

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Erbon W. Wise

COLLECTION: 4700.0636

IDENTIFICATION: Claiborne Parish native, 1941 graduate of Louisiana State Normal College. Served with the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Adjutant general of Louisiana 1964 -1968, and later major general. Publisher of several small newspapers in Southwest Louisiana and author of books on that area's history and genealogy.

INTERVIEWER: Tara Zachary

SERIES: University History – Ole War Skule

INTERVIEW DATES: December 27, 1995

FOCUS DATES: 1940s

ABSTRACT:

Tape 924

Date of birth and family information; educational background of parents; graduating from high school and entering college at Louisiana State Normal College [Northwestern State University of Louisiana]; enlisting in the Army Air Corps; hearing about the bombing of Pearl Harbor; being sent to Officer's Candidates School and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Finance Corp; duties as a Finance Disbursing Officer; England at the start of American involvement; loss of planes and lives during the early part of the war; the Memphis Belle; meeting Prime Minister Winston Churchill; landing in England aboard an assault landing craft; Utah Beach; entering Paris prior to official liberation; reactions of the French people; spending the winter in the French countryside; ending the war in Wurtsburg Germany and meeting the Russians; soldiers reactions to V-E day; coming home after the war; commanding reserve units in Lake Charles Louisiana; becoming the Adjutant General of the State of Louisiana in command of the National Guard for Louisiana; being named State Director of Selective Service during the Vietnam War; promotion to Brigadier General and Major General; protests against the Vietnam War; involvement of the National Guard with hurricanes; meeting President Johnson and showing him hurricane (Betsy) damage; opinion of General Patton; memories of Utah Beach including a Colonel who dangerously broke down under stress; staying at the Savoy hotel in England upon arrival; staying with English families before equipment arrived; starting a tabloid paper in Sulphur Louisiana after the war; meeting Charles De Gaulle former President of France; practical joke and misunderstanding involving watermelons.

TAPES: 1 (T924)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 21 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 44 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: Photocopy of picture taken during World War II; Correspondence; LSU Salutes Biographical Information sheet; excerpt from a chapter of a book; information sheet

RESTRICTIONS: Some restrictions as they apply to the publication of his narrative in books, etc. See control folder for details.