

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

American Bicentennial

Personal Experience

O.H. 1346

RICHARD H. JONES

Interviewed

by

Joseph P. Alessi

on

November 16, 1990

RICHARD H. JONES

Richard H. Jones was born February 22, 1942 in Youngstown, Ohio, the son of Herbert and Helen. After moving to Boardman, Ohio at a young age, Mr. Jones attended Boardman High School, and graduated in 1960. After working for several years, Mr. Jones enrolled into Youngstown State University. In July of 1967, Mr. Jones graduated with an AB in Accounting.

Following the completion of his degree, Mr. Jones entered into a partnership with two individuals, and joined an accounting firm. After many years of dedicated work, Mr. Jones eventually bought out his partners. Currently, Mr. Jones is the owner of his own accounting firm. As a result of his diligent work, Mr. Jones became an enrolled agent and a certified public accountant. Mr. Jones is a member of several work affiliated organizations. These groups include the AICPA and the OSCP. Mr. Jones attends the First Church of Christ Scientist.

Mr. Jones currently resides at 4680 Heritage Drive in Canfield, Ohio with his wife Merrily. He married Merrily on August 22, 1964. Mr. Jones has four children, one daughter, Tiffany, and three sons, Brian, Eric, and Matt. Mr. Jones is still active and enjoys family activities, reading about history, and traveling.

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INTERVIEWEE: RICHARD H. JONES

INTERVIEWER: Joseph P. Alessi

SUBJECT: Bicentennial, B.A.R., Brigade, Reenactments,  
Williamsburg, Virginia

DATE: November 16, 1990

A: This is an interview with Richard H. Jones for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on The American Bicentennial, by Joseph Alessi, at Mr. Jones's office, on November 16, 1990, at 1:12 p.m.

Good afternoon Mr. Jones.

J: Good afternoon Joe.

A: Before we begin the interview I would like to ask you a few personal questions about your background and your up bringing. First, of all where and when were you born and where did you grow up at?

J: Well, I was born February 22, (a very historical date - George Washington's birthday) 1942. I was born and raised in Youngstown and Boardman. I went to Boardman High School.

A: What were some of your interests as a child and an adolescent? What did you do to occupy your time growing up?

J: We did a lot more different activities than kids do now. We hiked in the woods. We spent a lot of time in Mill Creek Park, the Old Mill. We spent a lot of time playing baseball, football, a lot of physical activity when I was growing up.

A: What type of sports did you get involved in?

J: Baseball, football, mostly those two.

A: You said that you attended Boardman High School. Where did you attend grade school?

J: Well, first, second and half of third grade I went to Chaney then we moved to Boardman and the rest of third grade all the way through I went to Boardman.

A: Now you said other than physical activities when you were growing up were you interested in or any other type of activities that were not so physically oriented or were you just "always on the go" type of a kid?

J: The only thing that I really read about too much and was interested in from an academic point of view was history. I did history and was always interested in it for some reason.

A: Why?

J: I don't know. I think what started the history part was when I was thirteen my father and mother went on a trip down to Virginia and we went down and saw Monticello and we went through Williamsburg, Virginia and Mount Vernon and I was so impressed with that that at the age of thirteen that made some kind of...Even now I will go into Virginia and I will get a funny feeling. I can feel the history in that state. Just so many things happened down there of historical importance. That always did interest me from an early age.

A: After you graduated from High School what type of employment or jobs have you held?

J: When I first started to go to college...Well, when I was a junior in high school my father and his infinite wisdom got me a summer job working at a local aluminum extrusion plant. This was kind of like hard work. It was working with other kinds of people that I wasn't familiar with up to this point, because it was in manufacturing concern and they had all kinds of different people in there and I was just seventeen years old and I hadn't come across some of these kind of people before; and at that point in time I kind of made the commitment that...Well, after I worked there for about a month I kind of made the commitment that I would go to college after all and that is when I decided to go to college. So, I decided to go to college and after I graduated my uncle knew a fellow that was going to open up a Humble gas station and he got me a job working with this guy. I worked there for a couple of years.

Then, the man that owns the business that I have own now I used to wash his car and take care of it at the gas station. One February when it was particularly cold, snowy, etc. I asked this man if he was looking for some help. He said, "No." Then about three weeks later he came back and he asked me if I was serious about wanting a job and it did he made a lot of sense he said, "You can make \$1.25 an hour doing this and working in this cold weather or you can come over and work in the office for \$1.25 an hour." Well, at that point in time it made sense to me and I said, "When do I start?" From that we go up to this point. Where I own this business as a CPA and we went through a variety of partners and other things so the point is that I am by myself now.

A: What type of degree and what field study did you acquire in college?

J: Well, when I went to college the big thing was to get a Liberal Arts degree and when I was in my senior year in high school the couneslor there told me that I was so bright that I could do anything that I wanted to do. It is the same old thing when kids graduate, as kids graduate you are faced with the prospect of what you want to do with the rest of your life. Well, you know we had English and history and geography, and math, and Latin, and French and stuff like that in high school and I that just didn't give me a big enough menu to decide from those subjects what I wanted to do. So, I said I will start out going to Youngstown State University. I had to have a major in something so I picked Chemistry. Why I did this I will never know but you had to have a major. And they said that I should get into the school of Liberal Arts, which was the sciences and so forth. Instead of business. You have to understand now that I am a CPA, okay but I didn't go to business school. So, I took a couple of years of Chemistry and this class that all people that major in chemistry take like organic chemistry and anyone that is not serious about studying chemistry will not under any circumstances pass that class and I didn't. At this point I decided on an early career move which I decided at that point I was limited to the school of Liberal Arts so I thought that I would give psychology a shot. So, I was in psychology for a while but about some where in this period of time I got the job from with the guy across the street from the Humble gas station. Then I decided that I would take some accounting classes because what I was doing at that point was we had something like two hundred service stations that we did their records and their taxes and sales taxes and so forth and so I decided to take some accounting classes and thank God for that because I did get A's, and B's in that subject

and we got out of the psychology and so forth. The business and I kind of grew together and I finally graduated in 1967.

A: What is the name of your business today and exactly do you do?

J: Well, we are really two businesses. The name of one business is E.K. Williams and Company, which is a nationally franchised company that deals in business management techniques for small businesses. The other business that I have is just me acting as a Certified Public Accountant. If someone needs a Certified Public Accountant or wants a Certified Public Accountant I act in that role, but if it is someone else that is the service station business to something closely aligned to that then they are seeking us out as E.K. Williams and Company and we do that.

A: How exactly did you get the company with the service station?

J: Well, the first man that hired me as it turned out he lasted about six months because the head company E.K. Williams, terminated his contract and sold it to somebody else. Well, the second man that got the franchise he taught me a lot, which was personal relationships. The first guy was a salesman and he didn't have any other attributes here, but he could sell but he couldn't produce anything that well. Then the next thing that happened was the...Well, we will call it the...Joe ran us into some financial difficulties and he offered me a partnership for some of the money. So, I went out and borrowed some money and gave it to him and he made me a partner. Some where along the line he found another guy that worked for a local oil company here at in town, a big one, and we will call him "Bob." So, there was a three way partnership between Bob, Joe, and myself. Then Joe decided that he wanted to do something else and he went to Canton and we kind of like bought Joe out so that there was just Bob and I. That continued on that way with just Bob and I for about fifteen years. Then Bob got sick about ten years ago and then I bought him out and here I sit all by myself. It was a progression of just events that happened.

A: How exactly did you get involved with the brigade?

J: My wife saw your father on television one afternoon. I think that it was between football games and I didn't see it, but the next day she had talked to one of our friends that we both went to college with, some people from Warren, and they were talking back and forth about getting involved in this thing because it might be interesting.

Now you really have to understand my wife to understand how this can happen to somebody, but she gets "gung ho" real quick, okay. So, I guess she kind of talked me into going to the first meeting, which was up on Rayen Avenue at the Armory. I remember like it was yesterday. That is how we got started in it and there was no high purpose for doing it. It just seemed like a fun thing to do, meet some of the people in the area and do something in this area, because I think that we hadn't contributed anything to anything and that is how it got started.

A: What do you recall about the first meeting?

J: Chaos. It was just a bunch of people that got together to do something for a variety of reasons, not always were the best reasons. Some guys showed up just because it gave them an excuse to fire the guns and other guys showed up because it gave them an excuse to maybe do something crazy, and it was a real "mish mash" of people that were one minute children and initially there wasn't a whole lot of agreement on what should be done, but your father did his best to keep this band together. I suppose that it wasn't too much unlike the crowd that gathered and boxed when the British troops marched into town because everybody was running every which way then too, and this was the route of that entry beginning so that band I would say.

A: How were officials elected? I mean at this first meeting did they elect officials or what was on the agenda for the first meeting?

J: At the first meeting it was just an over view of kind of like what your father...And I think that the officials were already elected or appointed or however they were done when we got involved in it. We were assigned companies...I don't remember how that occurred, but I found myself in the Green Mountain Boys I think, with some other people. At that point it didn't make any difference where we were at because everyone was strangers anyway so it didn't matter.

A: What was your impression of Mr. Alessi when you first saw him, what was your first impression of him? Do you recall?

J: That was a tough one. This is going to be on tape too?

A: It doesn't matter.

J: Oh, my. Don't you have any easy questions?

- A: No, they are all going to be hard.
- J: I don't think that I had any impressions the first time because you know when you go into a new situation you are not really sure of whether you are going to stay in that or whether we are going to do anymore with it. I really didn't have any impressions because I just didn't know anybody well enough to have any impressions of Joe or anybody else, except I had this feeling that he would be able to carry this off. I guess that I had confidence in the guy and he seemed to know what he was doing and I also thought that he was doing some strange things. I mean I was not at this point into the dress and the things that he was talking about. I just wasn't sure if I wanted to do this or not at this point.
- A: As time went on how did your opinion of Mr. Alessi's leadership and personality with the brigade itself grow? What was your impression after awhile, throughout the whole Bicentennial?
- J: Of Joe? Well, I got along good with him, okay but as in any group there is always some people that don't want to go along with the program. Joe tried to run it democratically, but there were just some trouble makers in this group which caused a lot of...It wasn't as good as it could have been. If some of the people would have just gone along with the program and done what they were supposed to...Because an organization like this you really can't run it democratically you have to have a leader and you have to have followers. If you have fifty people that are all leaders they are going to be marching in fifty different directions, okay. So, we had this band of people that wanted to do this and this band of people that wanted to do that and there were some very exciting meetings because a lot of these people frankly didn't want Joe to call the shots, but from my point of view was he started this thing it is his party, okay. So, I was content. Do what ever you want to do. Because he started it and these other people were just...I had been around people long enough at that point to understand a little bit about what goes on as human beings in relationships with one another. Some people were just trouble makers and like I said some of these people I think looking back on were just I don't know what they joined for. They just caused trouble in my humble opinion.
- A: You said at the first meeting that you looked up and you said, "Well, some of these ideas don't jive with me. I am not into the dress and I am not...This whole idea is kind of iffy." What made you decide to go ahead with it?
- J: Well, I mean when you first start on something new you



either do or you don't. After awhile you decide well...I don't know we just had three small children then. I guess the thing that made us decide to stay I guess was the first parade. I think that that is the first thing that we ever did. We looked terrible historically. Number one in this part of the state nothing happened during the Revolutionary war so...But some of us had raccoon skinned caps on and our dress did resemble that of the 1700's at some point in time but it was terrible from a historic stand point to say the least. But the people enjoyed it when we went in the parades.

We would march down the street straight and fire those guns sometimes if it wasn't raining or too damp out. But as time went on we started winning awards and prizes and people really enjoyed it and I guess that is what got us going. The people that we put these programs on for enjoyed it and they were interested in it. This was in 1974 or 1975 one of those two before things really got going for 1976.

A: Now you said at first you were historically inaccurate. Did this change? How did you go about changing this?

J: Well, we tried to change it, okay. But I think for the purposes of the 1700's...We tried to change it but some of these people were hard to change. Number one a lot of them wanted to do there own thing. They didn't want to be historically correct. They wanted to go on a parade and put on there raccoon skins or Indian stuff or what ever they had and they weren't really into this thing from a strict historical perspective presentation. I think that after 1976 when some of us went off and joined the Brigade of the American Revolution we were kind of like the die hards, after we got into it we kind of like wanted to do it right. We didn't want to wear the J.C. Penny ready made costumes that were available at that point in time that were polyester and so forth. We basically got to be snobs. Again it is just a evolution of something that you either want to continue with something doing it right or not doing it at all and we decided to do it right.

A: Did you at any time find yourself actually researching uniforms and people of that period?

J: Myself, I read a lot of books. First time in my life that I can actually say that I read a lot of books. We read a lot of books about what happened in this part of the country in that period of time, which became available, not in a colorful supply. As 1976 passed...Now the people who stayed into it just wanted to know more about what happened in our area, what they actually wore. We went up to Williamsburg a lot and other places and museums, Valley Forge, what have you. The people,

not in the Mahoning Valley Colonial Brigade but afterwards in the Brigade of the American Revolution they did everything 100% as accurately as it could be done. They did the research. They told you what material had to be in what ever it was, wool, and from that point on it got to be an expensive proposition because these things were not available locally.

We started to do historically correct activities when they actually happened. As opposed to around here. It was more of a social event. You know you would go out and meet people and you parade up and down the street or you had a good time at a picnic or what ever, but when you dress up in that outfit that was 100% accurately correct for that period of time and you marched down the Main Street in Yorktown and you have a fife and drummer behind you. It just puts chills where you didn't know there would be chills because it actually happened there and even the people in the shops come out and watched us it was just...A little bit different from marching down Rt.224 you know.

A: Now you mentioned that you became a die hard and one of the snobs. We saw the elite I guess, why? What was it had to be more than parades?

J: No, at that point it wasn't the parade. I don't know. It is something that once you start that it takes...You almost get so much at once there you hate to stop and we went out and bought a camper, a pop up camper. All of the uniforms that I had were hand-made buckskin that I stitched by hand myself. The rifles and muskets were all made by hand, and a tremendous amount of work and blood in this thing, okay. We recreated events at actual places, sometimes on actual dates. But after it is all done and you have the musket that you also made yourself from a kit and you have all of the accouterments, and you had the right shoes and you had the right pants and you had the right shirt and the haversack and all of the other things then it got fairly easy because then all you had to do was jump in the car or a truck or what ever you had and drive the distance and you were ready to go. So, once you got over the initial cost, the initial burden of it all then there was an element of fun, but I really enjoyed going to the events where something really happened. Like, one summer we went to the Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey and it was just unbelievable because there was like twenty-five hundred guys in the field on the day two hundred years ago that this battle actually happened. The weather conditions were even the same. And we are loading and marching in this field, fighting this battle with cannons roaring in the background. There was like ten British cannons and ten or fifteen American cannons and you see the guys out on the this field

and that is what it was it was a bowl sandy bottom, having this reenactment, and it was just unreal. It is something you know it is hard to explain to another individual why you did this because then the person's reaction is "this is nuts." I mean you drive all the way to New Jersey to put these hot clothes on to march around in ninety-five degree weather. Which at first glance doesn't seem to make a lot of sense, but on the other hand you go to that battle and there is a group from Washington D.C. that was a regular Army outfit and was called "The Old Guard," and they had all of their stuff on, their clothing, they were authentic. They were coming up to us asking for water because their canteens wouldn't hold water, but ours would. There were just so many things.

We were down at some event at Beaver Falls where they were having a dedication of this fort that was constructed during the Revolutionary war believe it or not. I think that it was Fort Macintosh, but I am not totally sure. To make a long story short we participated in these proceedings and General West Moreland was there. So, I got to meet this guy. I didn't even know who it was. I was sitting in the fort, they didn't have a fort they just had some earth works that were in the foundation of fort wise and I was just sitting there looking, and soaking up the history as it were and trying to imagine where the people came from Fort Pitt across the river and over the hill and they came to this fort and this guy came up to me and asked for a few questions and I thought it was General West Moreland. But there were just a lot of things that happened like that were fun, interesting, educational and it happened to us during those years, and we were really fond of them.

A: You mentioned that you hand-stitched your own buckskins and your uniforms, how did you feel when you were making these items?

J: Well, most of the time my wife was making them. We were on our way to some place and the things had to be done by the time that we got there. You got to be real good at doing things in the dark, in a moving car, at night when you are tired. But like I said, we did learn a lot of things. I can't remember where I got the buckskin from now, but that was a real treat. I am an animal lover so it was very difficult for me...I mean I couldn't go out and shoot a deer and get the buckskin, okay, but I remember bringing home...I went some place and got the hide and maybe your father had something to do with this, I don't remember where the buckskin came from, but I actually made pants and they fit. They may still fit because buckskin stretches.

- A: Did you get the buckskins at Lodi, Ohio?
- J: No, it was some place in Canton.
- A: Back to the brigade itself, you mentioned earlier that there were trouble makers, people always didn't want to go with the flow; can you recall some of the conflicts? What they were about other than just wanting to use certain...
- J: There was petty stuff. It was just petty stuff. I can't remember specifically Joe. Anything would set them off. A lot of the conflicts arose from the women. There was always conflicts there because the women wanted to do something different or they didn't want to go here or there. And probably the whole problem was that Joe, your father, he tried to please all of these people and at that point in time there could have been sixty or seventy people in this thing and there was just no way on this earth that you are going to please or satisfy sixty or seventy people what they want to do and make them all happy. It is just not in the cards. So, I can't remember, I don't know. There for awhile though I remember that there was something every week that was petty in nature that something got blown out of proportion. Originally, Joe wanted, I think his original intent was to have everyone fairly up fighting. He wanted to wear rifle frocks and pretty close to correct. A lot of these materials weren't available then. You couldn't get linen, only polyester. There was cotton, but they didn't use cotton. And those things had to be ordered from England, literally. The only place that we could get linen was from England. Originally, Joe wanted to look pretty good I think, but then after the people showed up and volunteered to do this thing I think Joe relaxed it. In that anybody come which ever way they wanted to come and then it was just everybody wanted to do something different.
- A: You mentioned earlier that you were thrown into companies, how was the brigade itself organized into companies and how many companies? Can you recall?
- J: Well, it changed from time to time. After 1976 we had a real problem of getting people to come to anything. Then it just got to the point that I think a lot of people just lost interest in it except for us few guys that went on as I said to the BAR. Well, there is a women's auxiliary and they did their thing. They dressed up and they marched in parades behind us which I don't think that they liked that either, but they had to march behind us because that is the way it was in those days and the kids and everything. There were five or six different companies. There were some guys from Warren that were in one company. I would have to say

five or six but it has been a long time ago.

Joe would give us ribbons, awards, decorations. It was neat. It really was and the cap of the whole thing was that Bicentennial ball. Of course you got your picture in the paper a lot. You got a certain amount of notoriety for doing this stuff I think. You got to meet a lot of the big shots in Youngstown. At the Bicentennial ball was the top of it. That was great.

A: How was the unit run itself? You mentioned that you went to reenactments, you went to parades. Was it run like a military unit? When you were playing the part per say was it...

J: Yes, it was. The guys that stuck it out, either decided that they were going to do it Joe's way or they weren't going to do it anybody's way and as it turned out and after I found out later you know Joe did want us to do it the right way. It really wasn't a democratic decision or anything like that it was just Joe knew how it should be done because he had researched this stuff before. Some of the stuff was dumb but anyway it was run like a military operation. I mean we are in the parade or we are in the battle or a reenactment and it was just like in the military operation.

A: Can you recall some of the crazy stunts that you guys did?

J: Crazy stunts...The one that stands out in my mind and I don't where you got this question from, but the one that stands out in my mind is that Joe got the bright idea to have a canoe trip and this was to be a two day affair down the Little Beaver River, which happened to be a river that George Washington came up and surveyed. See how this history stuff rubs off it is just terrible, but we know George Washington came up this river to do some surveying in his early years and you know we thought that would be fun. And again I don't remember how many people were in on that thing but it runs in my mind that we had six or seven canoes. So, we all met down there and we found a place about half way down the river to camp for that night so some of us stored our gear at the camp site and just took the minimum amount back. Now most of us were rifle frocks on this deal. We had two guys in particular that were really born one hundred years too late exactly. They should have been mountain men. I can't remember their names now.

A: Moon Mullens and Rat?

J: Moon and Rat, okay. Well, they should have been mountain men and they should have not been born around this century. Well, they decided that they would take all of

their stuff on this canoe trip because they were going to do it right. Now real mountain men would have taken their gear. So, we started out...A little other information here, it had just rained a lot and this creek was high. I have seen it when we could wade down it and you would have to portage your canoe. Well, in this particular weekend this baby was really rolling. So, I was on the left and I had to go first because I had never been in a canoe. I had been in a canoe at Mill Creek Park, which is like a goldfish pond but those canoes didn't look to sturdy and I was kind of big to start with and I announced that I had never done this before and I wanted to be with someone who knows what they are doing. So, another fellow by the name of Don Brown, who is bigger than I was, said, "I will go with you, I have done this before." I said, "Fantastic." So, we jump in this canoe. Well, to make a long story short by the time the two days were over, Don Brown and I had the nicknames of the "River Inspectors." The reason for that was, that every time you heard a ripple we knew that we were going to go in and we went in about four times in this trip.

To continue with the story about the guys who took their stuff, we didn't lose anything because we just had our clothes on our back and we were able to hang onto them some how. But the two guys that should have been mountain men were right where our camp site was there was like a waterfall, no it wasn't a waterfall but it was a little drop okay. Well, it shouldn't have made much of a difference but everyone went in at that point except I think your father and Butch. Now when we all went in we all turned over that wasn't a surprise to Don and I we had already been in three or four times before and at this point it wasn't a big deal. As a matter of fact you could hear a ripple in the water, you know the noise it makes when you hear white water for me and we would warn each other, "Now get ready. Here we go again." But anyway, these two guys are coming down their canoe real professionally in all of their gear and they are paddling and we know that they are going to go in because everybody did. You had to go in but they kept paddling to the very end and they kept raising their paddle up till they were out of sight and it had been a defeat and they came in. So, we all sat in the shore and joked about how much fun this was and we see these two young girls coming down the river in the canoe and we say, "Wait a minute, we have to see this." So, here come the girls, they see it coming, they scream, cover their eyes, and sail right on through. It made us feel great. I guess that was about the silliest thing. But we did survive the weekend.

A: Did you find yourself doing a lot of things that you would not have done?

J: Absolutely, yes. We stretched ourselves on some occasions to our outer limits. A lot of the parades were in the summertime when it was hot, grossly uncomfortable, or it had rained. Oh, yes we did a lot of things that we would have never done.

We had a winter camp-out in Lisbon back in some woods and Chuck Port, who was the cook, made us a full roast chicken dinner, with mash potatoes and gravy and everything. It was going good until it started to snow and we had to lug all of that stuff back out of that woods. Yes, I had never shot a musket before, or a rifle. I just wasn't into that. I have a trophy at home I came in third place at that. Just sitting proudly...

A: Other than activities which the brigade in that were military, were there any other type of events not directly associated with the public, but mainly events that you yourself did for yourselves? Other than the camping? I mean the women, the children, the whole group was involved in?

J: We had picnics. I remember going down in Mill Creek Park in the fall and getting one of those cabins or something and we had picnics, but most of the things that we really did was for the public. I mean we went out to the Canfield Fair and put up a display there. There were so many things that I can't remember all of these things.

A: How did the public receive you? Did they look at you as people who were trying to recreate history? Did they look at you as people that were trying to relive their second childhood by playing soldier? How were you received?

J: I don't know how they perceived it except that they loved it. In almost any parade that we were in that there was a first place trophy, money or whatever we won it. We went to East Liverpool. We won one of those first place pots three years in a row and I have a couple of plaques at home. The people loved this. Now what they thought down deep in side what we were doing I don't know but they loved us because we would go to schools and give presentations, ladies clubs. We tried to educate the people a little bit as to what it really was like in those days as opposed to how you perceived it was. We think that it was very romantic you know to think back to those times. If you go down to Williamsburg and walk through and see the nice houses and the capital and the palace and you think of it as being very romantic. But when you leave there and get on the bus and go back to the hotel and then go out for a steak dinner. Those people went through a tremendous

hardship which we can never fully understand what they went through to get us to where we are today.

A: How did you feel being in the brigade? What was the brigade to you, Dick Jones?

J: It was just a lot of things really all rolled into one. I liked the sense of the history about it. I liked getting involved in this and seeing what it was really like. We like to travel and go to different places. We got to meet some life-long friends. We made some friends through this, meet some other people, learned a lot of history. It gave the kids a little bit more perspective of what it is like to be in a group, what it is like to march in a parade, what it is like to be a part of something, what it is like to learn a little bit about history. Now I am not sure yet, I know what the kids got out of all of this, but we did it for the most part because we enjoyed it. Whether it was because of the travel, the history aspect we just did it until our fourth child came along and then it just got to be too much you know hauling the baby around and stuff. We did it for a year but it just got to the point where I guess it couldn't be too fun anymore. Plus the fact that the money was drying up because the Bicentennial was over and we used to get meals at these things. At the Battle of Monmouth, in New Jersey the National Guard feed us a roast beef dinner out in the field. I mean we are talking about four thousand meals you know, helicopters and everything. But it just got to the point where we wanted to do something else.

A: How was the Bicentennial to you? Did you feel like you were contributing to a community or was it "I am in it for myself. I am jumping on the bandwagon because it seems like it is fun." Or after a while of it did it seemed like, "We are special. We are here to be seen and heard?"

J: It was probably all of those things Joe. Most everything that you do you do I guess for yourself one way or another. We did it because we enjoyed it, but we also liked to do it because we saw that the people were enjoying it. And we all got attention from it which means that the people did enjoy it. I mean my wife did numerous programs for schools, and she still does to this day. She just went with Matthew to school to tell about how the ladies dressed and so forth. My wife did get involved in this and she went "gung ho" too so it just wasn't me doing this. We did it as a family and that is another aspect of this thing. It was something that we could do as a family and travel and learn and teach others because in that period of time the general public didn't have a clue as to what it was really like back in those times.



A: In the dispatch there was a quote, the dispatch was your monthly newsletter, it was by Ray Moore and it said, "Each man should be a walking, living history of the era we are attempting to depict." How true was this? Was this really the goal?

J: I think that that is what Joe wanted to do originally. But I think that he saw that he really couldn't. Number one, there wasn't a ton of people that came out maybe fifty or sixty guys at the maximum and then I think that he saw that you really couldn't require these people to do all of the things that they would have had to do and still have the group. I mean you can't take a person as a volunteer and say, "Now you can't wear that raccoonskin hat because that didn't come till way later. You have to go spend \$25.00 for a Bi-corn hat from this place in Boston. You can't wear those shoes you have to go buy a pair for \$70.00. You can't wear those buckles." If you put all the restrictions on the people we just wouldn't have the group. So, originally with Mr. Moore saying that statement I think that that was their original intention. It probably could be said that we were living history of different periods of time. As a group we weren't living history of the 1700's I don't think. Some of us stretched into the 1865 and things like that.

A: How well did you do it? How well did you depict the era that you were in?

J: Well, a lot of us didn't know, okay. It wasn't that we knew better and just didn't want to do any better it is just we didn't really know until we had the brigade locally here quite or disbanded and we went on did we really understand what we were supposed to be doing.

The local group here I think did as best as we could do with what we had because we weren't rich, we didn't have the material. It wasn't easy to do. We just showed up with what ever we had or what ever we could afford to do at that point in time. I think that we tried the best that we could.

A: If you had to do it all over again would you?

J: Yes.

A: Why?

J: After thirteen or fourteen years these things are coming back to me just as we are talking. It was just a very interesting period of my life that five or six year period. We still talk about it today with the children or friends that come over. We have in our main

hall in our house there has to be twenty pictures in a frame of different pictures, different things, and different events that takes a major part of our house. It is in a very prominent place. Now it is expensive, it is time-consuming, it took a lot of work but it was still worth it. The whole period of time that we did.

A: How do you feel now that it is all said and done?

J: Oh, I am glad that it is over. Well, we had...My wife and I had just come back from Williamsburg last week. We went down there just to get away from here and do something different and the first time we went to Williamsburg it was badly presented. I mean their clothes were bad, they didn't have the right stuff and the place didn't even look right and you get to be a snob, you really do because you feel that you know what these other people are portraying should know and they are not. It is just like we knew everything that they had told us at Williamsburg.

A: Do you ever find yourself just sitting back maybe when you are out in the woods, do you feel that historical spirit or something that takes you back? Is that always with you?

J: Yes, it is. But it is really with me when you are sitting down in Monticello on top of the mountain just sitting on the rocks looking around you and if you close your eyes you can see people riding horseback in and out of there, people working the fields. Or if you go to Williamsburg you can just sit on the Village Green, as they call it, and even though there are modern buses and jets flying over your head you can just sit there and you can just feel it. You can feel the sense of history and what went on there. I can. I have had friends tell me that I am nuts. But it is just...I just don't know what. I can't tell you the word for it.

A: Do you feel as if you have lived history? That you feel that you have almost walked out of history to live again in the twentieth century after those six years?

J: No, I don't feel like that. I feel like I know better what it was like then for having gone through this and I don't think that most people have that understanding or feeling. I feel like I can go to Williamsburg and belong there, okay. You walk into the palace for example, and they have got five or six hundred weapons in the palace and you know what those weapons are. You have fired them a thousand times yourself and the bayonets...I guess that you feel like a part of it but I don't feel like I came from there. I feel like I am a part of it more than anything else. That may sound

go into Raleigh Tavern, you feel like you were a part of going through this as opposed to an outsider just looking in on something that is happening.

A: Do you have anything else to add? Can you think of any thing else?

J: Except that my wife and I both...The kids were kind of young then, but Tiffany remembers it. She was about ten years old and we have real good fond memories about it. It is just a good feeling about a fine segment of your life that you can look back on and say, "Gee, we really had a good time in that period of time and we knew a lot of people and had a lot of fun." That is about it.

A: Well, thank you. I appreciate it.

END OF INTERVIEW