

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Taylor, Porcher L. (Porcher L'Engle), 1925-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr.,
Dates:	September 15, 2012
Bulk Dates:	2012
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:33:48).
Abstract:	Colonel (ret) and educator Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr. (1925 -) is one of the few servicemen that served the United States in three major wars – World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War – in both the Navy and Army. Taylor was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 15, 2012, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2012_196
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Retired colonel and education administrator Porcher L. Taylor was born on August 9, 1925 in Jacksonville, Florida to Porcher L., Sr. and Mary Bell Taylor. Taylor's father was the founder, publisher, and editor of the *Florida Tattler*. The weekly newspaper ran from 1934 until his death in 1964. Taylor was hired by his father to work in the family business, Taylor and Son Printing Company, Inc. Taylor worked as a typesetter and a pressman until 1943, when he joined the U.S. Navy and spent three years on tour in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces, he was able to enroll at Tuskegee Institute with support from the Army's G.I. Bill.

In 1946, Taylor enlisted in the Tuskegee Institute Reserve Officer Training Corps – the precursor to the famed Tuskegee Airmen – and completed his training in 1949. Taylor also played varsity football for three years as first-string fullback and was selected as one of Tuskegee Institute's All-Time Greatest Football Athletes in 1985. With the outbreak of the Korean War, Taylor was deployed to the Pacific Theater, where he served with the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1971, Taylor became the first African American promoted to full colonel at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Taylor is one of few living Americans who served the United States in three major wars – World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War – in both the U.S. Navy and Army. He served in the Navy for three years and the Army for twenty-five years.

In 1961, Taylor received his M.S. degree in counseling from Virginia State University (VSU), where he also served as president for student affairs and as director of counseling. He also served as professor of military science and tactics at VSU. He was then selected to enter a doctoral program at the University of South Carolina in 1968; and, in 1972 he became one of the first two African Americans to earn a Ph.D. degree in psychology from the University of South Carolina.

Taylor has been recognized for his many contributions. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze

Star, Meritorious Service Medal and Army Commendation Medal. He was also the recipient of the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, an honor shared by former U.S. President Gerald Ford and astronaut Neil Armstrong. Taylor lives with his wife Ann in Petersburg, Virginia.

Porcher L. Taylor was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on September 12, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 15, 2012, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Colonel (ret) and educator Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr. (1925 -) is one of the few servicemen that served the United States in three major wars – World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War – in both the Navy and Army.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Taylor, Porcher L. (Porcher L'Engle), 1925-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Taylor, Porcher L. (Porcher L'Engle), 1925- --Interviews

United States--Armed Forces--African American Officers--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Colonel (Ret)

HistoryMakers® Category:

MilitaryMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., September 15, 2012. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_001, TRT: 1:30:07 ?

Porcher Taylor slates his interview and describes his family's background. His mother, Mary Virginia Bell, was born in 1905 in Albany, Georgia, where she was raised. His maternal grandparents, Snyder and Stella Bell, were born in Georgia, and later moved to Jacksonville, Florida. Taylor talks about his childhood memories of Georgia, segregation in Georgia, his mother's education at Albany State University and her religious faith. His father, Porcher L'Engle Taylor, Sr., was born in 1900 in Jacksonville, where he established 'The Florida Tattler,' the first black newspaper on Florida. Taylor talks about his father's newspaper business, the black community in Jacksonville, and his paternal grandfather, Dennis Taylor.

African American families.

African American mothers--Georgia.

African American fathers--Florida.

African American grandparents--Georgia.

Childhood--Georgia.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_002, TRT: 2:29:27 ?

Porcher Taylor was raised in Jacksonville, Florida, where his family lived under the Jim Crow laws of segregation. In this section of the interview, Taylor discusses his family's history under segregation, and his own memories of growing up in the South. His paternal grandfather, Dennis Taylor, was a member of the Knights of Pythias secret society. He talks about his grandfather's move from North Carolina to Jacksonville, where he amassed a large fortune. Following his death, Taylor's grandmother, Annie C. Taylor, was deceived of this fortune by her lawyer. Taylor's father, Porcher L'Engle Taylor, Sr., attended Tuskegee Normal Institute where he was in the George Washington Carver Class of 1922. He then went on to take correspondence courses in law from La Salle University. Taylor also talks about his parents' personalities, their attending different churches, his sisters, Virginia Anita Williams and Betty Ruth Belton, and starting school at Hall's Kindergarten.

Segregation--Florida.

African American grandfathers.

African American grandmothers.

African American fathers--Florida.

African American churches--Florida.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_003, TRT: 3:31:20 ?

Porcher Taylor attended Hall's Elementary School, Old LaVilla School, New LaVilla School, Davis Street School, and Stanton High School in Jacksonville, Florida, where his favorite subjects were English and mathematics. In this section of the interview, Taylor describes his experience in school. He played baseball and football in school and later at Tuskegee University, where he was included in the Football Hall of Fame. From the age of ten, Taylor helped his father at his printing house, which remained in business for thirty years, until his father's death in 1964. Taylor talks about his interest in reading black newspapers during his upbringing, his favorite teachers in school, and his involvement with the Boy Scouts in the 1930s and 1940s. He also discusses his decision to join the U.S. Navy when the U.S. joined World War II in 1941.

Education--Florida.
Tuskegee University.
College athletes.
United States. Navy.
World War, 1939-1945.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_004, TRT: 4:28:42 ?

After graduating from Stanton High School in 1943, Porcher Taylor enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He first attended basic training at the Naval Station in Great Lakes, Illinois, becoming a Seaman First Class, and was then selected to attend Signalman/Quartermaster school at Great Lakes. Taylor received his first assignment to the U.S. Naval Frontier Base in Galveston, Texas. In 1944, he was assigned to the Pacific Theatre of World War II, where he served as a Petty Officer, Third Class aboard the submarine chaser, SC-1341. He describes his experience, and also talks about his return to the U.S. following the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Taylor also talks about segregation in the Navy in the 1940s and race-related issues in the U.S. military. In 1946, he was discharged from his service in World War II, ending his career in the Navy.

Education, Secondary--Florida.
United States. Navy.
World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--Pacific Area.
World War, 1939-1945--Naval operations, American.
United States. Navy--African Americans.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_005, TRT: 5:29:19 ?

In 1946, Porcher Taylor enrolled at Tuskegee University on the GI Bill, where he joined the U.S. Army ROTC program. He talks about majoring in commercial industries, meeting his first wife, playing football, and his encounter with George Washington Carver, while he was there. Taylor graduated from college in 1950, and taught for a year at Matthew Gilbert High School in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1951, he was called into active duty in the Army, and served in the Korean War from 1953 to 1955. He talks about his experience in the war, and in the 25th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. He also discusses segregation in the U.S. Army and Navy, and the desegregation of the Army in the late 1940s. From 1957 to 1960, Taylor served as an assistant professor of military science and tactics at Virginia State University, and also earned his master's degree in counselor education.

Tuskegee University.
Carver, George Washington, 1864?-1943.
Korean War, 1950-1953.
United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.
Virginia State University.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_006, TRT: 6:30:33 ?

In 1968, while stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Porcher Taylor began his Ph.D. degree at the University of South Carolina, after the U.S. Army voiced a need for officer training in psychological services and education. He talks about his mentor, General James F. Hollingsworth, desegregation in Columbia, South Carolina, and the Army's reaction to Dr. Martin Luther King's

assassination. Taylor also discusses his experience in Uiojongbu, Korea, becoming a member of Lions Club International, and serving in the Organizational Effective Training Unit. Taylor served in the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, in the 2nd Battalion of the 14th Infantry. After retiring from the Army in 1976 following nearly thirty years of service, he served for eleven years as the vice president of student affairs at Virginia State University. Taylor reflects upon his legacy, his life after retirement, and the awards and honors that he has received.

Fort Jackson (S.C.).

University of South Carolina.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975.

Virginia State University.

Reminiscing.

Video Oral History Interview with Col. Porcher Taylor, Jr., Section A2012_196_001_007, TRT: 7:34:20 ?

In this section of the interview, Porcher Taylor reflects upon his life and his career. He also talks about his family, shares how he would like to be remembered, his election as the military aide-de-camp by seven governors of Virginia, and receiving the Noel F. Parrish Award. Taylor closes the interview by describing his photographs.

Reminiscing.

Awards.

Photographs.