looked like we were doing more in that battle. As a matter fact hearing stories of people in combat coming back and there was one story that we heard that there was a group of squadron that always wanted that 99th Pursuit Squadron to be with them because they felt that they were getting even more protection and so forth than the other fight there. So it made us feel good, though, that we were—found that we were helping win this war that would help everyone, of course.

DANDRIDGE: When you were in Italy and North African, what kind of, um—Did you ever come in contact with the Algerians or with the Italians during this time?

TEMPLE: Well we did on passes, of course, and of course you'd get a pass to take a day off far as going into the city and visiting. You'd get to select the food, taste the food that they have, and so forth. And instead of going into the city, I was a person that wanted to make tours, sight-seeing tours to some of the different spots and so forth. And I remember in Italy I ____ (??) far as Vesuvius, ____ (??) far as the eruption I think, so just right after that. And, of course, there were always guides to tell you about it and all and you would have your camera and this was something that you could take back, that you'd experienced this. I have a difficult time remembering some of these things, but I remember right out of Naples there was a place, and I forgotten the author that had wrote the different stages of hell and so forth—but anyway I remember visiting this place and it was still smoldering then because of the flames and so forth. And it was a surprise, got back in the United States and when I went back to school, of course, this author, we read this story that he had at the time and it was at—Dante, and it was really something to know that I had experienced that same spot that the author had selected as far as writing on.

DANDRIDGE: Tell me—You know, I remember sometimes you were telling me, because I was doing some work on the France Benin(??), when you were in Algeria—I asked you, I remember once, was the colonial revolt going on at that time. Did you sense anything at that time? That the colonized were also preparing to revolt or did you observe any of that—

TEMPLE: I, uh, kind of hard to remember back, that was my first experience overseas. But the war was going on, especially in Algiers and so forth. And this was one of the things that, in our patrol, that we patrolled these different areas and so forth. And as a matter of fact the French were still arresting some of the Arabs and bringing them in and they were put in the same prison that there was separation and even some of their families were brought in. I remember once an experience that it was a rather—a person had been stealing for this group, as far as ammunition and so forth, they were still fighting their revolution there too. And to get to it, the way the French would do, they brought one of the oldest

members of the family and brought him in and strapped him to a couch and the French police did the questioning and all. And at the same time they had whips, whip at the feet, I think a little brutality, and they had his family there and asking him questions and this was one way that they could get questions that they want—cause there was little war going on too. And I remember the French were saying, so it's the French police saying that the Americans here all, that when they go they were going to begin to take up this battle again. So, actually, that was something that the French had had before, with the Arabs before I had, we had gotten there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever have any communication with the population of Algeria? Or did you—Or were you all allowed—

TEMPLE: We were allowed, of course. But on a pass, we—A little place called Laga(??), I think, in Algeria, and could go through and kind of visit the town and so forth. And, also, in these particular, in this particular town that—there was a large shower for, what they called it, a bath place, bathing place. And, of course, in the Army you had the old type of shower and to go—

DANDRIDGE: What was it like?

TEMPLE: Well, actually, in the Army there you were limited so much—I'll start at it this way, limited so much water. Because there was a problem, especially in Algiers, as far as water and so forth, water was brought in the tank. You were given so much water; you used to actually wash your face, hands, but then the same water was used a lot of time, after drinking, the same water was used for clothing and so forth. So—

DANDRIDGE: So that was your allotment?

TEMPLE: There was certain allotment for us.

DANDRIDGE: For each person.

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh. But we were able to visit these towns and so forth and see—

DANDRIDGE: Well, what were these bath houses like that you visited?

TEMPLE: Oh, well this is where that I would—a sergeant at the time and would get permission to drive a truck and drive to a nearby town where this, the bath house was. Well, what _____ (??) that you could actually get a good bath and a shower. And there was a pool-like, far as the bath, and then when you'd get through, they'd throw a bucket of cold water on you. Because this was just—otherwise you'd just, due to the dust and so forth, you were close to the desert. This was one way for us to try to improve the cleanness there. So you would actually drive there. And one experience I remember I was learning how to drive and I was learning how to drive in this truck, I didn't have a driver's license, but it was good enough to drive back and forth. And we'd stay on the road and sometimes as far as animals we'd come

across—I've forgotten, what was it that—Anyway, if you'd see a flock of animals coming across, you forgot about the road and would go around the flock and just go on. But, anyway, this was for soldiers to actually get out and you could get a bath and get hot water and it was usually around a spring, natural spring, you could get hot water, swim around, and then, afterwards, throw the cold water on you and so forth there.

DANDRIDGE: When you had, when you went to these bath houses, did you notice that African American soldiers could only go to certain bath houses or did you notice—

TEMPLE: There were certain ones, of course, that you could go there to.

DANDRIDGE: Because you were African American or because you were U.S. soldier?

TEMPLE: Because of U.S. soldier there. And they had certain days, right, that they could go for this of course.

DANDRIDGE: So, U.S. soldiers were allowed to go to certain bath houses?

TEMPLE: Well, actually, to tell you the truth, in these small towns there was only about one, large one there, so they were allowed to go to that, let's say. Yeah. And while there, of course, they would, you'd pick up fruit and some of the things in the store and all, maybe some souvenirs that you want to send home. Of course you were warned before you left that you were at your own risk, as far as eating in some of the these restaurants and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: (in background) I was going to ask you about the food.

TEMPLE: (continuing) And, of course—And you often wondered about it before as the sanitation and so forth, because, like bread and other things, there was no wrapper on breads or anything, and the roads so dusty. But it was just bought, you know, on the streets and somewhere like that. Of course, too, there was a lot of buying and selling of, let's say, government clothes and so forth that maybe there were some soldiers they brought—Not in our unit, cause see we were the Military Police—brought that and they could get a good price to sell to the Arabs and so forth. Even, like, far as sheets for beds that they got twenty dollars for, so forth, and it was our job, though, to try and track down these things and find out where it as being sold; because, after all, they had the money to actually buy these things and all.

DANDRIDGE: What—did you eat out in restaurants and—

TEMPLE: There were certain restaurants—

DANDRIDGE: Did you go?

TEMPLE: I did go when we got to Italy, because the Italian restaurants were much better as far as the food and so forth, more like we were accustomed to in America. But these, far as the Arab and the Arabic food, just were quite different and all. And it was rather amusing, though, there's one thing that when you go to a store uptown that you didn't shop around twelve and maybe you'd come back at three because there was a certain time that it looked like everyone, they took an extra nap. In other words the store was open in the morning and business there and then close down to twelve to three so that they could take a nap—

DANDRIDGE: Was this in Algeria?

TEMPLE: This was in Algeria; this was in North Africa, of course. It was not that way in Italy. And, of course, you could maybe buy what you wanted in that souvenir and so forth from twelve to three, and then you could come back after three and they would be open until later in the evening and so forth. It was quite a scene though, and all.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever have a relationship with any of the Arabs and—

TEMPLE: Well, actually we do as far as the—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) I mean, did you personally?

TEMPLE: Yes, and of course as checking on guard duty and everything and you would have to check, sometimes, as far as the Arabs coming in. And it was always kind of amusing, we used to, when we would see an Arab coming in he would be on his mules—and they rode that mule a little different, sideways on—and behind the mule would be, what we would call the number one wife, and she would have her slippers coming, and then after that, maybe, there were about seven or eight other wives and they would be barefooted, of course, with their shoes over their shoulders. And it was kind of interesting, when they'd get to town there, they would put their slippers on there. So—And, quite often, we had the experience with them—it was a camp that I was in in North Africa was located in an olive grove. And, of course, when these olives got ripe there was always an Arab, I assumed that he owned that, he would bring, I guess, his wives there and, of course, he would come in in the camp there and, I guess, enjoy himself with the soldiers as far as just talking in general, while you know who did the work. The wives did the work. And it was all this, principal wife would, of course—it was amusing, these trees did now grow tall, would kinda get in the tree there with a stick or some way they'd shake the limbs and the olives would fall on canvas and all. And the other wives would be busy getting all the olives and so forth to actually, to sell though.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever buy any of those olives or did the camp buy the olives—

TEMPLE: We never did because they were green at the time, though. As a matter of fact there was olives we hate(??) because they were, our tents happen to be in this grove and all and they would be falling on tents and so forth like that.

DANDRIDGE: And you couldn't eat them at that point?

TEMPLE: No, well they were—No because they were actually just green taken off there. So that's the experiences we had with them. And there was always one Arab, though, that knew everything about the town, and this and that, and they somehow would get on the camp and—Well, this was another thing, they would come on the camp to see about buying government clothes and this or that and all and, as I said, our purpose was to avoid this, to keep this down. And, of course we would talk with them quite a bit and all to try and find out where there was things that had been taken of course.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever try to get that information through just a friendliness?

TEMPLE: We did one time. It was rather interesting that we both had some sheets and, of course, they would give twenty dollars for it, and we weren't selling them of course. But when we entered an area there that they wanted to buy and gave an offer and all that and this is what we thought was interesting, and gave us a price and all, and we said, No we'll keep on. And we were just trying to see about this there and we went a little further there, and when we went a little further and there'd be some more to buy, and we would ask what—but it was always a little higher and how they could pass this on or get together, and then we would go to the third.

DANDRIDGE: You're telling me(??) there were fixed prices.

TEMPLE: Yeah, then we would go to the third place, Oh no good, no good, I'll give you so and so. And then, 'course we'd bring the things back and all. But it was just interesting; we'd scratch our heads and want to know how is it we had one price that went up? Oh, and the thing about it, we would turn around and come back and the one we'd just passed was higher than the one before. And you're going—when you're ready to come out, well it was double the price though. But I guess they thought that if we couldn't sell it there, not take it back, sell things there because—

DANDRIDGE: And this was a way for you to ferret out the—

TEMPLE: Well, to try to see where these areas are to actually keep a little—Because, after all, you not only carrying the French police, but you were looking around in these areas yourself, that the buying and selling was going on. Especially like with clothing and food and things like that that—But this—

DANDRIDGE: Did you observe any missing munitions or anything during this time?

TEMPLE: This would maybe happen to a certain extent but this is something that did not happen too much. Because actually that's one thing you did not want them to have an arm out there as could use it or ammunition or so forth. So it was really clothing and the other thing was food, of course, that they wanted because even you found around the camps that some, especially women would venture around the camp and the food that was thrown away that they would be digging through that. And, of course,

they were not to be on the count(??) at the time and some commanders at the time would try to tell them not to come, leave, and others would get a little anxious that they were staying too long and maybe a little brutality saw us kicking and so forth. This would actually come on. But people would come and they would actually beg, you felt bad, with a bucket. I've forgotten the word they used; they always had a lot of children, no food, and so forth. And they called it, um, munge(??) so forth. And even in some of these towns it had gotten to the place that we had to laugh, right, it wasn't a joke. Fellow on out and he come back and he said he wasn't feeling well. That he happened—It so happened, let me say this here, that the girlfriend he was visiting off of the camp there, and he said that he ate there, and, afterwards, he'd had this munge(??) food, and said, Munge(??) meow, meow, and Bow wow, bow wow, and he said he couldn't eat after that. Because where you'd come in, the food was gone and so forth, and actually these people were eating their animals, cats and dogs—

DANDRIDGE: (at same time) Domestic animals.

TEMPLE: (continuing) And it was really a problem in that particular area there.

DANDRIDGE: Do you think some of the Algerians were stock piling any of these munitions?

TEMPLE: Oh, it could be, right, because they had—Well, see, this was one of the things that was bad. We were in a mountainous area. And no telling what you had there, whether they were buying and selling or what the relationship they may have with the Germans that may be over in there around or something. So, in other words, you just had to watch. And, of course, several cases that Arabs were killed for actually breaking in and, of course, you got a lecture on that. And, of course, you were not put in jail or anything like that, but this maybe kind of bad for you as a camp in a particular Arab area. Cause you wanted to stay in good with certain Arabs within that particular area because they also fed you information about what was happening and so forth; so you wanted to kind of—You were policing that particular area too, there. And you could see what could happen. And if they did steal guns and this and that, they could come in and shoot the person on guard and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever learn any of the language or anything?

TEMPLE: Well actually it was French that we—Going overseas you had, let's say, the route that you would take, maybe five or six days or something like that when you left the States. And of course there were two things you were given. One was a Bible, which I don't know whether you'd get now. You had a Bible and, also, a pamphlet with the language, translations and so forth to the country that you were going. And it was assumed in that four or five day, let's say a week, that you would read that Bible. Of course some had forgotten the Bible, I guess could say on the Bible when they would get off of the boat someone would, oh what we call, raise Cain and argue and this and that and all, and said they just couldn't understand why, when you have that Bible on that boat and on that water you were so quiet, you never did hear anything on that—But I have to finish this and then go to that. But, also, with the book, translation, this was something that you actually learned as far as the French, and the Arab's had a French too. And one of the biggest problems though that you found that the Arabs didn't use all pure

French. (chuckles) Which was the translation was in pure French. But they knew what you were saying, in a way, because they would call it in, what I guess, Arabic and French, Arabic and French, so forth. But it did help to a great deal. And then far as getting out into the community a number of us, they learned a number of little terms, Arabic terms, but this translation was supposed to help you, which it did, I think. But I must tell you, far as coming on the boat, far as quiet there, but far as the water. And of course, when we were coming into the water, this was actually from North Africa into Italy, in the harbor in Naples, that the Germans were still bombing the port in Naples there. And the thing about it, here you had American ships out in there, and the Germans several times come in to actually you could always tell that you'd be out there and everything was quiet and pretty soon you'd hear one mortar. And we could tell a German mortar because it would kind of cut off and on and here a flare would drop and that flare would drop and a little while then you would hear these planes coming over, as far as dropping bombs and so forth. And the time we were there, they bombed the harbor and one _____ (??) outside, he got excited, he came down, he said that everything is being—You'd better come up and all. And yet he was running and getting down—See where the troops are carried in that under deck, in there. But, you had this bomb and so forth. And, going over, you could sleep downstairs in the, far as—I've forgotten what they call that part on the ship you know, at night, and of course I guess because I wanted some action and I was never afraid, but going to sleep downstairs like that, but you could always—because for some reason everyone wanted to be on deck and the reason for that you had cabin—I guess compartments in this ship and you had a bed, everyone had a bed, inside that compartment. And if the bomb or torpedo hits that ship and hits the compartment, that door would be automatically locked and if you were in there asleep, that's it. So you'd be sleeping forever. Because the ship could sink when it hit that, caused water to come in, so they just close it, so the water—that was sealed tight, see the water couldn't come in there and eventually get in the—

DANDRIDGE: Well that's why no one wanted to sleep down there!

TEMPLE: (continuing) That's what I'm getting at. So, therefore, you would get—Oh, no, I just—So you got plenty of food in the way cause if they didn't have money, Here you can have my tickets for meals, you know, on the boat at the time there. So—In other words they did not want to sleep down, everyone was up, and I guess this is what the Germans would have been glad because they could have killed more. But so far we were fortunate that it was just we could see it, but they were still bombing there, coming over, just sending a few planes over. You could just hear it. As a matter of fact, as far as any of the—although the Germans had taken certain areas in North Africa, in North Africa the war was over there—not over, but far as Germans had moved to Italy. And, still to remind they were around, when you would get a pass, some people would want to go to a movie in Algeria and you'd go to the movie and they were late getting out of the movie, may have seen two shows, because the Germans thought they would bomb that particular area, they'd just send to let you around and you could hear them where we were, hear the boom, boom, boom, boom dropping. And, of course, they said that they are bombing outside now and I don't know how many's started or not and they would go on and show the movie again. But they would want to let you know that they were still around. And that's why we were in Africa and there were no Germans in Africa, the Germans were actually in Naples, but our stockpile of bombs would be shipped actually into North Africa and, of course, the planes would take off there going to bomb in Italy

and in the meantime the Germans were dropping soldiers behind the lines to try and ignite those bombs and blow 'em up there, so they would never get there. So that was one experience I had that the top sergeant that they had dropped two or three into that area there and he wanted someone to go around with him. Well I happened to go around, although I was kind of sleepy, went to sleep and woke up alright. But we had to go through that whole particular area to just see, and there was a standby whether anyone was actually, we could see anyone in there and so forth. And too also you had Arabs that lived in that mountainous area and all and, of course, they wanted to get in good with the Americans and, sometimes, they would tell you what was happening and this and that so you would know and all. But uh—it was on the alert all the time because the Jerry, they called, Jerry would let you know that he was still around and all there.

DANDRIDGE: Let's talk about you taking your ship ride going to North Africa. Where did you leave from in the United States?

TEMPLE: I do not know exactly the town, I know that we went to New York and then went down the coast. And I'm not sure whether it was around to—I think it was out of Virginia, I think, the ship on over. And—

DANDRIDGE: Was this your first ship ride?

TEMPLE: This was the first ship ride, and it took so long—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) What did you think, were you scared? How'd you feel about it?

TEMPLE: Well, I tell you what; I just didn't want to _____ (??) and I think a lot of us on all that water. Plus the fact, you might think the ship starts off for North Africa straight shot, it was not. It was a zigzag because—so that in case bombings or anything like that. Plus the fact you had other ships that helped to guard you know as you go around. Cause you see these were troops at the time. So, actually, we spent about a—I can't say exact days for about a week. They showed a movie on the boat there. We had drill, time for the drill, you had this boat's line where you had lifeboats on the different sections on there, and—By the way, too, I might mention, the boat was integrated, that was one thing going over. The boats were inte—you had whites on and blacks on, but they were actually certain areas, but still the boat was—

DANDRIDGE: The boat contained both groups.

TEMPLE: Yeah both groups there. So we would actually on the boat—there was something else I was going to tell you about—But, anyway, it was a zigzag going on over. And –

DANDRIDGE: You want to stop and think there?

Pause in recording.

TEMPLE: Yeah the boat got there. They were saying that actually you were so quiet and so forth on that particular boat. But, uh—Shut it off a minute—

Pause in recording.

TEMPLE: That boat ride, I think that everyone thought that it was a long, long ride and I think more about it even when we were coming back on a boat, I think a lot of us thought of that boat coming to North Africa and of course Italy. Going back, it was really—I must mention this. You had your choice, they had a drawing going back and, of course, you know, we had quite a few airplanes and so forth over there and you could take an air ride back, some, if they drew the right number and all. And looked like everyone wanted to draw that right number instead of that long ship, that's a long ride and they want to know what happens in back—Oh, no, I'm backwards, they wanted that air ride over. Yeah, and not on the ship because they said—No, I'm getting mixed up. They wanted on the ship because they said if something happens now, I can get in one of those lifeboats and said I'll be around a long time. But they look up in the sky and say, If something happens to that plane and it comes down, that's it. And, going over, it was rather interesting, on the boat going over we had these lifeboats and you had they called train, a drill. When you'd go and get in a boat and all. And there was one soldier on there, he was from—where was he from? Anyway, I think from Washington, DC Kennedy. And DC Kennedy, I just couldn't understand on the boat, that every time there was an air raid they would fake, this drill, he would run to where one of those boats happened to be at the time. Of course we had our boats, I think there were about seven or eight people and they had the boats for about five or four officers and so forth. And they finally asked him, you know, it just happened to, soldier, said, Why is it when that siren goes off these men run and get in the boat, why is it you don't run and get in any boat there? He said, "Well I think you have it wrong, cause if this ship is hit and going down, there's going to be three officers and DC Kennedy in that boat." And the ____ (??) turned around and he didn't know what, because it was four officers, and so—But DC he was a person that, he was going to get in that boat, said, "Well there's one thing," he said, "I'm here if that ship's going down and we're going to scroun(??) that boat, there's going to be three officer and DC Kennedy in that particular boat." But going back and all the air, it was just that idea on it there. So, in other words, the food was good and all that, for those who wanted to eat, and of some who did not want to eat because they didn't want to go down deck to eat, still, that fear that what would happen that—

Side 1 ends; side 2 begins.

DANDRIDGE: During your war time experiences in the various places you were, um, did you ever meet any of your friends in Kansas in any of these—

TEMPLE: I met one friend very early and I always remember his name was Gate(??) Wood. And he lived in North Topeka and I lived in what, we lived on the other side of South Topeka, but knew him very well; and my mother knew his mother and my sisters knew his sister and so forth. He happened to go into the Army at the same time that I did and we went to Fort Leavenworth together. And that was something.

And when we were ready to actually ship out to our first training area, actually at Whitside, he was along too there. And then at Camp Whitside he went to Italy and North Africa. And then when we got into North Africa we began to kind of—they were in charge of clerical workers and so forth. And he was a well-educated person and he decided to work with the clerical group there. But I knew him very well and, of course, would see him off and on because he followed the unit on, but the only difference I happened to be with a group not in the clerical work there. But knew him very well. And then—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) You deliberately—Did you deliberately not want to be in the clerical group?

TEMPLE: I was asked of course because, remember, it was a fellow that was—well, he was a dean at Texas Southern at the time, and, of course, they had their records and they, he went over my record and all. And he came to see me one day, “Well, you know, we need you there, far as your tests and all that came out high; we have a good job for you over there.” But I told him, you know, cause I wanted all this other. But he kept, you know, telling me, “We still need you,” but I never did go along with that, on that, because that was not—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) So there were clerical workers overseas?

TEMPLE: Yes, overseas all right. And, of course, they started it was the same group that went overseas there at the time. So another group of people, when we went to—and there was an ROTC at Lincoln University in Lincoln, Missouri and looked like there were about nine or ten students that—I was in what you called the Enlisted Reserved Corps; they were also in the Enlisted Reserve Corps. I was at Kansas University when I went in and they were at Lincoln University and it came a time when all were actually called in. See in Enlisted Reserve you had already been drafted and the government was giving you time to get more education, since you were already in college, they didn’t want to interfere with that college. But it came to the point where everyone was needed, and all the Enlisted Reserve Corps that was in went in. And this was a group from Lincoln University. And we were always together, all the way to Camp Whitside; and then when we went overseas, we were together. And there may be, sometimes, things that they did not like. It so happened that the outfit that we were in had just been made up, the battalion. And the platoon that we had—I think there were about two or three platoons up—and in that platoon there were a number of these ROTC students from Lincoln. And, of course, you know how you could feel that some of them had had ROTC, knew the this and that, but they were actually looked down on by the people that were actually over us, the corporals, the sergeants, and all because they were old soldiers that had been in the Army and I guess they thought that they knew and some may not have had the education and so forth and had a time as far as explaining this and that and all. But anyway—

DANDRIDGE: So there was tension between these—tension between the ROTC people and the officers?

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh. And even sometimes—not officers to the—

DANDRIDGE: (in background) What do you call ‘em?

TEMPLE: Oh, gosh, the uh—

DANDRIDGE: Like a sergeant or—

TEMPLE: Yeah, sergeant, I should—But, anyway, they would come out and sometimes try to make a joke, you know, as far as the roll call, this and that and all. I know one case where someone, they were out there, and it was always something were calling the roll and all right, calling the roll and someone mentioned about the, tell him the sergeant, Ulchahey you didn't call. I didn't call what name Ulchahey is here and they want to know who had signed, would spell out a name there was no one in there of that name and all. I mean there were different kind of what we called jokes and this and so forth at the time, though. I'm trying to think of what they call that—un—what kind of officers?

DANDRIDGE: Yeah, I know what you're saying. Noncommissioned officers.

TEMPLE: Noncommissioned officer, yeah. But they were very good, because they were old soldiers; they had been in the Army. Maybe there was a purpose to try and get these young soldiers in—

DANDRIDGE: Did some of them come out of the Ninth and Tenth?

TEMPLE: Some of them did. One—Or let's say we had one—and we had two who's residents happened to be old soldiers and so forth. But some of them they'd come in and they were actually soldiers and they were put in supply camps and some of the older job.

DANDRIDGE: Did some of them serve—Had some of them served in World War I? Or they weren't that old?

TEMPLE: No, oh no, unh-uh. As a matter of fact I don't think we had anyone in World War II. But I mean there were people who had been in the Army for a time and all and knew and everything there.

DANDRIDGE: What other—What other people did you meet when you were in the military? I mean in the European Theatre and North Africa; what other people do you remember meeting that weren't from Kansas? I mean—what kind of—did you meet—where did they come from, where were the variety of people did you meet?

TEMPLE: I would think—Well one thing it looked like there were a number of 'em that were around the Northeast and around the area, New York area, and around Chicago. I say around because at that time everyone was from New York or close to New York or they were near Chicago and all. And they wondered when they were discharged, Well how are you, why are you going to this place and all? I guess it just made you feel better to say, I'm from the New York area, I'm from the Chicago area, but they didn't say what town so forth there. But we had a lot of soldiers from that particular area.

DANDRIDGE: What about the South, the U.S. South? Were the many from the U.S. South? I mean, did you remember seeing, from your own experience?

TEMPLE: Yes, I did, yeah, um-hm, there were.

DANDRIDGE: Would you say were they majority—or would you say most of them were not from the South?

TEMPLE: I would say not from the South. And, you know, it's a funny thing, but it looked like no one was from Mississippi, no one was from Georgia, just like these towns—although they may have been, but from some reason they did not want to say actually, there. And, of course, far as our officers that we had, I would say that 99 percent or 98 percent were actually from the South there, as though the idea was that they do southern youth and so forth and could do a better job, I guess they thought, and so forth could train this and that as far as your officers and all there.

DANDRIDGE: And your officers were—

TEMPLE: Were white, all the officers white. And sometimes you had about two or three whites that were actually from the North and it looked like they enjoyed talking to you more, just sitting down, talking in general (static) as far as your fam—this and that and all. And some of them would even bring their problems, know you have problems, this is our problems, and so forth there. But—Overall, I thought we had—what we had that had been in the Army that had experience and so forth. We didn't have any, what they used to call ninety day wonders and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: What about—Going back to your movement to Italy, in going through your training camp, any other experiences in Italy that you recall? Any other experiences in that?

TEMPLE: Let's see, I'm trying to—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: Let's talk about some of your experiences in Italy, going back to Italy. So what were you going to say?

TEMPLE: No I was going to say that in the—I was(??) a sergeant there and I did see to it that there were certain men in the outfit, far as the pass on Sundays of course. Even you had a few church goers that, uh—although maybe they were not but it was the idea of getting off of the camp. So, usually, I would go down on the every, not every but about number of Sundays and, of course, go to the command post, I had to see about getting a bus, so that some of them that wanted to go to church at the town and so forth could go. And we would usually pick up about twenty-five, thirty, and they would go, even if they were on guard duty they would get back. So they would go to, get to the city there, to go to a church there, and some would go to church, maybe some wouldn't, but we were all together coming back. But

they had that right, although there was always some type of religious service at the camp and all. And, of course, it may have been far as the denomination that you belonged to because sometimes you had a person that was—what do you call, person that was—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) Chaplain.

TEMPLE: Chaplain, that was Baptist and you had another chaplain that maybe that was a Catholic and all, but it looked like it didn't make that much difference to the soldiers that whoever they had. There was some that was a little closer to that chaplain than others while some just didn't want to believe in this and that and so forth. But the chaplain would sit down and talk with you. Far as some type of games, you know at—they always were some type of gambling games and so forth, being the Army. Recall one building, it was a big building, and in the middle there was always a gambling table, and people were gambling there. And it was all overnight on the weekend there, and pretty soon you'd hear the noise, I just happened to be there because I was relieving someone.

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm.

TEMPLE: (chuckles) But anyway, there was a noise there, and we came in and here a chaplain came in. And they were gambling there, but he didn't—anyway he said, "Let's move the tables and have a little religious service," and everyone stayed! And he went on and on, and I guess, let's say about an hour, and he left and told 'em, "Now put your tables up, and go on." And everyone thought he was such a good person and this and that. But what I'm saying, he could have come in and interfere, "Why this and that," and all that. But he let them go ahead and go forth. And they were very close too, on the ____ (??) because it was someone, you know that, far as needed that and—And it was surprising, in the Army, too, the number of people, far as mentally, after they got overseas, they had three and four and five, they'd get overseas and you'd put them on guard, now whether there was actual (lots of mic noise) let's say kind of having a mental problem or a way to escape, I do not know. But in some cases, there were ways that one or two people that I remember ____ (??) about a day or two and they had to go to a special camp and so forth. (lots of mic noise, some words hard to distinguish) But there was a camp—you know, far as taking care of them and all.

DANDRIDGE: So you did observe some having trouble?

TEMPLE: (overlapping) Yes, you did observe, right, having trouble and all that. Because, after all, no one wants anyone out guarding and watching with problems like that. There was what you'd call a stockade, though, far as problems that would come, individuals would go in the stockade and all that.

DANDRIDGE: But that was punishment?

TEMPLE: Yeah, that was punishment. And we had an office that came as far as up the front, you know, and you do this and do that and so forth. And he actually sometime would want to visit our stockades. (lots of mic noise) And he said, "I don't care what you say, but I find the best soldiers that I had for

taking a chance and this and that.” Some of them come from stockades. And he said, “That they’re people that will take chance,” they’re this, they’re that, and they may not have been put there for a real ____ (??). But we always kind of laughed about that. And he had such a tough unit and all that, and what that unit was made of. But far as your health-wise, there was always in the Army there was what they called a health call every morning. And there was sick call, which you could report to that, every morning, and then you were taken to an infirmary to see how ill you happened to be. And, from that, some would go to the hospital and some would be right back there and they could go the next day and all.

DANDRIDGE: Were there any particular illnesses that were real—

TEMPLE: There were. And, of course, they would go to the hospital, it would be—

DANDRIDGE: What kind of illnesses was common?

TEMPLE: Most of them, I think, far as actually being(??) problems there, the—

DANDRIDGE: Not physical?

TEMPLE: Not physical problems. You’d get one or two physical—Because you, there so many examinations when you go into the Army before you have a physical exam. Then you have what they have; then you also have exams far as in the Army and all, too. So—Actually about—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: About healthcare—

TEMPLE: As far as healthcare, soldiers would get passes and all. And, in some cases they may end up at the wrong(??)—(loud mic noise) In some cases they may end at the wrong place, as far as sex(??) relationships and so forth. So this was one thing that the Army always did. They had in the term, I guess I can use it, they called it a short arm inspection, it was in the Army. (chuckles) But you had an inspection, say, for say every couple of weeks or something like that. And, of course, you had a group of doctors there are the time and this was shifted one after one week maybe one doctor and, next time it’d be another doctor, and so forth to see that you were in good health, and health-wise and all, this was actually carried out. And it was carried out regular-like. And to show how it was carried out, like all other examinations, it was never mentioned when that examination would take place. In other words, it could be six o’clock in the morning, if could be—but you’re not told when and this is far as, so that you could, maybe not be there at this and that. And there was always, every morning after you would come up in roll call and you could go far as your health, if you were ill some way and all. And, then, you would go there and they would check it out and see, and if it was bad enough to go to the hospital, don’t worry, you were in a hospital and, otherwise, you’d come back to camp, maybe in a day or two you’d be out there once again. But—

DANDRIDGE: Where you ever sick?

TEMPLE: I never did report for sick call; I never was sick. Come to think of it, no I can't remember it. I guess, once again, I wanted to see what was going on and all. And, also, it was interesting that you had details and some things that had to be done around the camp that more soldiers would be needed and, of course, you would have details for that. And, of course, some people knew certain people, and certain people wouldn't want to go out and they would volunteer for this and maybe they were doing better helping around the camp than going out there. Because you went out to train, you really trained, you know drilled out there and all. And—But there was always someone that stayed—some things had to be done, someone had to stay around the kitchen and help with KP—I never did any KP—and, of course, KP a lot of times was punishment, and you lost your pass, and you did KP there and all. But they were very, very strict.

DANDRIDGE: What was the food like when you were in Europe and North Africa? The food that you ate on—

TEMPLE: The food was very good, it was always _____(??) out, but the problem is that sometimes maybe the supplies didn't reach you. But the food was very good and, usually, you had a good chef of course. I always remember when I first went in and we had our food there, and of course you know in the dining hall you line up, then you go in and then you have a plate and you go by what you want. I happened to be—had never been in the Army before, first time, and so I went by and I noticed the others there and they would know someone in the chicken there and some of them would point, want that, Man I want that damn chicken. So it was my turn to go in there, and I was a recruit first time, and I went in and I said, "I want that one there" and they looked at me, old cook, and I said, "I want that one there." And then the head, an officer came there said, "What's wrong, what's wrong?" The person there said, "He wants all the chicken, come pointing out the chicken he want." "Give him all that's in there, just about, and I'm going to see that he eats it all." And I'll never forget that. There were about four pieces of chicken and I was sitting over the plate and the male(??) officer came by and watched, came by to see me eat some—and I said I'll never do that again. I didn't know, I saw the others pointing out what kind of pieces of chicken they wanted and I didn't want that old piece of chicken they gave me, so I pointed at the man who was giving it, and then he didn't like it, said he wants to eat up everything. You had a sergeant there in the dining hall and he said, "Oh he wants—put him all," and then he stood by there and I dare you to leave any of it knowing that, in the Army, I guess maybe they would take you out and shoot you stuff, but I ate chicken and I didn't want any more chicken after that. But, really, this happens any place, when you go through a food line and someone knows you, they're going to give you a choice and so forth. But I would say the food was very good, especially the supplies.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever get short of supplies?

TEMPLE: That's what I'm saying. When supplies are sort, like—

DANDRIDGE: What would happen?

TEMPLE: Well, actually, usually you had something to lean upon and—I know at one camp there, looked like everything was gone except macaroni, and they fed macaroni and the mess sergeant said that he didn't need to worry, we didn't need to worry about losing weight and this and that, "As long as I've got all this macaroni, and as long as I feed this macaroni, they're going to be fat and healthy there." So—(chuckles) Oh, and I was talking, now—this is rather interesting, this is jumping, I guess it did happen to certain camps. But when I went back to school there, there was a roommate there—not roommate, person in the dorm, he happened to be a white individual and he was saying about how that, "We always had all the food we wanted" and I said, "Well how did you have," we got in a little argument and all. He said, "Well you all didn't do this?" He said that we would look through and there was something like a B(??) product in the thing and all, and he said and we'd sat down and I would sit on a ladder, oh we don't have this, we don't have this, we're so hungry and there was a can of AB(??) and so forth, and everyone ate it and wouldn't let me eat it and I just wanted to thank you and oh how I wished I could—this and that, two weeks, he said, "A whole case would come." He said, "And the boys got onto it," he said, "and write to these different companies and they send you a case of food and all." And he said, "And that's what we did." But we did not think of that that time. But, anyway, you did run short of food at times. And there was one problem, too, when you run short of food—we ran short of food in the area, and they moved it in, and they moved it in in the evening and the next day we did not have any food there. Someone came in and raided and stole, held up the car and stole it, but we never knew who it was that came and stole it. But we knew there were certain people that had a little more money to spend, of their own. But—I'm just naming things that can happen. And we had to go without it—Cause, see they would go down and get a truckload of food and bring up. Well that was that supply and if something happened to it, of course it was held up, they did get more but there was a day or two where you didn't have any like that. That is one incident. Another incident, we got a hog, a pig we brought; the Arab gave us a pig and we got a pig there or something. And we were going to roast this pig some way and they built up a fire and cut a stick all, some way, as the soldiers would come in, they would get to, you'd turn it you know. And I'm beginning to wonder why it took so long, look like it took two or three days to get this pig ready cause it was going to have a barbeque pig and roast and all. And they, we nearly got—we'd come in, when you came in from guard you'd do this for a while, everyone would take turns and that day we were getting ready for it, and everyone was getting ready, and all at once we heard some hollering and noise and all and saw smoke go up. And the stick burned and broke and the hog fell in the fire and burned up. Everyone was disappointed. That was our pork that we were going to—someone knew how to roast a pig—and it was on a, it was large enough, but some way, I think, the stick burned and fell in the fire there. And, too, there were always people who could buy something outside and bring it in and eat it and all. Then, you know, then as far as food was concerned, when we got over in Italy, we ran out of food and, of course, you were close to battlefield, there on the line and all there, and we shared with a British unit and they were very helpful, they shared the food with us and all. And, for example, looked like we had tea, and no one liked tea including myself, I liked the coffee, no one liked tea, so we had tea and, for some reason they were out, but they had plenty of tongue. And I wasn't going to eat no beef tongue. And this beef tongue looked just like a tongue and some way I would(??) slice tongue or something. So they said, We can share. They shared the tongue with us and

this was the time—the tongue, and this was the time I'd never been so hungry, cause we had plenty of bread and I guess we still had some macaroni, but I got so hungry that I got the tongue and put the tongue between bread and squeezed the juice on it and ate that bread with the juice, I guess. And it didn't taste right, but I didn't starve. But I'll never forget that because that was their diet and they said, Oh we have tongue. But—I just didn't care for it there, but I'll always remember that at the time. And then, too, as far as eating, a lot of times when you're out eating on a pass or something and someone would take you to another unit as a visitor, you'd have a good meal there. And all along when you're going from one place to another, like from one—from Italy, maybe, up to Naples, and you wanted to go to Rome, and you would go to Rome on the truck. The truck would stop along the way; it was just like at camp, when you get out everyone would eat, you'd get out, you'd line up and eat, and you didn't cut lines. There was always some soldier there, sergeant that would step up out while you'd be, "Soldier we don't cut line." And everyone would get some food and this happened around the camp. They would come in, you would eat your food, enjoy it, you'd come in they'd give—We don't cut line for seconds, we wait until everyone eats and then if there's some left. But there was no argument, no fight, anything over food, because I guess food's the principle thing, I mean just like gasoline for the ____ (??) and that you would—And there was only one case I remember, a case that I can tell—not case but case as far as food we're sharing. It so happened that a lot of times, especially in Italy, there were a lot of nuns at the time, and these times wanted to move from one place—let's say maybe they wanted to go to Rome and they were at Naples or someplace; there was no transportation or they had to wait until the government gave transportation. And there was one thing about them, one thing that when they wanted to get there they wanted to get there. So they would ride(??), you had a truck and maybe there were in that particular truck there was thirty soldiers, let's say twenty to twenty-five I'll say, and in there there were five or six nuns along. And when you went along the way that they stopped to eat they would make sure that these nuns could eat, they didn't have to stand in line, cause they're only five or six, they made sure they could eat and all of that. And someone asked about, you know when you'd get there, What you'd come with some nuns, someone not knowing, been, How did they ride with you and ride with all those soldiers and so forth. And some soldiers in there was honest and said there was no fear for them because you could ask them that there was one thing with the soldier, that the soldier somehow had respect for nuns. And that they did not—and they would tell you on the, well a lot of things I might not say, that might happen to them. They felt that, some of 'em believed in luck and all that, that I wouldn't touch, I wouldn't bother, Sister do you want this, Sister out there(??)—So, in other words, they were treated with respect, and they treated soldiers with respect too. So I always remember that and they saw that they got something to eat, they saw—or even some of them would take, from the camp, would see that a nun or something that didn't have anything. But I always remember that

DANDRIDGE: Well, on—Let me just ask about the racial component, several things you have talked about. In terms of the chaplains that you saw, and were close to you in your unit, were these chaplains white or were they black?

TEMPLE: Now that was one thing, the chaplains were integrated. The chaplains were. That as far as I know.

DANDRIDGE: You had chaplains at your unit that were both black and white?

TEMPLE: Oh, no, I'll take that back. I meant far as staying(??). Yeah, no, we had all, I can remember, we had all black that went out on the field with us. But, now, at that particular area, that if there was a church service or something, you could go to any—a white may visit—well, you had integrated groups that go to church.

DANDRIDGE: Really?

TEMPLE: Yeah. Far as—Well, church was just a certain camp or this or that, and it may be a white chaplain or it may be a black chaplain there at the time. And I can say that, too, I guess I could say far as actually you'd go to see for—but actually going out on a problem within your company, let's say, or your battalion, that we had, you know, mainly for us a black chaplain.

DANDRIDGE: Um, do you—In terms of the cooks in your units, were they blacks or were they white?

TEMPLE: All cooks were black at that time. All cooks were.

Pause in recording.

TEMPLE: They were black, I mean most of them, and we'd see that you got a good—most of them, and most of them had friends, too, and see that you got a good serving. Especially if they came—see we had different platoons and so forth and if they happened to be in that platoon and all and then I'll treat you right, you're going to get a good helping and all. But they tried to be fair on that. Because it's just a funny thing that food is just like ammunition, if that food is poor, you're going to have a poor Army. I mean that's something that you have to feed people—

DANDRIDGE: So the cooks were valued?

TEMPLE: Yes, right. Uh-huh.

DANDRIDGE: In terms of the doctors who—you were talking about health care—were the doctors white or black that served your unit?

TEMPLE: Uh, white and black, they were. They were far as—that served general, I mean.

DANDRIDGE: But to serve your particular unit, did you see any white doctors or did you always see black—

TEMPLE: I saw white, I mean for the inspection.

DANDRIDGE: For the inspection they were white doctors.

TEMPLE: They were white and black, I have seen, but mainly white.

DANDRIDGE: But you did see some black physicians?

TEMPLE: I—I'm not too sure. I would say principally white, that's what I would say, because it's a little different than far as chaplain. And I didn't go in the hospital or nothing like that—

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm, so you don't really know.

TEMPLE: I really don't know. All I know as far as the sexual(??) inspection and all. And these were, I would say white, yeah, uh-huh. Because, yeah—

DANDRIDGE: Because what?

TEMPLE: No, I was saying that they were joking around about, they said, That I wonder—some of them I can remember telling, I wonder whether these—they thought they were specialists—I wonder if there's something wrong with them, with all these white doctors bringing—I wondered if they had done all their life doing this and all. Something has to be wrong with them mentally (chuckling), but, anyway, they were white at the time. But they used to joke about that. Go ahead.

DANDRIDGE: Now if sol—if a black soldier needed blood, what—do you know any, were you aware of anything like that? What would they do? Or needed blood transfusions.

TEMPLE: I don't know, but I feel that it would not matter. You find this, that if you get closer to an action, the battlefield and all of that, it looked like segregation breaks down a great deal, although some individuals may not want it to. But imagine you're hit and you would find soldiers mentioning about that a, Oh I knew a black, for instance so forth, And he held this and that, and I think they would help each other and so forth. But the closer—the further you get away from service units and you get to the real thing you're going to have one helping the other then. And I don't think you have—Well, as a matter of fact, I don't think you would, if it was known, I don't think you would be alive too long, in the Army. If people knew, if soldiers actually knew that that is carried on like that, on the battlefield, that—I mean there were jokes about and this and that and all, but what would happen—And I just feel that, knowing the Army, knowing the battlefield with white officers and so forth, I'm sure that they would treat black soldiers right that. And—

DANDRIDGE: What—Did you ever experience association with the Red Cross while you were overseas? Did you have any experiences with the Red Cross?

TEMPLE: No, I can't remember.

DANDRIDGE: What about USOs?

TEMPLE: USOs. I attended every evening I could, just about, the USO. Because—Well, this was always special food, as far as the USO, there was always maybe a movie there or something. And this is where—And there was some integration, too, because there were black soldiers and white soldiers would come because the USO would bring entertainers and so forth over, and this was, they would sit as a group, but this was white and black as far as entertained.

DANDRIDGE: What kind of entertainers do you remember seeing?

TEMPLE: Well, these were movie stars and so forth they would come. And I guess they were people of—well, I don't know whether you had TV shows, but radio show stars, something like that they would come to entertain with their jokes.

DANDRIDGE: Did any black entertainers come, do you remember any?

TEMPLE: It seems like I can remember very few, I can remember at the time.

DANDRIDGE: Most of them were white entertainers.

TEMPLE: Yeah, uh-huh. And, as a matter of fact, they would even visit your camp and all; of course they were with officers at the time, but they would come by and see, you know. And if there's someone from the place would say, Oh I know, you know so—And you—

DANDRIDGE: In terms of, also the USO, did you all have dances or—I mean this is overseas, so I don't know.

TEMPLE: No, I don't think, not overseas. That they did.

DANDRIDGE: But it's mainly the food that—

TEMPLE: Mainly with the food and, far as reading material and—I guess you—

DANDRIDGE: Where were the USOs? Were they near your camp?

TEMPLE: They were near; there was one always near camp there. And each—

DANDRIDGE: Was it run by whites or blacks?

TEMPLE: I don't know it was run by, but I think you'd find both there far as working, like, and—

DANDRIDGE: When you were talking about—going forward—What was it like toward the end of your service overseas? Did you notice any difference or did you just—was it abruptly ended? How did your, how did your service—Was Italy your last place—

TEMPLE: Italy was the last place. As a matter of fact, uh, in Italy we were going to another staging area, cause the war wasn't over, in Italy, so we were moving out of Italy and we were going to another staging area up near—Not moving out of Italy to wherever I was in Italy up to Naples. And we were going to a staging area there to get ready to go to finish the war because we had Japan, the war was not over. So, in other words, we moved and went through another—let's say about a day before what(??) the war came to an end, while—just before we could get started on the trip. It was—I think, was it the second dropping of the—What was it called?

DANDRIDGE: Bomb.

TEMPLE: Yeah.

DANDRIDGE: (in background) Atomic bomb.

TEMPLE: And the war was over then it was just sort of a waiting around to see what to do. Because we had papers and everything to go to Tok—to go to Japan. Papers, everything, boat all. It was a matter to go, we had a few days and we were going to load on that boat and ship out. But on the way on the boat for, when we got over there at that, in Italy to staging area to go, the war came to an end. And, so that's where we didn't, we finally—they had to wait to see when you would leave and all that. We spent, oh I guess it was a good month or more just in the staging area just to go overseas. There were other units due to this, due to that they had to go first. There was a boat far as the injured and this and that. So it was a slow trip. And it really _____ (??) because we were ready to come home. And everyone was anxious at the time. And that was when you could be in a drawing; get an airplane or a boat ride over. And that's why they said that old boat can stop out there and I can still paddle round, but if that plane goes down—But, far as coming back—

DANDRIDGE: How did you, did you hear about the Normandy invasion? How did you hear about that?

TEMPLE: It was early in the morning and, I think, we were on guard and the news came on that there was an invasion, you know, and it was the Normandy invasion and no one knew whether it was going to work out or what. Some couldn't see how it would and all that. Everyone was glued to get any news they could. But we did hear it, it was—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) You heard it over the radio in your camp?

TEMPLE: Over—Yes, I guess you would say over that.

DANDRIDGE: Did they have loud speakers?

TEMPLE: They had loud speakers—I mean it was something, it was just no matter where that the invasion—Because, see, it was something we were waiting for to happen, to take place, you know. Eisenhower, of course there in France they'd visit this and that and all because, really—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) Did he visit your camp?

TEMPLE: (continuing) He, he—No, unh-uh. But that was, he knew the—we were in North Africa at that— But he knew that it was going to come about. And, of course, the day he said that was the day it rained and all that, stormed, but they had to go through with it. But the invasion did come off, you know, was successful.

DANDRIDGE: So, you—Where were you camped when Normandy, do you remember?

TEMPLE: That's what I was thinking of, I was thinking it was in—it had to be in, no it was in North Africa. It was. Because, see, Italy was still in the war there. Yeah, uh-huh.

DANDRIDGE: So how, so when you had heard about Normandy, the invasion, it had already occurred, I assume?

TEMPLE: Yeah. It had occurred, yeah; after it occurred, I guess, _____(??) success. I guess, looked like it was going to be. Uh-huh. And of course then you had all types of _____(??) coming out, Well we won't be over here long. Forgotten about Japan. We won't be over here long, the war's going to be over, and this and that. It was just that feel. Well it was a relief, I guess, too, because there was just a wondering how they were going to invade there.

DANDRIDGE: Well what was your attitude toward the closing possibility of the war? What did you feel about it?

TEMPLE: Well, I think we were all glad, I think we had seen enough action although we wanted all this action at one time. And, uh, I think that were glad to actually see it over. And I think, too, it meant a lot to us because after all we fought in that war, I mean as far as the black soldier. And they gave—left a lot of lives over there, black soldiers there. And I don't think—I think that while they were fighting some of them said, America's going to be different, too; that, We are not over here fighting for nothing. And on the way, as a matter of fact, you heard that that was brought out too on the way, Look I fought in the—I mean look like it did something to strengthen, I don't know what it was, but it was a different feeling. And I know I had a different feeling, too, at the time, though that—In other words, segregation wasn't—you just _____(??) it couldn't last. I mean it was that here we went over and we fought and all and what did we fight for otherwise, if not for freedom? I mean for everyone. And, too, and you found when you got overseas they would want to know how the Americana, that, you know, that you found in some foreign countries that they thought, especially the English, that how we had this system to go through

and all that—In other words I'm pretty sure that there was a different feeling on us that, after you go through that—

DANDRIDGE: So, tell me, how did you—Tell me about your departure. How did you get back to the States? Do you remember anything about that? Did you come back on a ship or—

TEMPLE: Excuse me. Oh yes, I came back on a ship and all. And on the—Oh, on the ship, it looked like the officers were better and all of that. Cause going over there was a little dispute one while this was going over, I just think of these things.

DANDRIDGE: Sure, that's all right.

TEMPLE: (Continuing) That there was a—we had some black officers and they were, and I think on this boat you were together you were in ____ (??) and it seemed as though a higher up black officer going over had given an order to a lower, junior officer and a little argument developed. And the argument got out of hand, kind of, so this passed on on the boat and they wanted to kind of quiet this down and all. And, after that, there was a little different feeling you know because the blacks knew that they didn't want to have a ride on that boat. But this, I remember this, I don't know what it was but there was an officer was talking to a junior officer, which had the right to give a command and he gave the command to this junior officer and he did not want to take that command because it was a black officer there. And going back we—See, in other words, you had to do KP—not KP but help on the boat this and that, and I noticed going back, for example, they integrated going back on doing things on this boat that I happened to be on. I don't know whether it was due to the end of the war, whether it was a difference on the boat or not, but there was a difference, a different feeling and all you tell on that. Because this other—they really got worried because they didn't know what that dispute would lead to.

DANDRIDGE: When you were coming back home, do you remember where you landed? Where did you go, do you remember?

TEMPLE: Uh, well, I know it was on the West Coast there.

DANDRIDGE: It was on the West Coast?

TEMPLE: Yea—Not west, I'm sorry don't get me, East Coast. Because I never left—

DANDRIDGE: (at same time) Because you never did—

TEMPLE: (continuing) No, we never did go because, I guess we went in to, it was in New York. Because I came back and I guess that's the only place, wasn't it, that some saw, when we got there, that they did they saw the Statue of Liberty. Where is the Statue of Liberty? New York. And there is laid the Statue—was so glad, I remember the soldiers. Some way we were coming in or something where they were at the rail there and looked at the Statue of Liberty to know that you are back home and all that. And I—So

that's where, I guess that was in New York that we actually came. Oh, as far as going, I think it was going down by Norfolk, going out. Going on the way that we went to some way up near Pennsylvania, but— Oh, I'm trying to think of this chocolate shop where chocolate candy is made, Hershey—

DANDRIDGE: Hershey.

TEMPLE: Yeah, on the way the train had to make a stop and they made a stop there. And as far as you could see that was houses there, there was people with baskets and all from the Hershey Candy just giving you all—You were getting ready to go overseas, just baskets of candy, all the candy Hershey bars and all to soldiers. They was just, you couldn't see—

DANDRIDGE: So did you get off the train?

TEMPLE: No, we didn't get off the train, they came—Yes, we did get off, just in that area there. And they passed out chocolate candy and everything. I remember that going over there. And it just brought a feeling up that it's just, you know—Cause when you're going overseas like that—

DANDRIDGE: (at same time, in background) You want as much support—

TEMPLE: (continuing) But coming back, I mean it was a different feeling and all that.

DANDRIDGE: Well when you came back home, how were you greeted? Do you remember any greetings or any—

TEMPLE: Uh, I think so, yes, I think so far as—I think a lot of times they'd ask about far as if you're a veteran, I don't know, guess that's supposed to ____ (??)—

DANDRIDGE: When you came home, you came home on a ship right?

TEMPLE: I came home on a ship and I'm trying to think whether—It was at Fort Leavenworth, went there—

DANDRIDGE: Did you come back home from the ship on a train or how did you come back home on?

TEMPLE: On the ship, I had to get discharged first, so that went to Fort Leavenworth and we went through a—

DANDRIDGE: But how'd you get from the ship to Fort Leavenworth?

TEMPLE: That was—that was by rail. Yeah. I never used a bus. It was by rail. Like we left Leavenworth to come to Fort Riley—I mean to Camp Whitside cause I always remember, guess where the train stopped a few minutes? It stopped at a place called Topeka, Kansas and then left. And this is when this other folk

said, My home is right over here, but—But anyway, we went by rail to Leavenworth, Fort Leavenworth, and got there that evening. And that morning that you were to get out and wondering and hoping you could get out that evening. Always remember another soldier that always had bad luck and this and that and, I betcha I won't get out, this happened to 'em, that happened to me, and so forth. Lot of things that did happen to him which no one would stay in his unit, some of which I won't get into, but they started after breakfast early. Had to go through, I guess, to see whether I brought any disease or this or that back and physical—

Tape 1 ends; tape 2, side 1 begins.

DANDRIDGE: Dr. Temple, we were talking about your coming home.

TEMPLE: Okay, I was at Fort Leavenworth. (clears throat) Went through the physical exam and got through that, I don't know the exact time, late—well, I guess it was probably the early afternoon. So, after that, they had free transportation, by the way, always to the, you have the truck to carry you there, transportation to take the train home. Arrived in Topeka, Kansas, back home. The Yellow Cab was still running, so I got a Yellow Cab and 2300 Fillmore Street, where I lived and I got home. When I got home and opened the door, how pretty was that?

DANDRIDGE: Were you surprised? Where was Alberta?

TEMPLE: Alberta was in the kitchen. Kind of emotional—Alberta was in the kitchen and she put down the skillet and everything and came up and all.

DANDRIDGE: Did you know —Was Annie(??) supposed to be—

TEMPLE: Annie was in good hands.

DANDRIDGE: Was she supposed to be teaching somewhere else or did you know she was going—

TEMPLE: I'm not—I think she had come back, though, hadn't she at the time? To stay with my—I think, because she was there helping with the house.

DANDRIDGE: She wasn't at Bishop at that—

TEMPLE: No, unh-uh, no.

DANDRIDGE: She hadn't gone to Bishop.

TEMPLE: So she was there and I came in and she couldn't believe it and all.

DANDRIDGE: So they didn't even know you were coming home?

TEMPLE: No, I—Oh, by the way, no one knew when I was leaving, even overseas, and a person by the name of Odrear Dandridge came over and said, “Oh Mrs. Temple, you know Fred’s coming home.” And she said she didn’t believe it. And she said, “Let me look at this, show you this in the paper.” And they listed the units coming home and it was in the paper, and my mother knew I was coming home a week before I did because they’d report who would be coming home at the time, but they didn’t say when but they would be back in the States and would be coming on. So, anyway, Alberta was there and she was in the kitchen and came and all, and she said—

DANDRIDGE: So, you came home in a Yellow Cab?

TEMPLE: Yeah, Yellow Cab. And she said—couldn’t help pay(??) my money, guess I gave a good tip, but anyway. And my mother—I forgot who lived across the street and she ran out and hollered and my mother came over. My dad wasn’t there, he was over at a neighbors. And he saw me and he waved and he said, “Oh boy.” And, uh—Well he ran there and all and we were all together again, but it was really a homecoming.

DANDRIDGE: Well where was—

TEMPLE: My mother was across—I don’t know whether it was, who lived over there at the time, in the house where Mrs. Scott, she was over there visiting and Alberta was the only one. Didn’t know when I was coming. I rung the bell and she just couldn’t believe it. And then she—And my mother, you know how people look out, I guess, they know when a cab, and saw the cab and she came running over there. And then Dad was over, that it was a Mr.—I’ve forgotten the name, but all the old retired men would sit over there and talk and he was over there and talking. And when I went out someone must have told him, and I know he stood up and he just couldn’t believe it. And—

DANDRIDGE: Where was—

TEMPLE: (continuing) And he said, because anyway Dad kinda believed I wouldn’t come back, like. Cause he told me once that the ____(??) worried him because said blank all of the sudden and one of his foursome, you know, kept asking, Where is your son and where is—I was overseas and all. And he worried about that and he said, “The thing that got me, I never told your mother, ____(??) the night before” he said, “I looked downstairs and I saw you coming up the stairs and I said, ‘Oh what are you doing here now?’.” He said, “I never told that to your mother, because I just thought maybe that meant you wasn’t coming back.” But, anyway, and he said that blank asked him on that other and all. So he was so happy to see me and all. But it was quite an emotional thing.

DANDRIDGE: Well where was your brother James and your sister Jeanette? Do you remember?

TEMPLE: Uh, let's see, I don't, I'm trying to kinda remember back. I think, uh, I think Buddy was in New— was he in New Orleans? I think he was at the time. Yeah, I think in New Orleans. And I think Jeanette was still teaching. Or was she at the time? Let's see—

DANDRIDGE: She was at Langston or something?

TEMPLE: Yeah, probably at Langston.

DANDRIDGE: What year were you discharged?

TEMPLE: Let's see, I was discharged in '46.

DANDRIDGE: Does it have a month or—

TEMPLE: (continuing) I think she was at Langston, because it looks like—I went back with her once after I was out, I think at the time.

DANDRIDGE: So two of your siblings weren't home.

TEMPLE: No, unh-uh. And, uh, no I think she had, went back. I'm not sure on that.

DANDRIDGE: Well, what was it like coming home? Did you arrive there in your military uniform?

TEMPLE: I—oh yes, uh-huh, in the military uniform and all and everything. Oh it was just a good feeling just to get back home and all. And I guess—I never thought about, uh, I might tell you this, though—but I had a funny feeling. I never worried about when I was overseas and everything, this is a funny feeling I guess I can tell you, I always feel when I went in the Army and from there, I always, and I even told my brother, that I'm going in because I ____ (??) I don't want you to go in, this and that. I like adventure and all that and everything. And so—and I pray quite a bit, you know, in the Army and all, and I went. And I—I'll just go this far, I always prayed that—and I got, when I was even at training when my ____ (??) I never, I always prayed that I was going to come back, and I was going to see them. And the reason that I was going to see them because I prayed that nothing going to happen to them until, and if something would happen to them it would happen to me first. And, therefore, I did ____ (??) everything and felt good, and I said ____ (??) and I mean ____ (??) I just felt that as long as I got up and felt good, I didn't worry about anything else. I would always say that I wanted to come see my mother and father when they would get up in their seventies and eighties. I mean, maybe it's silly, but anyway I just had a feeling that nothing was going to happen to me. And that's why I would go out on—Someone's scared to go out, and I would go out, cause nothing has happened, even if it would ____ (??), but nothing would happen. And looked like—my mother was ill one time and didn't come, and I never worried about it, and later she said she was ill that time and didn't want me to worry and all that and wondered whether I had worried because she didn't, something and it was a day or two and came later. But I always felt I was

going—I mean I just had that feeling that nothing’s going to happen to me, as long as I—maybe that’s taken in faith, but I don’t know.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever write letters home when you were in the military, when you were overseas?

TEMPLE: I wrote, we called—what was that? Email? Email. I, uh, had—Well first of all there was email that got there every month, because of the email that got there every month, there was money for a bond, like, I bought a bond every month. Also, I always sent a little change home, mother and father kept it for me, like it was for them(??), here I’m in the Army—But any way I made a habit to write a letter once a week, and I always wrote that email. And, matter of fact, if something happened I wanted to, I would put down a little note there, and when I wrote that letter—And, that, sometimes, I’d write a letter that’d go to the, what do call this, USO like cause they had a place there they had writing paper maybe to encourage this and that, and you could get the paper there. So I would write a letter and maybe, sometimes, I would go too far writing and the officer would tell me I had to cross out this or that, cause see any letter you sent at that time they, what would you call it—

DANDRIDGE: (in background) Scrutinized.

TEMPLE: (continuing) Yeah, to look it—they don’t call it, you know the word—

DANDRIDGE: I know, right.

TEMPLE: (continuing) But I always write and let ‘em know where I went and I felt all right and this and that and all. But I always wrote letters. And I always got plenty of mail, it was like I always got—

DANDRIDGE: Mail from whom?

TEMPLE: Mail from mother and father; my mother would write you know and ask about—And from Jeanette, Alberta, I got mail from everyone. That these letters—

DANDRIDGE: So mail day was pretty big—

TEMPLE: Yeah, it was. I always felt sorry—There was a fella that knew everything you thought from Chicago, and they called him Chicken. And Chicken knew, “Mail’s in, mail’s in, mail’s in.” He’d tell everyone and never got a letter, one of these. It got so that the soldiers would write to their people to have them to write a letter, though. And when the mail was in, I’d go all the time, because there was always a letter there. So, they did—Course you know how my mother would write everything is well, this and that and all. You know, don’t want to worry—

DANDRIDGE: What did you do with those letters that you received from home?

TEMPLE: I _____(??), which I just wish I had known about things, really.

DANDRIDGE: But did you keep them with you when you got those letters or did you have to throw them away when you moved around?

TEMPLE: Well, that's what, throw them away. Throw them away at the time, because really you were limited supplies.

DANDRIDGE: Uh-huh, limited space.

TEMPLE: Space and all of that. But I'd write all the time and get letters back; I mean mail.

DANDRIDGE: When you were away at school, did you write home that frequently? Before you entered the Army?

TEMPLE: I guess it's just a regular thing. In school there was a letter one week.

DANDRIDGE: So you had that habit.

TEMPLE: I had that habit and had a habit of from home every week. I always remember—what was it, a ten cent, a fifteen cent special. My mother would always send a special delivery letter and I think it was ten cents that time. She felt that you'd really get it, the special didn't get lost. Well, you know. Cause at that time there was a little more _____(??) special delivery.

DANDRIDGE: And your father was in the postal service so he knew.

TEMPLE: Yeah, uh-huh. But—

DANDRIDGE: What—Did you ever get any what we call care packages from home when you were overseas? Did they ever send you—

TEMPLE: Oh, yeah, I did, uh-huh. And it would last the one to really in your tent and all, cause you'd share, you'd share with the people in your tent. So Alberta would send me some cookies and things and all, and it would last one time. And someone said, Where'd you get that? Well then they'd come by and, Hey so-and-so want—All that. Everyone would get and they would share. I remember a boy in the tent with me, we wouldn't share and _____(??) that he got a box and he got some cookies and things and he gave the two of us, I had one and the other ate a lot of 'em, the other ate all of that cause we were going down. He kept going, "How do you feel?" I said, "All right." "How do you feel?" "All right." And then that afternoon, that's when I quit eating, "How do y'all feel? Y'all feel okay?" I said, "All right." He said, "Well I'm going back and eat my box, I didn't eat it." We said, Well why didn't you eat it? He said, "Well you know, before I left, my girlfriend and I we didn't get along, and I know how she is and all, I didn't know what she put in that food. And, as a matter of fact, I watched you all while I was out there and if I'd seen anything happen to you, I was going to throw the food out and now nothing happen to

you, I'm going to go on and eat mine." We fell out with that, you know, I'm going on and eating my food. That's why I was keeping at you, How do you feel? How do you feel? I 'll never forget that. But, anyway, usually you would share with. But that was just an experience.

DANDRIDGE: Did they ever send you anything that wasn't food? Like—Were there, did you get—

TEMPLE: I think so, yeah, just kind of in general maybe. Because, actually, my mother would know what you can't get, and there was a list that you could mail, to the Army, said things that you don't and you know, like peanut(??) this—Well things not to send, you know. And then they'd tell you, because you don't know where whether you'd be moving this or not, because you couldn't tell where you were, you just had an APO number. Whatever that APO meant, I guess.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever sense in your letters from your parents or from your family members that it was a long time, that your letter took a long time getting there, or—You never got that sense from any of the letters?

TEMPLE: No, I didn't; I guess cause there was so much going on that I—And it looked like, I thought that—Cause it looked like it was a letter about every weeks I guess, cause see they wrote the same time.

DANDRIDGE: What about in coming back home—Do you remember about how old you were when you came back home? Remember how old you were? 1943?

TEMPLE: Let's see—

DANDRIDGE: Would that be twenty-one? Or—

TEMPLE: I think so, cause I was in the Army at twenty-one, cause I always—I came back, when did I come back from the Army?

DANDRIDGE: You said in '43?

TEMPLE: In forty—no I got out in forty—Wait a minute, forty-what? Forty-five, five that I got out, yeah. So I was actually twenty-three years old when I came back.

DANDRIDGE: Do you remember—So—And you went in in what year? I forgot what time—

TEMPLE: I went in in, 19—what did I—42 and I was, what, twenty-one. And that's what, as a matter of fact, I was twenty-one and found my twenty-first birthday and I was overseas when I was twenty-one. And though I used to joke and all was in the Army there, and I was a sergeant at the time and some men under me were much older and all, but we got along okay and everything. They called me Junior. (laughs) Junior so-and-so and all because I was so, you know—I was twenty-one years old and actually overseas at the time. But, I could, you know—But I got along with, in my group, got along, got things

done, and all that, and I had a bunch of command and ____ (??) wanting to know, How did you, and all this get done. But we—And when we'd go out on a pass, go out with them and all, Junior why don't you get a haircut, and I did one time. This was in North Africa; I got an Arab haircut. Cut all of my, shaved my hair and everything off. But I meant, as far as I the group, the two fellows that I ____ (??) they were much older than I was, though. Sometimes we'd go out like that.

DANDRIDGE: So you were twenty-three when you came back home.

TEMPLE: Right, twenty-three, yeah.

DANDRIDGE: So what did you decide to do then?

TEMPLE: Well, let's see, I guess I did, what was it—When I went back in what, in the, I'm trying to think about—I know I went back to school there, to Wisconsin—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, Dr. Temple. We were—let's continue this. This is in the evening of October the third, continuing our conversation. And I think we were talking about your experiences in returning home from the War. What kind of feelings did you have about your war experiences at that particular time, as opposed to now; what were you feeling?

TEMPLE: Well, my feeling was good, as far as the experience that I had there. And I thought by now I'd be—But still I always thought about I didn't get to get in that combat I wanted. So, in other words, every so often I would think about the Army and all. But I thought the experience that I had was very good. And as a matter of fact, after I got out and returned to school, I saw, far as the school, thought the same. I might say it was Kansas when I went in and when I returned, of course, I went to the University of Wisconsin, which I had started originally. And, also, due to the experience that I had overseas and so forth, the University thought it was worth a semester. So, therefore, that when I returned I got credit a semester due to my experience, and so forth, and especially they said being overseas far as the tour and so forth there. So, in other words, I returned to Wisconsin and stayed there until I graduated and I guess that was 1948 when I graduated from the University of Wisconsin.

DANDRIDGE: Now when you were going to the University of Wisconsin, did you go on a GI Bill?

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh, as a matter of fact I was on the GI Bill. And I can say that at Wisconsin, which I entered and finished, I'd saved up money for that first year and then when I returned we looked at Uncle Sam and Uncle Sam, of course, as a veteran that my tuition was paid for and all. As a matter of fact, not only tuition but supplies, books and so forth that you needed. And I might say, too, that teachers at that time, professors and all, thought you should know everything about the subject, so therefore they would say get this book, get that book, and so forth, which we did. But for some reason there was a little cost as far as Uncle Sam was concerned and after that first year, I believe, you could

only get your textbooks. If you wanted the other, that you had to pay for those yourself. But, anyway, my tuition was furnished, texts were furnished, I went through and actually returned to get my master's degree. As far as a master's degree was concerned, what was paid on that, and as far as the PhD, Uncle Sam, the government paid for that, and even the writing of the thesis. So, in other words, out of my own pocket, it was one year saving that was used for the first year at Wisconsin; other was far as the government expense, as far as being a veteran and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: Where did you get the—How did you get the money that you had saved?

TEMPLE: I got the money and saving from, as a matter of fact, saving even when I was in high school. I was kind of an industrial fellow, from mowing lawns and selling magazines and so forth, that—and I intended—

DANDRIDGE: Talk about your experiences selling magazines.

TEMPLE: Selling magazines, my brother had sold magazines and done very well, and so I thought I could too. But far as selling magazines that I found the first thing that, the person that let out the papers to sell did not have any blacks people far as, Negroes, far as selling that paper, it was only white. But she thought I was interesting and so forth and said, "Well, look I will bring the papers there, the magazines, *Time Magazine*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Pictorial Review*, some of them they had, and I will collect it, and you will be able to sell books for prizes and so forth, just like any other. But there's one thing," she said, "that, you know, they have a picnic and a get together and all what do you think on that? Would you feel bad on that?" I said, "I would have liked to attend, but I know"—"Well, we even include you with some of the food and eats and so forth that was had at the picnic." But—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) How successful were you in selling those magazines?

TEMPLE: I happened to be very good because I had trade(??) as far as colored—I'm using that word—all over Topeka. I sold papers and magazines in the eastern side of the city, in the west side, North Topeka, and just every section I had as far as white customers. And I might mention that I did have quite a few prizes because I was one of the top sellers and not only did magazines—some reason I liked to sell things, I even sold potato chips and so forth. Didn't have that problem there, they were glad to have selling that. But the money was saved on all of this. And actually I did use it far as going to college and all.

DANDRIDGE: Were—So you sold to both African Americans and Whites in Topeka?

TEMPLE: Yeah, but I had mainly far as black to sell to.

DANDRIDGE: (overlapping) You had the black—

TEMPLE: (overlapping, continuing) Right, uh-huh. I remember far as the white one or two service stations and so forth like that.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever—in your experience, not in this particular instance—But did you ever sell any of the local African American newspapers? Did you ever do any of that?

TEMPLE: No, I didn't, although we did receive a lot of them, they were usually sent through the mail or delivered by a actually person that was _____(??) the papers. So I did not—

DANDRIDGE: What were some of the black newspapers you remember?

TEMPLE: Well I remember the *Plaindealer* and the *Pittsburg Courier*, the *Chicago Defender* I think. There were several papers that I remember that were actually delivered, and mainly delivered by mail and of course there was a person one who happened to be _____(??) that also delivered the *Kansas City Call*.

DANDRIDGE: Tell me, were you the first child in your family to go to college?

TEMPLE: No, I was not the first. As a matter of fact, my brother went to college, attended, graduated and so forth. I had two sisters; my eldest sister—Jeanette and Alberta Temple—also attended college. It was Washburn College they attended. And as a matter of fact both attended at the same time and that was something because the tuition and so forth—No one worked, well as far as college. My brother, of course, worked and had money to go to college. But my sisters did not have any, working at that time attending college; both attended Washburn College and both graduated and seem to have gotten along very well after that graduation.

DANDRIDGE: And, so—What years did—Did Uncle James—was it in the 1930s and the 40s?

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh, 1930s, 1940s, in that area.

DANDRIDGE: Yeah, that they graduated. Um, let me also ask you, in terms of your family. What did your parents do? What kind of jobs did they have?

TEMPLE: Well, my father, of course, was a postman and he also happened to be the only black postman in the, at that particular time. Well, there was another one, but he had a rural letter carrier, but no one at the window and so forth like that. My mother was a seamstress, far as dressmaker, and spent time far as making dresses and so forth. And also—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) Who were her clients?

TEMPLE: Her clients, as a matter of fact two of the main clients happened to be two wealthy individuals; and one lived in the western part of the town and the other lived about three or four blocks from where we lived, which was called the Country Club Area. And both had clothing made by her and they seemed

to have gotten along very well. As a matter of fact they enjoyed talking and discussing things. And, as a matter of fact, it looked like there was competition between the one in the west and the one in other area.

DANDRIDGE: Were these white women?

TEMPLE: These were white women.

DANDRIDGE: Were all of her clientele white?

TEMPLE: Just about all; maybe there was one or two, but it didn't matter who if they wanted a dress made and so forth, but mainly they were white customers at the time. So and also—

DANDRIDGE: Did they come to her home?

TEMPLE: They came to her home and far as trying on different things and so forth. And then far as chickens too—

DANDRIDGE: What about the chickens?

TEMPLE: Well my father enjoyed, I guess as far as the farming, the part of raising chickens and so forth. And we, as a matter of fact, had three hen houses far as chickens we raised, selling fryers and so forth and also eggs. So actually this kept us busy too, kept me busy far as cleaning the chicken houses out, far as feeding chickens and so forth. Everyone always has a job there in selling these. And then my customers, some of them were along my father's route and that was my job to deliver the chickens and so forth like that. So this helped bring in the income, too, for the family there.

DANDRIDGE: So, uh, you were talking about you were in college before you went into the service. Where were you attending before you went into the service?

TEMPLE: I was attending Wisconsin; that was the first university. And then, as I mentioned before, from there after Pearl Harbor I actually went to KU there cause I knew, as far as being drafted. Then at KU I got in the Reserve Corps there, which I had mentioned; individuals that were in college, the government wanted them, as much as possible, to complete their education so, therefore, they did continue until they were really needed. And after that, about one year—about a year and a half I guess, uh, all the Reserve troops were called in, so that's when I went into the Army and of course—

DANDRIDGE: Were you in the ROTC in Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Was in the ROTC in Wisconsin. I think I mentioned before—well I was in the ROTC at Wisconsin, right.

DANDRIDGE: University of Wisconsin.

TEMPLE: University of Wisconsin, right.

DANDRIDGE: So then you—but then you can home because of Pearl Harbor?

TEMPLE: Right, uh-huh. It was the one—

DANDRIDGE: And you knew the draft was in?

TEMPLE: Right, uh-huh, I knew that would happen.

DANDRIDGE: Well tell—Can you tell us just briefly about your experiences as a student at KU? What was it like? How did you compare it to Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Well, I think as a student I really enjoyed the student life and so forth at Wisconsin. I think the main thing, I lived in a dormitory at the University of Wisconsin; and for the—I think there were about twenty, twenty-five in that particular dorm that I lived, in that house, the dorm was divided into about five or six houses and, of course, they had different names. And, there, it was just as far as being the life in there with the students; I happened to be the only black student in there and looked like they didn't mind that and so forth. Uh—

DANDRIDGE: Did you have a white roommate?

TEMPLE: Actually not at first. In this particular dorm, later it was a different dorm, but in this particular dorm there were only single rooms. But it was a very good dorm, they had single rooms, and as a matter of fact as far as eating and so forth there was someone at the door when you had your meal, except for breakfast and lunch but for the lunch you had to wear a tie and so forth. Far as service there was ushers—I mean far as at the door, I guess someone to see that you were dressed properly and so forth. And I just enjoyed my life there; we'd go to movies and so forth. And you took part in more activities than while at KU. I lived off the campus, which was about a mile or two off the campus and I would go home on the weekend, which meant I did not have time to actually enjoy the activities that you would have on the campus there. And, of course, they would want you to get involved in this and on the campus there was an Activities Center and I was always passing in at this Activities Center to see the things that were going on, what I wanted to attend and so forth. So in other words, I think I became involved and more activities and so forth, which involved pranks and so forth and this and that.

DANDRIDGE: So you were at Wisconsin in the fall of 1941 I assume about that time.

TEMPLE: Mm-hm.

DANDRIDGE: (continuing) And when you were—So were you the only African American at the university?

TEMPLE: No there were a few scattered there. But in my particular dorm, I happened to be the only African American there. I think, over all, there was one or two individuals that were in that area—these dormitories happened to be in a certain area that were—And there were two, I can't recall their names here, that I would see quite often. I think their father was an attorney or something in Chicago and they were at the University of Wisconsin and—

DANDRIDGE: What were you majoring in, or did you even know, when you were at the University of Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Well, you wouldn't believe, but when I entered at the University of Wisconsin, I majored in botany. And I got ti—Well, one reason for that, before I went to Wisconsin. My father was a postman and he had a friend, white friend who was also a postman, and this friend's daughter had married a man that was now at the University of Wisconsin and he also happened to be in the botany group there, far as area. And this person, Mr. blank would tell me that, "Oh your son's going to like Wisconsin, he should go there and all." And, "I'm going to tell"—I can't recall the name—"that you will be there" and so forth. And I went and I saw this man and met him, you know the first time at the University, he was telling me about botany and all that. So I happened to major in botany also. But I soon changed because I got tired in a microscope, looking at algae and far as—well then that particular field in botany I changed. But I was in botany while at Wisconsin during that year there, that first year.

DANDRIDGE: Did your sister Jeanette have any influence in that botany decision?

TEMPLE: I think so in a way. Because as a matter of fact that in high school she was interested in botany to a certain extent. And I remember with her at the time had to find, they called dogtooth violets and the other things she had to bring in and all. And, of course, you'd go along with her on. I think that may have had an interest too. And, then, I guess being like an outdoor life, that may have had. But it was just the idea—I just didn't want to stay in that.

DANDRIDGE: So, tell me, what was your classroom experience like? Let's compare it from KU to Wisconsin. What was it like, in your impression, what was yours like?

TEMPLE: Well, I enjoyed it because, looked like to me, that being a student in the class that—well, the professor would be interested in you to a certain extent and it looked like maybe it was—

DANDRIDGE: Where was this? At Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: (continuing) At Wisconsin. And I would get more involved.

DANDRIDGE: Would you discuss in the classroom?

TEMPLE: I would, in the class and I would have a question. And I can remember now far as the professor would ask the others, "Mr. Temple said so and so," what(??) maybe one reason cause I could start a discussion. But anyway, "Well what do you think about this?" and then a discussion would start. Or else they would ask me about, What do you think about this, what's your idea on it? And as a kid up I was always told in other school, by your parents, Always say something to let people know you're in school. And as a matter of fact I would always be thinking about or reading certain things with questions I could be bringing up. And there seemed to be in me in that particular class. I don't know if being the only African American in that or just what.

DANDRIDGE: Did professors call on you at Wisconsin University?

TEMPLE: Yes, they did call on me and yes. And wanted to know if—

DANDRIDGE: Now what was it like in the classroom at KU?

TEMPLE: Well it was a little different. As a matter of fact you had one or two that would ask you a question all, but looked like, for some reason, you just didn't get involved in the same way, far as questions and this and that. And—(coughs) I had one experience at KU and this happened to be in political science. And I had a professor there and he was wanting to know about comments and all. And when I had my comment and all, he would just look the other way and all. And then after I would get through he wouldn't say anything to me, but turn around and tell the rest of the class, "And as we were saying," which I assumed my comment didn't mean anything. So when you go to that, have that experience, it makes you—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) After having Wisconsin.

TEMPLE: (continuing) Yes, it makes you feel a little different as far as the school. Well, I will say this that I did get a good grade, but that wasn't what I was thinking. I was thinking of my experience then. And seeing the reaction of other students and they knew what was going on, so that was one of bad—and they just kinda—And my other experience when I first went to KU, that I was in the ROTC at Wisconsin, but for some reason, I know why, there were no American—African—blacks in ROTC, so I was told that there had never been any and this commander said that as long as he is there there will never be one. And that's when I got in the Enlisted Reserve Corps, because I knew that I would have to report to the Army and so forth to the Army and all because I would be called. But I knew then—and if I got in the ROTC there I didn't have to worry. And I thought that was a good place because in the Navy ROTC, that's where—and it was just the same, that was segregated, they were going there to recall the Navy then when the Army came along students could go there until they were actually called, from the ROTC unit, and as far this meant far as promotion maybe according to how far you were in the ROTC.

DANDRIDGE: Right, and you hadn't gotten that far in the R—

TEMPLE: I had got—I just had at Wisconsin; I never did at KU.

DANDRIDGE: Yeah, so you have to graduate from it to be commissioned as an officer.

TEMPLE: (overlapping) Well, that's really—Oh, yes, uh-huh, and that's where—

DANDRIDGE: And that was what your goal had been?

TEMPLE: Well, yes, I had—because we really didn't know; maybe I would get to finish I thought, although the war would have to be over by then.

DANDRIDGE: Well what even made you—cause this is before Pearl Harbor—what even made you go into ROTC?

TEMPLE: As a matter of fact at Wisconsin, ROTC was a required course for it. If you physically passed and so forth you did take a—think it was about a one or two year of ROTC and then after that you may want to go further, graduate and then, what, officer in the ROTC and then commissioned and so forth. But all freshmen had to start and all. And you know how that group in ROTC would be at first, because you had some who didn't want to be there, but they did have to take that course in ROTC.

DANDRIDGE: So, uh—let's go back to—So you went to college when you came back, that was one of your first things that you did when you came back home from the war.

TEMPLE: Right, um-hm.

DANDRIDGE: Well, let's go back, just before you went to college, what other things did you do? Did you do differently? Did you enjoy having an opportunity to do when you came home? Did you—Did your family have a car?

TEMPLE: No, not at that time. And that's one of the things, too, that as I said I did not have a license, I did not know how to drive, I went in the Army but by taking a six for six(??) and learning how to drive on that, I thought I would do very well with a car. So, when I returned, that was one of the things that I did get was a maroon I think it was Ford. And I was quite proud of that car too, and it did—it helped around the home, too because when my folks were getting older and I could take them places and, at that time it was something if you had an automobile because not everyone had a car at that—so that was my first car I had.

DANDRIDGE: And it was, what kind—it was a maroon what?

TEMPLE: I think it was a maroon Ford, four door Ford. At the time that I had.

DANDRIDGE: Was it brand new?

TEMPLE: It was brand new. And I might say, and I paid for that myself. And I've forgotten the price on that, but it seems as though it was around seven or eight thousand. That was right after the Army—

DANDRIDGE: Oh, seven or eight thousand, that is too much money.

TEMPLE: Well, let's say five or six—

DANDRIDGE: You mean hundred dollars; seven or eight hundred dollars maybe? It couldn't be seven thousand, Uncle Fred.

TEMPLE: No, I—I guess really I don't remember exactly on that. But, anyway, I paid for the down payment and then far as kept up the monthly payments and all. And that was my car I could take out.

DANDRIDGE: Where'd you buy it?

TEMPLE: It was a place called, I think Mosley Mack Ford Company. And that's where I actually bought it there, Ford.

DANDRIDGE: Did you have any trouble get—making payments? I mean, did they give you any trouble giving you a loan payment kind of thing or—

TEMPLE: No, I guess I've forgotten what the down payment was, a hundred or something dollar like that. And the payment, as I recall, it was not that much, in today's value of the dollar. Fifty or something like that; and I paid that out and there was no problem on it.

DANDRIDGE: What about—what were your parents like? Had they had access to a car before that time?

TEMPLE: No they hadn't. As a matter of fact we did a lot of walking; I guess got exercise and so forth. The school I went to was on the other side I would say—well, let's put it this way, about a forty-five minute walk. And even in the lower grades, like the first and second, when my mother actually would walk to the school with me when I first—like in the first grade and all. We didn't have a car then. And would walk there; and as I got maybe to the second or third, she only walked _____ (??) three-fourths of the way, a half of the way, until I could just on my own. And I—There's one thing, if it was raining or the weather was bad, there was a streetcar three blocks away or a bus and she would get on the bus with me, and I'm sure she would go along and we would have to transfer uptown and take another bus down for me to, you know, at school. But, otherwise, I would walk and there would be a few other kids along the way that you'd go far as the school there. And it was about a forty-five minute walk. Nine o'clock and I would leave after about 8:15 and walk there at the time and walk back too. And—

DANDRIDGE: That was a long time. What—

TEMPLE: And even, I might say, far as shopping and so forth the bus was the main transportation; there was no car or anything. I recall the—an individual that wanted to sell a car and I think the car at that time wanted was about four or five hundred dollars, a new car, and I think the payment was something like, I don't know about fifteen dollars a month, something like that, but we couldn't afford or didn't want to be buying a car and paying fifteen dollars a month. But that was in the depth of the Depression for it. So you only had a few people that had a car and it was always something when they'd see you and want to pick you up to give you a ride on that there.

DANDRIDGE: Did your father appreciate being able to get around in a car? Or did your grandmother—did your mother, rather?

TEMPLE: Yes, they were—But my father was a way(??) too that he always liked to walk too. I remember, even after he retired, after sixty-five, my oldest sister far as Jeanette would always take time to have time to carry him, he wanted to pay his bills and the first of the month she would take him to town and let him—and there was always a little discussion because—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) Was she driving?

TEMPLE: (continuing) She was driving at that time. She was at a car because I remember right that(??), cause there was always—and I assume that was—I'm wondering that—Yeah—Because he would always like to walk home. He liked to walk and there was a fairgrounds and he would cut through—But you could carry and the reason he wanted to get out after he paid his bill, he always liked to visit the post office where he retired from and talk to some of the postman that were still there. His name was John, they'd go, How are you doing John, this and that and so forth. And then of course from there walk home, and there was a shortcut through a fairground, but he always wanted to walk home after he visited the post office there. So—But anyway, transportation was a problem. And when someone would see you, even—And just imagine then actually walking from your home to church on Sundays and if you wanted to shop you had to get on the bus or else walk, something like that, cause we didn't have a car. The first car in the family was this car that I had gotten, the Ford there.

DANDRIDGE: Well when you went—when you came back home and you went back to Wisconsin, so that means they didn't have a car again, is that right?

TEMPLE: That was—right. I'm trying to see on that, how that worked on that.

DANDRIDGE: About what year did you go—

TEMPLE: Or it may have been—Wait. Cause I went back to Wisconsin, but I knew I had that car there and I'm wondering if it was sold when I went back to school, which probably was. And I'm wondering how it was—because I did return to Wisconsin.

DANDRIDGE: So what year did you graduate from Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: I graduated in 1948 in Wisconsin. ____ (??).

DANDRIDGE: What was your degree in?

TEMPLE: My degree was in, I majored in economics. When I went back to Wisconsin I didn't know what— Well first of all I went into, far as regular economics and then went to Ag economics and all. I guess at that time you wanted to pick a course that you would like. And I would see economic problems on TV about the economy, this and that and so forth. And to me it just seemed to be an easy course cause people were talking about it all the time, there was the stock market, there was the livestock market and all this, and it looked like these were the things we were talking about. So I decided to major in economics and that was my major.

DANDRIDGE: When you went back to Wisconsin—

TEMPLE: I majored in economics, actually, as an undergraduate, I was an economics major.

DANDRIDGE: When you went back Wisconsin, in undergraduate school, where did you live?

TEMPLE: Well I lived at—did not live in the dorm there. Actually there was a building—I have to think a minute—actually you had a group of the Army, I think had a setup, what do you call it? Far as buildings where they did their training and so forth there, grounds, during the war and there were buildings set up on this, which was away from the campus, and I can't recall now the name, but it was about an hour's drive by bus from—I can't think—from where I stayed to the university and, of course, the buses were furnished for that students, because this was part of the university's program there. But you would stay there and you would go to the campus.

DANDRIDGE: How come you couldn't stay in the dorms?

TEMPLE: Well, at that time you just couldn't get in the dorms.

DANDRIDGE: Why couldn't you?

TEMPLE: (overlapping, continuing) This was the dorm for the undergraduates there and, as a vet, I could stay there and—I think there were certain pay—far as room and board on that. Well that was through the veteran of course.

DANDRIDGE: But you couldn't—But your GI Bill—

TEMPLE: Maybe you could pay under that, but you see this was a—

DANDRIDGE: So all GIs were staying in these—

TEMPLE: Yes—

Tape 2, side 1 ends; side 2 begins.

DANDRIDGE: We're talking about you—Where were you staying in—

TEMPLE: At Truax Field. And, of course, this was a, right next to a, far as an airport because this was a training ground for airmen going into the—

DANDRIDGE: But you weren't going back into the—

TEMPLE: No, but this was now used as a housing unit by the university. And I guess, too, you had a number of students going and this helped far as finding place—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) It was overcrowded with them.

TEMPLE: Yeah, uh-huh. And there was bus transportation from there to the university of, course back to the field—

DANDRIDGE: So where did you eat? Where did you eat your food?

TEMPLE: At Truax Field. Far as breakfast—well, they had three meals there, so you could, they had a breakfast there, a lunch, far as a dinner there that you could eat. And the food was very good also, too.

DANDRIDGE: Was it different going back to school and having experienced war, was that different? Did you feel different? Um—

TEMPLE: Well, I guess you did, in a way. But you just—You had the experience of being in the other countries and it seemed as though—and you had experience of people from all types of live and this and that and it looked like you just understood. Your classes, the coursework, just like I mentioned before for it, a poet that wrote a poem, well I happened to be there at that place there so I knew more about it. We talked about Vesuvius, far as erupting, I knew what it was because I had been there; I knew about Rome, I knew about Naples, I knew about—And it just makes you feel a little because all these courses are going to become related one way or the other and just felt that, Well I know more about it, and so forth, so I think it was very helpful on that. And the type of individuals you'd meet, and you'd meet all types when you're in the Army and you're going to see others and you know a little bit more about individuals and all.

DANDRIDGE: Did you also have a sense—Did, aside from your own personal experience, did you think that race relations at Wisconsin University were better than they had been before or did you even notice a difference?

TEMPLE: I did not notice a difference, but I think that it was better actually before—I think it was good each way. I mean after and so forth, but I think it was probably better—And it was hard to tell because prior to that there were very, very few, far as blacks there at the time.

DANDRIDGE: But there were more when you came back?

TEMPLE: Back, that's right(??). Well there were only a—if you call that more, there were about four or five out of—And of course they were accepted and so forth on that and all. I think we got along very well at the thing. So, uh—

DANDRIDGE: So where did you socialize in Wisconsin as a student coming back from the war?

TEMPLE: Coming back from the war?

DANDRIDGE: Where did you all socialize?

TEMPLE: Well, actually of course it was always far as a theatre to go to and sometimes there was actually functions in Truax they'd have there. When I say I learned how to play poker, I mean, the first in Truax. They did have parties there in which they invited white and so forth there. And they did have dances there and all. And I didn't dance; as a matter of fact I didn't know that much about it though.

DANDRIDGE: Did the dances have both blacks and whites attending it?

TEMPLE: Yes, I was a black that attended because it in the dorm there at the time. But in other words even then you just felt a part of the gr—you just felt a part of it like, in which I didn't feel at KU at the time even there.

DANDRIDGE: Who did you date while you were there?

TEMPLE: Well, let's see, I'm trying to think about, oh can't—I think I went to school there and actually was more far as the other I mean because, I can't think ____(??) when I'd come back maybe I'd date someone like that.

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) When you'd come back where?

TEMPLE: To Topeka, something like that. But in general—

DANDRIDGE: How often—

TEMPLE: (continuing) In general I find that you saw a few of them that dated and went out, but in a way, I guess, mostly there were activities around there and so forth. They would write to girlfriend this and that and all.

DANDRIDGE: How often would you come back home while you were in school?

TEMPLE: Oh, let's see. Well, actually, it was going there and then if there was—actually at the beginning semester, end semester or was during a break like Easter break, something like that.

DANDRIDGE: How would you go back home? How would you get there?

TEMPLE: Back home there was the old Santa Fe Railroad and the Santa Fe that, as a matter of fact, it was on the Milwaukee _____ (??) to Chicago and, from Chicago, that was the mainline for the Santa Fe that you could go on back and forth there. And of course, there, while in school you could write letters, I don't know, you'd write letters to different girls and this and that and all.

DANDRIDGE: Did you write home as frequently as you did when you were in the war?

TEMPLE: I think I did. I had a habit of writing home about every week I guess. While at Wisconsin, too, I would call say about once a week or something like that. And or sometimes I'd get a call—No I take that back, you know they didn't want to excite you, think it's something, you know, in those days. So I would make calls, like, just to see how things moving along.

DANDRIDGE: Did you have any relatives that were nearby in Wisconsin? Or did you have anybody?

TEMPLE: No I didn't, not at the time I was in school. But prior to that time I had a grandmother that lived up in Superior, Wisconsin, which is up near Minnesota, the extreme northern part that she lived at that time. That was my father's mother, and he would go every summer, the post _____ (??) had time off to actually visit with her and he seemed to enjoy it there and all. This is one of the reasons, too. I did have a relative there. And of course others would say, Well Wisconsin's a nice place. But I think this had a lot to do—cause he went there and he was always treated very well and this and that and all. And this was course, on the other side of Madison; Madison's about the middle, this was up in Superior, Wisconsin at the time. And she knew people there and was very active like, she played an organ and all that and far as music, and lived on a farm, too.

DANDRIDGE: Mm-hm. What was graduation from undergraduate school like at Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Well, I'm trying to think, how at the time. I'm trying to think if I, uh—because I—Oh, I had graduated but I happened to be a mid-semester graduate, so therefor for my master's, I mean for my—

DANDRIDGE: Undergraduate.

TEMPLE: (continuing) Undergraduate, I did not attend because I had finished and was away and didn't come back for that. So your diploma and so forth was sent along with the yearbook and all of that. And—Course when I went back far as the—

DANDRIDGE: For your other degrees.

TEMPLE: Uh-huh.

DANDRIDGE: So after undergrad—

TEMPLE: (interjects) As a matter of fact, even far as a master's, because see I went back—but go ahead.

DANDRIDGE: What did you do after you got your BA? What did you do?

TEMPLE: Well after that I thought I was ready to work; I didn't want to go any further to school. And I knew that they had—far as an office, far as obtaining jobs, Employment Bureau. And I did not think about applying at Wisconsin, I said, "Well I'll go home to Topeka and probably apply actually to"—Saw one place, and heard of one, it was a Morrell packing plant and I went there—

DANDRIDGE: And this is in Topeka?

TEMPLE: This is in Topeka and I was told, frankly, they didn't have no facilities for any job that I should have or take or so forth.

DANDRIDGE: What did that mean? I didn't understand what that means, what does that mean?

TEMPLE: Well, as far as the job that was available, uh, they did not need an educated to actually carry out that job. That they could hire someone else and I guess maybe I wouldn't be interested in the salary and I guess I wasn't going to get a high rank position or anything like that.

DANDRIDGE: Why would that be?

TEMPLE: Well I think, to a certain extent, that there was still some racial issues involved.

DANDRIDGE: Did Morrell have blacks working—

TEMPLE: Morrell had a number but they were to a lower class jobs and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: So no one was in the office?

TEMPLE: No—Now I do not know, there may have been, but very, very few because most were in—it was a packing plant and as far as the distribution of meat and so forth there.

DANDRIDGE: But there was an opening that you were applying for?

TEMPLE: No I had—Oh I applied at a lot of places and I never did get any.

DANDRIDGE: What kind of jobs were you applying for?

TEMPLE: Well I just applied in general and wanted to know far as I had finished and wanting to know if they had any work that, you know, would be—But there was no work, no clerical work anything.

DANDRIDGE: In this letter, this letter did you identify your racial identity?

TEMPLE: Uh, yes, uh-huh. Well not in general, just that I'd finished Wisconsin and all. But later after that something may follow, they talk with you this and that and I think race had something—I'm sure, had something to do with it—

DANDRIDGE: So once they you.

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh.

DANDRIDGE: Did you mention that you were a veteran?

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh. And as a matter of fact sometime they would apologize, Well you're a veteran but we just don't have anything like that now, and if we do we'll let you know. So that's why I decided to go—I didn't want to go back for the PhD—

DANDRIDGE: What kind of jobs, what specific jobs were you looking for, were you hoping to get?

TEMPLE: I was hoping to get any type of, what, as far as managerial jobs in a distribution—that's what I liked, far as distribution of food products or anything there, and I just looked forward to doing that, working in a, even a store I think I'd like far as a managerial job or something like that.

DANDRIDGE: What were some of the stores that—

TEMPLE: Well I didn't check with any stores like that, grocery stores or anything like on that.

DANDRIDGE: So, was there any—

TEMPLE: And as a matter of fact there was always work available while I was in college at all the stores far as operating an elevator and doing the janitorial work or something like that.

DANDRIDGE: So what kind of job, you were looking for the management sort of job?

TEMPLE: Well I didn't, just in mind, just in the credit department or some—cause see I just had a—

DANDRIDGE: Undergraduate degree.

TEMPLE: Yes, degree, I didn't want to be the head or—But I always thought I could go in and get in and work myself up. You know and so, it was just so I could be in—even an office job or something like that.

DANDRIDGE: So when did it dawn on you that wasn't going to happen?

TEMPLE: Well, all you have to do is go around and see and after you get a few letters or talk to individuals and all that—and I'm trying to think of one—So that's when I decided to go back to—And far as going back I wanted to experience, I'd heard people talk about—oh, what is the one in Washington? What's the college, black college?

DANDRIDGE: Howard?

TEMPLE: Howard and others and I really wanted to experience going to a black university and all. And I remember my letter I told my major in economics and I wrote to Howard, someone said, and I wanted to go and I would major in economics and the return letter I got that said that they did not have an area for an economic major. With your training and so forth, you would be better off if you would attend the university you graduated or some other white university that had, but we do not have the facilities here and you will not get the proper raining that you would at others. I remember that—and he said, "I'm just telling you that," and he said that he was being frank that you—

DANDRIDGE: Who do you mean?

TEMPLE: (continuing, overlapping) —would go further. I guess as far as the dean or someone I wrote to the job. And he was saying, "I'm just telling you for your sake that if you want to go farther, you will do better if you go to Wisconsin and finish than to come to Howard to finish, although we will like to have you."

DANDRIDGE: So—

TEMPLE: So I went on back to Wisconsin, I wasn't—

DANDRIDGE: You didn't have a job or—

TEMPLE: No I didn't have a job or anything. And I guess you know what, why I didn't stay in the Army or go back and as a matter of fact, several times I would go you know on the campus they always have you to enter the Army and all and I even stopped by and would get material wanting to know why, if I—could I join, this and that. Oh yes, oh yes, and material and one place of material and I even took an

exam and I filled out a form and all that and was scared to drop it in the mailbox. So deep down maybe I didn't. Anyway it was always—I guess there were just certain things you would think of and well why am I here sitting down and this and that, I could be in the Army doing this and that, work myself in that— See I always wanted to go into combat and hope I would get through with that and doing, so I did try even several there and even tried to file from—cause they'd want to encourage ____ (??) found anyone, and maybe I when I think of it more, and look at what's happened to my life maybe I'm glad that I didn't and did what I wanted to.

DANDRIDGE: So what was it—you got accepted in their M.A. program, at Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: It's Wisconsin, and—Now in my grad I majored in ag economics. So, in other words I had already a degree in economics and got into ag economics when I was taking courses and some of the professors would say, now we're in ag ec—Oh we're telling this in economics now. As far as the boys—he'd call boys and girls in ag economics, there'd be some there. What about if we had five times—I mean just as a joke—they would refer to that, but any way they were good teachers and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: How did you get your pay to go back to graduate school?

TEMPLE: All of this—I did not have to pay anything as even far as my master's and even far as my PhD, even far as my thesis that was written, the government paid for the—so I had to pay nothing. As a matter of fact I think there was a lump sum that was given Southern University at the time—

DANDRIDGE: What did Southern University have to do with it?

TEMPLE: I mean far as my PhD, cause see I went to my master's in—

DANDRIDGE: Okay, let's just talk about the master's at this point.

TEMPLE: Yeah, so I—

DANDRIDGE: Where did you live?

TEMPLE: In—actually—

DANDRIDGE: As a grad student.

TEMPLE: As a grad student I'm trying to think about now, where was that? I think that was in, what was that? That was in Truax Field, yeah, that was at Truax Field cause Truax Field stayed there quite a while.

DANDRIDGE: So did you have some of the same teachers or did you have a whole different crew of teachers?

TEMPLE: Well maybe, course they were different—there were maybe one or two in general economics, but you had different teachers, of course, in your ag economics. And, of course, the head of the department—Got along very well with him. Professor Shars(??), he was the Dean of the Agricultural Economics and he had been a dean for about five or six years. At Wisconsin at that time the deans were supposed to stay in one year and then they would change, give others a chance in that dean—But it so happened at Wisconsin that some of the faculty members would tell you that, I am interested in research and I voted again for Professor Shars(??), he's doing a good job. So Professor Shars(??) was there and was, I don't know how many years because there was a lot of research and they did not want to be dean they were interested in research. And I got along very well with him as a matter of fact and all. And I'll remember cause I was, he knew I had taught a little at Southern, you know—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) When did you teach at Southern?

TEMPLE: Well, I taught, actually, when I got my far as master's see I went—

DANDRIDGE: Oh this is after, let's—yeah, I'm just talking about the master's degree.

TEMPLE: Yeah, uh-huh. Well the master's degree, no there wasn't cause at the master's degree there—

DANDRIDGE: Did you write a thesis for your MA?

TEMPLE: Uh, yes I think I did. A master's, it was a thesis but anyway and I had taken exams—

DANDRIDGE: So then you got your master's—

TEMPLE: Now, wait a minute I'm just going, I'm thinking about on this, don't know why I'm getting mixed up, don't want to. Now, what about after your master's?

DANDRIDGE: After your master's then what did you do?

TEMPLE: Then I went to, actually to, Wisconsin; now that was when I went to Wiscon—Not Wisconsin, to Southern after I got my master's. I had one place to go before I went there. But anyway after I got my mater's my first job teaching was at Tuskegee. That was at—

DANDRIDGE: How did you get a job at Tuskegee?

TEMPLE: Well, I was applying some said that we need teachers at Tuskegee in this and that and all. And I applied at Tuskegee, being in ag economics and that was agriculture so I applied there at the time. Didn't like the position that well, as far as—

DANDRIDGE: How many classes, so you remember, you had to teach or do you remember?

TEMPLE: Well, in other words, I taught about, I guess, three or four classes there and plus there was a lot of other work to do and all. It was just a different atmosphere, I guess, coming out of Wisconsin and going to Tuskegee. Not that it was bad but it was just the change was too rapid or something, but anyway—

DANDRIDGE: Had you ever been to the Deep South before?

TEMPLE: No, I think Tuskegee, I mean as far as teach schools and so forth—

DANDRIDGE: Or, just travel had you ever been in the Deep South before?

TEMPLE: Now I had traveled, yes, in the Deep South from Kansas, of course, and would go to Emporia and sit in the segregated car and that's when you would change cars to go to—

DANDRIDGE: What were you going to the South for then?

TEMPLE: Going to visit my brother in New Orleans. After I got out of the war, he was in New Orleans and I went there to visit he and Alberta. Alberta at the time had a job there teaching. He was a priest there in New Orleans and also had a church there that he had. And this was a church school and my sister Alberta was also teaching at that school there. And then I went there to visit with them, I had gone—and that's when I would get in Emporia, going there.

DANDRIDGE: So you would catch the train when you go visited your brother—

TEMPLE: That was the only, that I can remember going South, right to New Orleans.

DANDRIDGE: Let's talk about that; let's talk about that train ride. So you went to Emporia.

TEMPLE: Right.

DANDRIDGE: And from Emporia you probably—

TEMPLE: You changed cars and got in what they called the segregated car.

DANDRIDGE: In Emporia, Kansas?

TEMPLE: In Emporia, Kansas. Is that on the route to that? Anyway, I remember it was Emporia, Kansas where we, Change cars, change cars, and this is when you get into that car together and—

DANDRIDGE: What was that car like?

TEMPLE: Well it was, I don't know how the other cars were like. It was the trip down that people would be, everyone had their lunch and all, boxes up there and all, very friendly and all, if you didn't—

DANDRIDGE: What train line was it?

TEMPLE: That was the Santa Fe. Well it went through Emporia—I guess it was the Santa—That's where I left from—It was either that or the Union Pacific. It may have been Union—yeah, it's the Union Pacific, cause Santa Fe was on the west.

DANDRIDGE: (overlapping) It went west.

TEMPLE: Yeah, yeah, that's what it was.

DANDRIDGE: Union Pacific.

TEMPLE: Union Pacific there. Cause I remember on that—

DANDRIDGE: So did you—So from—So you changed to the Union Pacific in Emporia and would they make you change to a Jim Crow car in Emporia or did they shift you when you got to Oklahoma?

TEMPLE: Oh no, I didn't get to Oklahoma there, before the shift. I'm pretty sure Emporia cause I can hear that Emporia, Change cars, change cars, coming through. Cause this is where—

DANDRIDGE: Did you stay in—

TEMPLE: And when you eat sometimes, you want a meal, you'd go through the—I think, I don't know, I don't think you'd go through the white—how was that coach, I've forgotten, was it near the last or what? But anyway, the food course service was segregated too at the time; you had one or two tables there that you could eat—

DANDRIDGE: So you did have a dining car for African Americans?

TEMPLE: Yeah, there was a dining where I could eat a meal and all on that. But I'm pretty sure that it was Emporia. But we'd go there and spend a few days there, and that's what I did the first, when I came back that was one of the things, from overseas I went there before all this other, of course. So that was my only trip, actually, to the South and I can remember—

DANDRIDGE: (overlapping) Before Tuskegee.

TEMPLE: (continuing) And of course you want to call it south I'd gone to Oklahoma, but I didn't call Oklahoma any problem or anything.

DANDRIDGE: What were you going to Oklahoma for?

TEMPLE: Well my sister was teaching there, was at Langston, I think, at the time there. And I'd go down to Oklahoma there. I think I went several times there. And I saw no problems there that looked like, I don't know, anyway—

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm. What—So how long were you—Do you remember how long you were at Tuskegee?

TEMPLE: As I said it was a year; I think at least a year. It may have been a little earlier than a year, can't think of the reason, but it seems like I left a little early beforehand wanting to come back—I came home Christmas, of course, and then after that talk with my folks and all that, and then went back for the other semester there and, after far as completing I just wanted to go back. So I left Tuskegee and—

DANDRIDGE: And went where?

TEMPLE: Came back to Topeka, from Tuskegee to Topeka. And, as far as employment, I still wanted a job there. I guess while I was back—I think it was there or even earlier but I'll have to say that I did take an examination far as a postal carrier. And it was the job I took was for a rural route, mail carrier; that was the only thing that was open at the time. And I got my score and all, and I happened to be in the nineties, ninety-three, something like that, and I thought that was going to come out all right. And I was told that the post office, when I went in to see the grade and all that. That, You have a ninety something, but you will probably not be hired so don't expect you may be or not, because there were a lot of ten point veterans and the ten point veteran has to pass the exam and if he passes the exam he would be above—

DANDRIDGE: (in background) Yeah, tell me what is that.

TEMPLE: (continuing, overlapping) —The ten point veteran was a veteran that was injured or something like that while in the armed forces and when they took any federal exam, they got ten points extra and also they were, if they passed, the way I understood it, if they passed that was it. I mean they were trying to help these vets that were disabled, and you had a lot of 'em as a rural letter carrier because in those days the rural letter carrier you sit in a car and put the mail in the box down, then you had more of them then getting out walking in the city streets and so forth. So it just happened, you guess, you had a lot of rural letter carrier—I mean people wanting to. So I was told that. What did I do on that? Let's see—after that I took another exam, I guess—I forget, GS 5 something, and that was for the air base in Topeka, Kansas. Therefore I worked there—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) Forbes Air Force Base.

TEMPLE: Forbes Air Base and at that time they were one-three-four, I think that my area there, there were about four blacks working in there.

DANDRIDGE: What were you doing?

TEMPLE: There were others doing clerical work and so forth there, but to start out, there was no position, but I had a GS 5, I think, and I remember the person that I—there was a reason he put me on the copying machine, and they would bring things and I would copy and this and that and so forth. And the fellow—to think of, he was from Baton Rouge, I hadn't been to Baton Rouge cause I hadn't been to Southern at the time. And he said, "I know you're on these copying machines, do a good job" and this and that and all. And you know what? He said that, "I have a brother that I want here to work and he's going to come here after your G 5, after in your position" and he had to hire and all that, "but I want to see that you can go to another position and you're qualified and all that, because I want my brother follow you, and you see when you leave there I'm going to put my brother to take that job, and when you leave the other job, my brother will take that job also."

DANDRIDGE: Was this a white guy?

TEMPLE: A white fellow. He said he was from, he said did I know where Baton Rouge was, I didn't know at that time. But he was over the whole thing. I forgot what you call it. And so then, and then pretty soon after my score came I had a promotion, which is—what is, I forgot, supplies, you sat at a table and when people are ordering for us, this is equipment and all, it comes down to you and you look it up and see whether we have it or not to stamp it and send it on to the next.

DANDRIDGE: So this was a promotion from the copying to this?

TEMPLE: Yes, but it was a higher rank, on that okay, paying. And sometimes on that things were slow and you got kinda tired at the time because at the time there was other people, you would get this from someone else and all and it would stack up here or it would they would get over here to stack up and you wanted to help someone and all and they—But my head would tell me, "You're a DS-5, your work is to do this and that, your work is not to do that or not to do that, and if it's piled up let them stay and do it or get help to do something." So, in other words—but I had plenty work but when something, you know—So this—And then from there I went to, far as putting up hard(??) I don't know whether you'd call this a promotion or not, I thought it was a better job, people would bring in the supplies and they would have to put them on and then you would actually distribute them where. In other words, we shipped overseas, and I've forgotten, I think it was west of the Mississippi or not, and you would check that to see if that equipment was in there and stamp it and send it on. Well it was an inspection that after they put it on the line others, you would inspect to see if they were getting this, and if they weren't getting it, then, what, you'd take it out. Or maybe it was a—he's getting this and that and this is not exactly this, maybe he could use that. Cause in some cases things could be used and all that.

DANDRIDGE: Well how long did you stay at Forbes?

TEMPLE: Uh, I stayed at Forbes until I applied at—far as Wisconsin—not Wisconsin, to Southern. Cause see after fall—

DANDRIDGE: Why did you apply at Southern University?

TEMPLE: Well, I heard that it was a good university and this and that. And Buddy had talked about Southern and all. He, as a matter of fact, used to visit that campus and was one of the principal speakers that the president would have him to come for—what do you call it on a Sunday, I've forgotten what they called 'em. Because sometimes we would go to a meeting on the campus and he would say about that, "I was talking to a young minister and he said this and that," and he would ask about Buddy that he knew him well cause he would come on the campus there and—He would invite him as a speaker.

DANDRIDGE: So this is the campus in Baton Rouge? Not the one in New Orleans.

TEMPLE: No, in Baton Rouge, oh that didn't exist then; this was the Baton Rouge campus there. And Southern had moved there. So Buddy would come there quite a bit for a speech here for this and that. And then sometimes I would drive him back there or go down there and stay and then on Sundays he would come back then on a weekend, like. But I went there and I lived in a barracks when I first moved, went to Southern University.

DANDRIDGE: What was your—when you applied for this job at Southern, what job were you applying for?

TEMPLE: I was applying for agriculture school, College of Agriculture, cause I was in agriculture economics. There's always someone coming in, that while I was in ag economics there was a fellow named—

DANDRIDGE: This is ag economics at Southern?

TEMPLE: At Wisconsin, before I even grad—got my master's. There was a Frederick—can't think of his last name—he was working on his PhD in Wisconsin and he was trying to move to North Carolina and he had been there quite a while. He actually had gotten a research project, one of the first research projects for so many dollars for Southern. And he was going there and he was asking me, "Well you know I know you ___ (??) Wisconsin, do you think you'd like to take that?" I'm going to do this. He was selling Southern and all that, you know, someone from there.

DANDRIDGE: Was this person white or black?

TEMPLE: Black and he was actually head of the Agricultural Economics, if you can call it that at the time—

DANDRIDGE: At where?

TEMPLE: At Southern. And he was attending class at Wisconsin to get his PhD. He was getting his PhD; he was not returning to Southern, he had accepted a job at—

DANDRIDGE: But you met him while you were getting your master's degree?

TEMPLE: Yes, we just met as students; he was getting his and I was getting my master's. So I said, "Well yes I think I will." "Well I'm going to write to the dean and let him know on that and all." So he wrote to the dean and the dean there was interested in me, going to let me know when you finish and this and that. And I did let him know. And the dean said, "Well let's see in this letter that I'll be coming up to Kansas City"—you know Kansas City—"and I will interview you for this particular job. Meet me," I've forgotten where, in Kansas City and all, and I forgot the place but it was a hotel there in Kansas City, Missouri. So I went there and met him. And he just wanted to know a little of my history and this and that, I would say that after an hour and a half I was hired. And he told me far as a salary what would you do between a range of this and that. And he wanted to tell me, we have a little area there that we are helping promote as far as agriculture—I've forgotten the name he called—would you be glad to work with the people there, the farmer's, and we have this and that, would be glad to? And I would. He said, "Well as far as I'm concerned, you can sign this and all and I'll see about your promotion"—not promotion, "about working there and hope to see you and I'm trying to catch this evening flight back." And he took the evening flight back.

DANDRIDGE: Not flight but train?

TEMPLE: I'm sorry, train. Take that evening and he went—So, therefore, that's when I was I actually hired at Southern University there.

DANDRIDGE: So when did you—So you went there and what was it like? Where did you live and that sort of thing?

TEMPLE: Where I lived, once again the Army had, there was a camp near Southern University and they had barracks there. And, actually, the barracks actually—well, they were officer's barracks and they had converted this into housing units for some of their faculty and far as that. And a few graduate students there; well, not graduate, but anyway for the faculty mainly. And a number of them lived in this, far as the barracks there at the time, which was really on the campus. So that's where I actually stayed there for the time, had a roommate that was too there. This was army barracks and a roommate was there, fellow from Virginia at the time, and he passed about five or six years ago. He came from Virginia—

DANDRIDGE: What was it like living in Baton Rouge?

TEMPLE: Well, I thought when you got through it, I thought it was really—I enjoyed it, it was quite enjoyable. And at the time—

DANDRIDGE: (at the same time, interjecting) Did you encounter any problems? Did you encounter Jim Crow?

TEMPLE: (continuing) Well, wait, at the time I got there was met and looked like the person wanted to take you around and show you this Baton Rouge and where did we eat here and this and so forth. And, I—Yes, you did see, far as Jim Crow, I guess in.

DANDRIDGE: Was this the first time you saw it—was this a different way of looking at race relations, was it different from Kansas, how did it differ?

TEMPLE: Well, I think to a certain extent that you had more cooperation, in Louisiana, far as race relation, but still it was there and they let it be known at the time, something, that—

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever see any signs? Colored only; White only?

TEMPLE: Oh, yes, I did on that, as a matter of fact—

DANDRIDGE: Where did you see them?

TEMPLE: Along the way there and even in Baton Rouge there. There was a one time, far as colored. I remember traveling once there was a place where I could go—I didn't know, that was while I was traveling along a place, that I used to stop along a place and we'd go in and out and in, and I asked, "Where is the restroom?" And that was coming up one time, let me just tell this part. Now, "Where is the restroom?" And said, It's around there. And I went in, this was about three or four times, went back and forth, and I asked Where is the restroom. And I wondered, when I'd come out, the people would look at me, it happened to be in Mississippi, while I was going back home. And then finally one fellow told, The restroom is around the corner and you'll see it around there, colored only. And here I was going in the white restroom and didn't know it. And I guess no one said nothing, they just looked, but even I did see this they had colored, the signs, as far as Baton Rouge, as far as—

DANDRIDGE: What did you, you were at the time a veteran by the time you got to Baton Rouge; you had served in the war. Were you surprised to see this after having fought overseas, or being overseas?

TEMPLE: Uh, I would see—But I just had a feeling that it couldn't last, the way overseas. As a matter of fact what was happening, not only did I see it that way, but I think the students at Southern University, which is one of the largest black universities, they were seeing it that way. And I think they had a good reason to see it that way because there was a teacher in political science, well the teacher in political science and she was always against this segregation and she would even bring this thing up. Well she had degrees and this and that and was not afraid of not being able, would have to leave the campus, so you had several teachers like that. And it's very questionable that I won't say any more except that a number of these sit-in strikes and so forth—

DANDRIDGE: When did the sit-ins start? Tell me about what time did you, what year did you come to Baton Rouge?

TEMPLE: Um, when did I come to Baton Rouge? Forty-six, forty- what, was it about forty-eight something like that. And actually they it was several years before, but you could feel the feeling, you know, coming along, and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: Were the kids protesting on campus?

TEMPLE: They were—It started a year or two after on the campus. And you had the sit-in—(clears throat) Excuse me. All of this came, you have to give credit political science, I think, on the campus, political science happened to be—

DANDRIDGE: Where were the sit-ins?

TEMPLE: At the five and ten cent store at the time. There were about three or four university students that went and sat there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever engage in it?

TEMPLE: I never did engage, but I was always there at meetings and was always seeing what was going on and all of that. And some—

DANDRIDGE: Do you remember whether —were they NAACP? Was it CORE? Or do you know what organizations were gathering these meetings?

TEMPLE: Eventually it was CORE that actually eventually would pass out leaflets and so forth because they were just on CORE, you know, at this time. But there were sit-ins there; you know how that went on, of course. And then there were demonstrations and all. That's why there were two—

DANDRIDGE: Where were you living at this time? Were you still at the barracks?

TEMPLE: I was still in the barracks because—wait, now, I think, and I can say that out of the barracks I could say that I married—

DANDRIDGE: You didn't marry in the barracks.

TEMPLE: No, out of the barracks I met a young lady there.

DANDRIDGE: In the barracks? Where did you meet her?

TEMPLE: No. Well while at Southern University.

DANDRIDGE: You were a professor there?

TEMPLE: I was a professor at that time and met her there.

DANDRIDGE: Met her where?

TEMPLE: In Bat—on—met her in the city of Baton Rouge.

DANDRIDGE: Where'd you meet her in the city of Baton Rouge?

TEMPLE: Well, I guess we got to talking on a bus. Coming on(??) talking and all and she got on, we happened to get off the same place and conversation, We'll see you later, and so forth. I don't know, but one thing lead to another. So I always look at this, this was a good fortune that I had. And I look back at it and think that I had a car at the time and it was bad, the brakes, this and that and I wanted to get it out before five, I couldn't get it so I had to get this bus to come home. And when I got on the bus there was only one seat in it and that was where this young lady was sitting, so I sat down and—

DANDRIDGE: And what was this young lady's name?

TEMPLE: This young lady's name was Ray Helen Ricard. And her name now is Ray Helen Temple. But, anyway, from actually we were married, actually in, what was that, fifty-one there. And then we lived off of the campus in an apartment there. So actually I never lived on the campus except for in these barracks at the time. And, of course, demonstrations were being pushed and all that and I was always there and some of the teachers would want to go with me—

DANDRIDGE: Let's go back to your marriage here. Was Ms. Ricard, had she finished undergrad school when you met?

TEMPLE: Uh, coincident. I came there and she had finished the—well, in other words the, guess you'd call that the spring semester. In other words, I came there for the fall, for the summer, of course, when I came there, and she had just finished from Southern University.

DANDRIDGE: So she had completed her degree?

TEMPLE: Completed her work there and was teaching in one of the—

DANDRIDGE: Oh, she was already teaching ____ (??) when you met her she was teaching?

TEMPLE: Yes, uh-huh. Yeah.

DANDRIDGE: So, but you didn't, you never saw her on campus when you were teaching?

TEMPLE: No I didn't—

DANDRIDGE: So you just met her on the—

TEMPLE: Well, yeah. (chuckles) Through a conversation, you know how you meet someone and you say hello and you tell your problem here and what are you doing on then—Yeah, okay. But, anyway, they had the demonstrations and so forth there, and I was always there and some of the people there would say, Well, Dr. Clark's going to fire you. This and that. Even your name is brought up—there was never any problem. But I was there, though, and I guess he knew how I felt and all. But, and some people wouldn't go with me, I went to all the meetings and hear the meetings and this and that. And—Well one reason, I will say, I was still kinda thinking maybe, I just couldn't get my feet on the ground, but maybe I would go to an ag job, maybe I wanted to go someplace else and all, I didn't care if they did fire me. (chuckles) And I guess I should worry, but looked like that never worried me because I may not be doing what I want to do and all that. I guess I just hadn't got—But I'm glad the way things did work out there at the time. But it looked like I never had a fear, you know, far as—And of course I stayed there until 1950, at the time. And I was surprised there was a letter and I thought maybe that's my dismissal and so forth. And in the letter, to see how Southern worked, I heard another teacher say that ____ (??) to her.

DANDRIDGE: But you were married, so this was after '50, '51 or '52.

TEMPLE: No this was in '50 there, that I—I had married, you know—

DANDRIDGE: You married in '51.

TEMPLE: In '51.

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm.

TEMPLE: Fifty-one, I'm—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: You were talking about some of your experiences at Southern, student protests—

TEMPLE: (overlapping) I remember that these demonstrations got so bad that they brought the state troopers on because I remember in the building that I happened to be, the state troopers came on the campus to quiet it down. That's when the school actually closed down for a while. And, actually, they came into one of the buildings, that happened to be our classroom there, and it was a temporary building, and some of them stayed there and so forth. And we found out when they left there was all paintings on the wall and all about the niggers and this and that and all and these were your state troopers that had come on the campus and all. And they came because it had gotten rough that they actually the police came on the campus—think it was the sheriff, because there was a demonstration there and they were trying to hold off there and too—they said they had blanks and to scare the

students they fired, and two soldiers were killed—two students were killed and that's far as the name in our, what you call it center—

DANDRIDGE: Student center.

TEMPLE: Student center, that's named after them. And they were accidentally killed, they claimed, because they didn't know their guns were loaded to ____ (??). So this—and this even brought more and more. But anyway, go ahead.

DANDRIDGE: So, why didn't you, um, you had applied to—You went to Tuskegee and then you applied at Southern, why didn't you apply to any of the white universities? Why didn't you apply to Emporia in Kansas? Why didn't you apply at Washburn University?

TEMPLE: I don't know, I never thought about it. Well, one thing, after I was in agricultural economics they may have had agriculture—

DANDRIDGE: Why not K State?

TEMPLE: I never thought—as a matter of fact that was, senator told me that once.

DANDRIDGE: That what?

TEMPLE: (clears throat) Uh Ms.(??) Moore had mentioned one time, I was talking about, just in general employment, and she said, "Why don't you come back here?" And this and that at school. And she said, later, "Why don't you write a letter to Senator Capper?" And I wrote a letter to him and all. And he said, "You're an excellent student" and this and that and all, "but deep down I cannot hire you and I cannot understand why you did not attend Kansas State." Shoulda kept that letter, I guess I didn't. But anyway, and I told her about it, she said, "Well that's one." But anyway, he said, "Why did you go to Wisconsin? Why didn't you attend Kansas State?" Because certain—

DANDRIDGE: Well tell me this, Uncle Fred, why couldn't you find a job in Kansas? After serving in the war, World War II veteran, and you—

TEMPLE: I guess I just couldn't—

DANDRIDGE: (continuing, overlapping) You had a B.A. and then you had an M.A. and still couldn't find—

TEMPLE: Well, you know, it was just due to race in a way. Because there was never anything available at the time, if so we'll let you know and all—

Tape 2 ends; tape 3, side 1 begins.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, this is October 4, 2010, continuing the interview with Dr. Frederick C. Temple. Dr. Temple you had wanted to kind of review the chronology of your experiences, your job and academic experiences after receiving your M.S. degree around 1949 from University of Wisconsin. And one of the things you had mentioned to us was how many times, right after really receiving the B.A., that you had applied to the USDA. Can you kind of elaborate on that?

TEMPLE: Yes, I had applied for employment as an economist in the USDA. I had picked up applications at the federal building, well, of course at the post office, and completed them because I wanted to be an ag economist in Washington, Department of Agriculture. And I would wait for the return and I would always oversee the letter back, usually, that, You were one of the three, you were selected as one of the three, and—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: You were saying?

TEMPLE: I was saying that I filled out my form, application and so forth, and the return letter would mention that they had selected three individuals for this, for a particular job, and you—one of the three would be selected, and I would wait and wait, but for some reason, I may have felt I knew why, but for some reason I was never that individual that was selected. But yet every time I take, You are one of the three that had been selected and that person will be notified. And this—

DANDRIDGE: Did you ever indicate in the letter that you were African American or did you—

TEMPLE: No, I never did indicate that. I just filled out the form and far as recommendations that I would give several individuals name as recommendation to apply.

DANDRIDGE: Did the forms, do you remember—and I know this is asking a lot—but do you think that form included your racial identity on it or did it?

TEMPLE: I did not look to—maybe if I had looked more carefully I could have seen some of the questions and so forth, cause they wanted to know far as your education, where you attended school and so forth, and maybe that could have been, you know, would give you some idea on that. Far as the recommendation, this could have been something too, if they had written to these individuals that I recommend. And then the last time that I—I did receive and I had recommended one of our senators(??), as far as a recommendation, I was also received a letter on ____(??) and I was one of the three and I turned out to be that individual that was selected that time. But that occurred after I had signed a contract, and so forth, for employment at Southern University. As a matter of fact, the day I arrived at Southern University, it was that day, I believe, that I also received a letter whether I was interested in employment in the State of Colorado, I believe it was in Denver, Colorado. So, this made me think hard and wonder, but after I had signed a contract and so forth at Southern, I decided to

remain there at the time. But I was finally selected. But I—what sort of(??) I think of all the times I happened to be one of the three.

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm. And this is 1950?

TEMPLE: Um, yes, 1950. As a matter of fact it was just before I started on the job at Southern, but I had already signed the contract and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: Who was this man Williams that you had mentioned that you had happened to meet at the University of Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Williams was an employee at Southern University; he was in the, at the agriculture department there, and he had filled a, developed a research project that was scheduled to start in 1950. But it so happened that he also received a job at a school in North Carolina to head the agriculture area there. And while he was at Wisconsin, he was also, I believe, looking out for someone to try to fill his space when he left. And this is—I happened to meet him at Wisconsin. He was also in ag economics; I was in ag economics. In some way, as a matter of fact I believe it was in the library that we met, got to talking; that was in the morning, we had lunch together and all. And he was telling me about the project and all. Also giving me a description of the area where Southern was, the business about Southern University—like he was trying to win me over for that. And, evidently, he did a good job because I decided that I would go to Southern and looked at it as a great opportunity and, as far as the project, too, to carry out.

DANDRIDGE: You had mentioned, however, as soon as, right after getting your M.S. degree, which was around 1949, that you went to Tuskegee first.

TEMPLE: First.

DANDRIDGE: And was there a relationship you discovered later or then between Tuskegee and the University of Wisconsin?

TEMPLE: Uh, after I—You mean after I went to Tuskegee there?

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm.

TEMPLE: (continuing) Well, the University of Wisconsin was brought up and, as a matter of fact, far as commencement speakers and so forth, for some reason several of them came from the University of Wisconsin. And, also, that individuals, several in that area, was attending the University of Wisconsin. And it seemed the more I looked at it that there was a close relationship between the University of Wisconsin and Tuskegee. And, as a matter, even in ag at University of Wisconsin, sometimes Tuskegee was brought out with certain problems, so forth, there. And, as a matter of fact, it makes me think that the University of Wisconsin, I met an individual that was a teacher at Tuskegee and that may have helped me decide to go to Tuskegee, too, at the time. Because he was there and he was in that

particular area and, of course, everyone wants to talk about their school and so forth; he gave me the history and so forth far as Tuskegee.

DANDRIDGE: So—

TEMPLE: (continuing) And this may have had a reason for me going to Tuskegee there.

DANDRIDGE: So there were at least two other African Americans in your graduate program there that you had happened to meet?

TEMPLE: Right, uh-huh.

DANDRIDGE: Um-hm, that's interesting.

TEMPLE: And, especially in the summer that you found faculty members from Tuskegee going, attending the University of Wisconsin.

DANDRIDGE: That's interesting. So, let's talk also about after Southern University. You're on board there and what were you doing with this USDA funded project there while you were on faculty? What kinds of things did you do, what research did you do?

TEMPLE: Well, actually, it was research on products that were grown in Louisiana. And the first ____ (??) I remember, as far as strawberries. And, of course, they were developing, it was really a marketing study. It started with the marketing of strawberries, and then also involved, I believe there was one as far as shallots and other vegetables, and then there was one also on cotton. And these were products that were commonly grown in Louisiana. And these were—there were four studies made on four different types of products and of course these were completed there and published.

DANDRIDGE: And you did the study?

TEMPLE: Right, I did the study, and had one or two individuals in the field collecting information and data and, of course it was brought there and—

DANDRIDGE: You had to analyze.

TEMPLE: (continuing) —analyze that data and so forth and write up a report and all.

DANDRIDGE: So these are publications by the USDA?

TEMPLE: Right, by the USDA in grants that were given to Southern there. And I could say that, to a great extent, as far as getting information, since I was not a native of Louisiana, that helped also, as far as the

agriculture area at Louisiana State University. There was a person there that would talk with about other problems and so forth as far as developing the study. But, Southern developed—

DANDRIDGE: Were you working with another faculty member?

TEMPLE: No, it was just a friend that I met that was at LSU in their ag department.

DANDRIDGE: Was this friend white or black?

TEMPLE: White.

DANDRIDGE: And how did you happen to meet him?

TEMPLE: Well Southern University did have a relationship with LSU, especially the agriculture department at that time. And that's how that happened.

DANDRIDGE: Uh-huh. Okay. And, so, in—So you stayed at Southern University and what happened in 1951?

TEMPLE: When?

DANDRIDGE: In 1951.

TEMPLE: At Southern University—Well this is the time as far as my marriage in 1951. Um-hm. That's a date I won't forget either, 1951, yeah.

DANDRIDGE: (laughs) And then in 1953 were you continuing to work on this project or did the project end in 1953? Your USDA—

TEMPLE: Yeah the project ended around 1953. And along with the project I had one or two courses that I taught at the time and after the completion of the project there, it was just far as teaching these courses and other, working with other things in the department there.

DANDRIDGE: Now when you say the department, do you remember what the name of the department was at that time? That you were working in.

TEMPLE: Well it was just the Agriculture Department of Southern University.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, all right. So you continued to be on faculty at Southern. What happened in 1955?

TEMPLE: Nineteen fifty-five I received a letter and wondered what it could be, it was from the president of the university—

DANDRIDGE: What university?

TEMPLE: Southern University.

DANDRIDGE: And that was who?

TEMPLE: Dr. Clark, Felton Clark was president at the time. In other words, my letter indicated that they were—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: You were talking about the letter?

TEMPLE: Yes, the letter. It was a letter indicating that the university recommended that I should go on and further my education, far as the PhD degree and then return back at the time there. And assistance was given on this far as—

DANDRIDGE: Financial assistance?

TEMPLE: (continuing) —financial assistance. And, of course, the university was not mentioned, but they knew that I wanted to return to Wisconsin University at the time.

DANDRIDGE: So there was no restriction on what university?

TEMPLE: There was no restriction. It was just to extend your training far as the PhD degree and they were also trying to build up their faculty there. So that was in 1955 and, as I said, I selected Southern University—Wisconsin University.

DANDRIDGE: And, so, did you complete your PhD?

TEMPLE: I completed my PhD. I would say it was in about three years, in 1958, far as the University of Wisconsin. And that was in agriculture economics.

DANDRIDGE: Did your wife go with you or—

TEMPLE: I went, far as the first year—My wife was teaching in the public schools in Baton Rouge—

DANDRIDGE: (interjecting) And her school was? What was the public school that she worked at?

TEMPLE: What was what?

DANDRIDGE: What was her public school?

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: What was the public school?

TEMPLE: The public school was Ready(??) Elementary School that she was working at at the time. And she had worked towards her master's degree at LSU. But she was able to extend her—to finish that degree at Southern Uni—at Wisconsin because she did join me at Wisconsin and was there at the time completing her master's degree while I completed my PhD. And we both finished there in 1958, when I returned to Baton Rouge and she returned to continue with her education at Ready Elemen—teaching at Ready Elementary School.

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: In looking back over your experiences and kind of of(??) relating directly to your World War II experiences, if you just had to make a quick summary, what would you say that you enjoyed the most about being a soldier in World War II?

TEMPLE: I would, as a matter of fact, I had just turned twenty-one there and there were a lot of things that I did not know, and so forth, so I thought it was really a good experience, far as what—Especially as far as the traveling to other countries and so forth. And I was a person, while in the Army there that enjoyed, as far as touring and all—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: When you were a soldier, what was it that you didn't like at all?

TEMPLE: I'm trying to think about what—

DANDRIDGE: Nothing comes to mind immediately?

TEMPLE: No—

DANDRIDGE: Probably means that you enjoyed it a lot ____(??).

TEMPLE: Well, I did enjoy a lot there that—

DANDRIDGE: But there's nothing that stuck out. Did you join a veteran's organization after the war?

TEMPLE: No, I didn't join a veteran's organization.

DANDRIDGE: Any particular reason why?

TEMPLE: Well, I just never felt—in general—Although I did support, financially, some of them and, as a matter of fact, continue to still support. But I did not join any at the time.

DANDRIDGE: There was a Jordon Patterson unit which was an African American veterans' organization and you never—Did you ever participate in it?

TEMPLE: No I never did participate in that.

DANDRIDGE: Okay. In what ways, do you think, did this military experience influence your life?

TEMPLE: Well I think it just—I think I mentioned before, as far as it was quite an experience, different individuals I met from different parts of the United States and so forth. And there were quite a few things that I learned from them and also their areas and so forth. Far as traveling, which I thought was a quite helpful, cause I did like to take tours and all. So I learned as far as traveling in other countries and talking to individuals and so forth. It just helped you as a complete individual, I think, far as—

DANDRIDGE: Okay, thank you.

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: Dr. Temple, you wanted to go back to what you thought was one of the least things you enjoyed about—

TEMPLE: Well, one of the least things, I would say far as—while in the Army, was actually not being able to join in, far as combat units, which being at that age and so forth and wanted adventure, and this was something that I was always look forward to. And, of course, one thing that I did not like far as—although I qualified very well far as clerical work and so forth, but I just liked the experience and adventure part of it. Did not care for the other part, far as, maybe clerical work and all. But, overall, I would say I liked the Army very well, period.

DANDRIDGE: Is there anything else that you would like to add about your World War II experience?

TEMPLE: No I don't think so. I think that I have completed as much as I can recall right now on that.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, thank you.

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: This is beginning another segment of the interview, on October 4, 2010, with Dr. Frederick C. Temple and we're going to overview this time, Dr. Temple, just some of your life experiences and growing up. Where did you grow up? And where were you born?

TEMPLE: I grew up in Topeka, Kansas, in an area that was called Quinton Heights. And, of course, I was born March 26, 1922 and the house that I was born in, I remember what—as I remained all my life, I guess, it was in Topeka, Kansas.

DANDRIDGE: Did you have any siblings?

TEMPLE: Far as one brother and two sisters. My brother was James Temple, and he attended the public schools there. And, as far as coll—Washburn College and all and continued his education far as becoming an Episcopal minister. I had two sisters. The elder one, Jeanette Temple, who actually finished at the college of Washburn College and became a teacher. And then I had another sister, Alberta Temple, who followed her at Washburn College and also went into the teaching field.

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: And you were talking, additionally, about the education of your siblings?

TEMPLE: Oh, yes. And by the way, my brother James he obtained his M.A. degree; my sisters, Jeanette and Alberta, also received their M.A. degree. And I might mention, too, that I received my master's and continued on with a PhD degree.

DANDRIDGE: Was there, in your household, did you have a sense that they had placed a high value on formal education? Or did they?

TEMPLE: I'm quite sure that they did place a high value on education and so forth. As a matter we were encouraged to continue on, far as college and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: So are you the youngest of the siblings?

TEMPLE: I am the youngest. And went through the public school system and also went to college, receiving the master's and PhD degree. As a matter of fact we were always encouraged, I know I was, while you're attending school never just sit there, always have questions, so forth. And as a matter of fact as far as at home, especially as far as at supper, we'd sit around the table, we'd eat as a family, and everyone reported on what happened at their school and so forth and there were comments and suggestions and we were always encouraged to actually get as much education as possible. If you want to go far in the world, like. So we were encouraged and it was—And as a matter, far as reading literature and so forth, that we were encouraged to read more and all, far as educational-wise. So it was actually encouraged and I would say, probably, number one.

DANDRIDGE: Right. In terms of going back to your youth, when you were in, let's say, grade school, what sort of games did you play? What was your favorite recreational game when you played?

TEMPLE: Well, at that time, in games far as students remembering always going to movies and there was always some movie star that they wanted to be like. And as far as games, when class would break up school, that there were always—Well, I guess, like one group attacked—I can't—turn it off.

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: So what—

TEMPLE: Well the games involved, far as cowboy and Indian, dividing up with different groups and all. Also far as sports, I enjoyed baseball quite a bit and I always wanted _____ (??) far as baseball, enjoyed sports completed(??) baseball, soccer and so forth while in school there, that it wasn't just far as just studying but you looked forward to the recreational side also.

DANDRIDGE: What grade school did you attend?

TEMPLE: I attended Monroe School, this was the school my brother and sisters had attended although it was located, I'll say forty-five minute, an hour walk. And at that time, with no transportation, we had to walk to school although it took forty-five minutes or an hour to it—

DANDRIDGE: Was there another school closer to you?

TEMPLE: There was. As a matter of fact within an area, about three or four blocks, where there was an elementary school, Quinton Heights School, but at the time when I came up segregation was at the time blacks could not attend that school. Certain incidents occurred which they could no longer—therefore I attended Monroe school. As a matter of fact there were four black schools; that was Monroe in South Topeka and McKinley in North Topeka, guess I'd say three, and then Buchanan the west side of town. I had a choice of attending the one, Buchanan or Monroe.

DANDRIDGE: What was the—you left out another school.

TEMPLE: Monroe, Washington, McKinley.

DANDRIDGE: Washington was the largest, I think. When you were going to school, you had mentioned that you enjoyed in your recreational games, enjoyed pretending to be some of the actors in the movies, where did you go to the movies in Topeka?

TEMPLE: I went to, there was one black movie that I went to at the time. I'm trying to remember—

DANDRIDGE: Black movie house or black movie?

TEMPLE: Black movie house and I can't—Apex, I think, the Apex Theatre. There were several other white theatres in the area there. There was one that I remember was called Grand Theatre, and, of course, it was, although integrated in entering but while you entered the seating was segregated. As a matter of fact, as far as blacks were concerned, it was a balcony that you had to sit in to see the movie, although you paid the same fare as anyone else. So that was a theatre that you could go. The others that—were for white only; there were several others in the area.

DANDRIDGE: Were there signs up or anything that you remember?

TEMPLE: I don't remember any signs, but I just remember it was just understood that this was your theatre and so forth. So the Apex Theatre was the main theatre, especially the black stud—kids and to go to it, especially on Saturday they'd have a program or club for the students a time(??). And I remember that about once a month they'd give you a free ice cream bar or something like that and it was at that time, I think it was ten cents to actually go to the theatre. And it was attended very heavily by students or especially children, and, for some reason, what they would see there were cowboy western stories, so forth. Everyone wanted to imitate certain actors and so forth when they'd get to school.

DANDRIDGE: How did you get to the Apex?

TEMPLE: It was walking, as usual to walk. And it would say it was, what—well, everything was about, maybe about an hour far as walk. And to that, of course, although I lived in a neighborhood where there were no—not too many, far as black students. When you go to the theatre, walking, by the time you get there, there was always a group because others would join you on the way and it was a matter of walking. So you would go to the theatre and discuss it and even act it out on the way back and all. And you were encouraged to, quite often, at the shows that they actually wanted to—the school's would sell tickets for a particular show, a donation and so forth, and, of course, if you sold a certain number of tickets there you'd get a pass to go to your theatre for, say, about a month or two months, and, of course, this was the _____ (??).

DANDRIDGE: What about some of the other black businesses? Did you ever—was there a soda shop or drugstore nearby? Did you all—do you remember? Or did you ever go in to any?

TEMPLE: I can't remember right now going in to any. Cause even where the school was located, Monroe School, the little shopping area store and drug store was very popular, but they were white at the time. Had no black help was hired; these were just white stores, schools, so forth there.

DANDRIDGE: Was there a hotel, Dunbar Hotel there? Do you remember that?

TEMPLE: I just barely remember, far as the Dunbar.

DANDRIDGE: And it was near the Apex cause they were in the Fourth Street area.

TEMPLE: But the other was actually white, there. And sometimes it was an experience one or two that, I know as far as the Jayhawk Theatre which was an all-white theatre, but something would come up far as, in movies that school students, children were recommended to see that certain classes at the black schools could attend that as a special—But, still, they would segregate cause usually the only class in there, but that show would be shown to you.

DANDRIDGE: Would you be sitting in the balcony or on the floor?

TEMPLE: You would be sitting on the floor there at the time. There was always plenty of room cause there was always just far as students from that particular school there, one or two—

DANDRIDGE: So, during that particular time, for that showing, it was open only to African American students?

TEMPLE: At that—Right, their school, right.

DANDRIDGE: Uh-huh, their school. When you say your school but it didn't mean your teachers accompanied you or did it?

TEMPLE: They did. I mean, the teacher would have come and all that. Say it would be an afternoon at two o'clock, well then you would be dismissed after—

D: (interjecting) During the week day?

TEMPLE: (overlapping, continuing)—during the week to go. Oh, yes, it was during the week not a weekend, which was—

DANDRIDGE: The weekend you went on your own?

TEMPLE: On your own, right. And that was to the black theatre, the Apex Theatre. And it was a very popular—And also, I might mention during the time that *Tarzan of the Apes* was very popular of course, and also there was one or two *Last of the Mohicans*, I remember, Indian story. And, then at the time students would attend that and come out and try to act those out, of course, at the time.

DANDRIDGE: Who were some of your buddies in growing up? And where did you go to junior high and high school?

TEMPLE: Uh, junior high was at a school called Crane High School. It was very close to the white elementary school. And, Crane, far as white school students from the seventh grade, I believe, attended.

But far as black students, which attended in the ninth grade because you were segregated up through the eighth grade and you could go to Crane for the ninth grade, it was integrated there.

DANDRIDGE: What was that experience like? Do you remember it at all?

TEMPLE: It was, uh—Maybe it was quite an experience as far as getting adjusted to it. Uh—

DANDRIDGE: What kind of—Do you remember anything about getting adjusted to it? Or do you?

TEMPLE: I don't remember on that.

DANDRIDGE: So this was the first time you had white teachers?

TEMPLE: Right. And as a matter of fact I had no problem myself far as with the teachers.

DANDRIDGE: What about sports? Were you allowed to participate in all the sports at Crane?

TEMPLE: Uh, no, not in the sports there. No, not in sports. And it was only in that; they just had one grade, ninth grade. And junior high did not have any overall, you know, far as—

DANDRIDGE: So they didn't have any sports teams or sports—

TEMPLE: No, just at that time.

DANDRIDGE: Okay. What about at Topeka High? I assume that's where you went.

TEMPLE: Yeah, Topeka High had all the sports, far as basketball, track, football, baseball, but actually there was only one that was integrated and I happened to be in that particular sport, that was baseball. As a matter of fact far as baseball was integrated, but far as football, basketball was segregated and, as a matter of fact, there was a black basketball team, but it was all segregated of course. But as far as baseball, it was integrated at the time and—As a matter of fact, I happened to be the only black that played on that particular team there.

DANDRIDGE: Did you all ever travel outside the city?

TEMPLE: We just traveled—We did travel outside the city and—

DANDRIDGE: Where did you go?

TEMPLE: Far as Wichita and in the Kansas City area.

DANDRIDGE: Where did you all stay?

TEMPLE: Well actually it was a trip there—Makes me think of one thing, there was a trip to that school and, of course you would have, play that baseball game. And I can remember one experience, which was in Kansas City. We played, I think it was a school called Wyandotte, and we played baseball there and then on the way back, I forgot the big(??) restaurant or cafeteria that we'd eat, that was where we were supposed to have eaten our meal and so forth there and so we got there and it so happened they did not serve blacks. So, actually, I did not know of any other place to eat and they seemed like the coach didn't either, and so maybe it was not a fruitful event at that time because the baseball players did not eat at either cause I could not eat there at there at the time. So, it was in Missouri at the time and it was segregated, this cafeteria, whatever. But, of course, my coach just probably thought we could all eat there at the time.

DANDRIDGE: So what did you all do for food?

TEMPLE: Well, we didn't have—and I felt kinda bad myself was I at fault(??) although I didn't think that, it was just (??) segregation that brought this about so therefore we did not have that evening meal that we—rode on back the time there. Because the other—the only choice was—Oh, too, my coach asked me about, you know, “Well what do you think about it,” this and that before, after they found that out. And it seemed that nobody knew any black place that I could go and eat and, of course, that would have—I guess he would not want that, that I would go to a black restaurant and eat while the other would eat—Everyone decided that that was just the end—Oh by, on the way back, we stopped in a place I believe it was near Lawrence, and of course we all had a sandwich or something like that. We did eat before, but of course this other, it was just discouraged on there.

DANDRIDGE: Could you have gone to a black restaurant?

TEMPLE: I could have after that, but it seems as though this was not thought of, since I assume you're a member of the team and so forth. So we did not go to that.

DANDRIDGE: But you would have been accepted if you had made that choice to go to an all-black restaurant?

TEMPLE: I think so, yes.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, what are some of the other things did you participate in high school? Do you remember anything else at Topeka high?

TEMPLE: No, because actually it was just baseball—

DANDRIDGE: Did you get in any other, Spanish Club or anything like that?

TEMPLE: Uh, I might mention this. As far as baseball was concerned, my—I played quite a bit of baseball before, I'm just trying to come to this—before I came to high school and—Well I was in high school at the time, as far as baseball. And you had a, in the city, they had city teams, but blacks could not play on that. And it seems so strange that I played baseball and yet we had our ballgame together. You could have a team, you played on a team, I played on a, I guess you'd say an integrated teams that played these, in these, played baseball against these teams, but you couldn't play on them but far as their practice games and all, they were willing to have a baseball game with you. I can't explain the way I want to. You could not—blacks could not play on that, because I remember my, at high school, I had a printing teacher that headed that and he said, "Oh I don't know," like it was just a surprise that I wanted to play on that team and he'd have to see. And it came up that I could not. But when they practiced I played on another team in my area and that team within my area was kind of a segregated team but yet they were glad to play on those games but not for the league games and so forth.

DANDRIDGE: In terms of graduation, did you participate with all the other students in the graduation ceremonies?

TEMPLE: I believe we did, yeah. I think, far as I know.

DANDRIDGE: You don't remember—

TEMPLE: I don't remember the details, and so forth, on that.

DANDRIDGE: And, so you graduated probably around, what, '39 or '40?

TEMPLE: Forty-one—

DANDRIDGE: No, graduated from high school?

TEMPLE: In '41, right, the '41 class.

DANDRIDGE: Okay, 1941.

TEMPLE: Right.

DANDRIDGE: And was it—Had you kind of had a sense of what you wanted to do, then or had you—Do you remember your—

TEMPLE: In a way, I was kinda uncertain, like what I wanted to do and so forth at the time. But it was important—But I guess even then I had an idea, I wanted to go to the Army, I was just thinking of the armed forces and all, that was even in '41 there.

DANDRIDGE: Do you remember hearing anything about the war that was going on in Europe at the time? Do you remember anything of that sort?

TEMPLE: Not too much about that at the time.

DANDRIDGE: Had you heard of any race riots in the nation or anything concerning racial unrest? Do you remember any of that?

TEMPLE: I don't remember experiencing any of that, but—

DANDRIDGE: I mean, but hearing about it.

TEMPLE: (continuing, overlapping)—reading the *Pittsburg Courier* and the *Plaindealer* and so forth, it was front page, I mean headline of course—So in other parts of the United States and in the South and so forth that there were riots that would occur over voting and so forth. I remember far as reading that and hearing that. And, as I mentioned to you about my _____ (??) sometimes I think, far as the, maybe white knew about this also cause the paper was actually sent through the mail and all and they may have gotten _____ (??) reading. But we were well informed what was happening, especially far as individuals that we thought had a right to vote and tried to vote attempt and the problems that came up and so that was one thing I think the black papers were very helpful to let us know, throughout, you know, the United—what was actually happening. And it was printed, of course.

DANDRIDGE: Let's talk about your—any religious activities growing up, what church you attended, and that sort of thing, when you were growing up in your household.

TEMPLE: Growing up, I attended—first attended Methodist church, which—

DANDRIDGE: You mean CME?

TEMPLE: Yes, CME. And—CME church, Methodist. As a matter of fact the entire family belonged to a CME church in Topeka at the time. And again it was getting there, walking, but we made a special effort to get there every Sunday and, of course, I had a grandmother that lived a few blocks away from that so it was a matter of visiting with her for that particular day that the entire family went, as far as church, so that we attended the Sunday school and other church organizations that would be meeting at that time.

DANDRIDGE: Was that the only church you attended in Topeka?

TEMPLE: Well that was the—the CME, that was the church started with and then from there it went to the, far as the Episcopal church. And my—

DANDRIDGE: Why did you shift to the Episcopal?

TEMPLE: Well my brother, far as started far as the Episcopal church and, one by one, I guess, we just decided that we would rather—

DANDRIDGE: What Episcopal church did you attend?

TEMPLE: Uh, that was St. Simon's Episcopal Church at the time.

DANDRIDGE: Was it integrated?

TEMPLE: It was not integrated, it was a segregated church. It was very close to one of the large Episcopal churches in that particular area, but it was white and, of course, it was segregated. Although they weren't quite _____(??) St. Simon, but actually you could not attend—we didn't attend far as the white church there.

DANDRIDGE: Who were some of your best buddies, do you remember, growing up in Topeka?

TEMPLE: Well, I couldn't say in general cause I was a person that looked like I had buddies in every section of town, just about. And as a matter of fact, living in my area there were very few black students there so sometimes I'd be on my bicycle and I would ride to what we call North Topeka there. And I had friends there and sometimes we'd see these friends far as even at the theatre far as the east part of town. So I had quite(??) friends in general around there. So I couldn't say if maybe—maybe there were one or two more that you knew, as far as buddies like, but I think I was a person that was kinda friendly with everybody like that.

DANDRIDGE: So there was nobody—

TEMPLE: Nobody, far as—I think, far as special—

DANDRIDGE: Was there a Bill Price?

TEMPLE: Oh, yes, I may have to say far as Bill Price, William Price, this was an individual that lived, oh about half a mile from where we lived. And this was a very close friend; this was an individual—There was an area there where you could play ball and so forth. And it so happened that it was located in an area where black, students from other areas would actually come there, so we played baseball there and as far as racetracks we made—it was a large area and this is where quite a bit of play activities in, so Bill Price, we were very close. And, as a matter of fact he was, we attended the lead(??) to walk to go to school together there because he was along the way, of course.

DANDRIDGE: What about the Parks family?

TEMPLE: Uh, Parks family. It was an individual I met when I went to high school that actually became close there.

DANDRIDGE: Do you belong to any fraternity?

TEMPLE: As far as a _____ (??) fraternity, I joined—

DANDRIDGE: Full name, please.

TEMPLE: (continuing) Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

DANDRIDGE: Were the Parks your—

TEMPLE: The Parks were frat brothers and all, as a matter of fact this is where I met them and met others, of course, through the fraternity.

DANDRIDGE: Where did you go over for Omega? Was it at one of the universities or where did you go over?

TEMPLE: It was far as university.

DANDRIDGE: Where? Where did you go over in a graduate chapter in Topeka?

TEMPLE: Far as the—I don't think it was the graduate—The graduate chapter in Baton Rouge here, I joined at the time; transferred from the one in Topeka.

DANDRIDGE: Uh-huh. Okay, anything else you would like to talk about, in terms of your family experiences?

TEMPLE: I don't think there would be at this time. I think as much as I can recall and knowing that I'm started back at some of these things, what, sixty-seven or sixty-eight years on. So, at the time, that's about all I can recall right now.

DANDRIDGE: What advice would you give to young people today?

TEMPLE: Well, I, uh—

Pause in recording.

DANDRIDGE: Well, Dr. Temple, we'd like to give our thank you to you for taking so much of your time. And if there's anything else that you think about that you'd like to say, you let us know and we'll start the recording, okay? Thank you very much.

TEMPLE: Very good. Thank you.

Tape 3 ends.
End of interview.

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