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Interviews with Jews in Utah

I. J. "Izzie" Wagner

I. J. WAGNER INTERVIEWER: Leslie Kelen 8-9-83

SIDE 1

L: Are you ready?

I: Yeah, I'm ready.

L: Why don't we begin by you giving me your full name.

I: I. J. Wagner, March 31, 1915.

L: Okay. Will you tell me where you were born.

I: Salt Lake City, Utah. 144 West Broadway. In an old adobe house with no water in the house and no toilet facilities. In the house. Does that help you?

L: Would you give me the names of your parents.

I: My mother's name was Rose Yuddin Wagner. My dad was Harry Wagner.

L: Okay. Yuddin is her maiden name?

I: Yes, Y-u-d-d-i-n, uh huh.

L: Where did your parents come from? Where did they immigrate from?

I: My mother was born in Kraslava, Latinof and my dad was born in the Ukraine. In Russia.

L: Yes. Did they come here together?

I: No, they met in Boston, Massachusetts at the turn of the century.

L: Could you tell me a little bit about how each got here? Do you know?

I: My mother, my mother's mother died and she had a older sister that came to Boston and then she got in a little trouble, not politically, I guess, she was talking against

the Csar of Russia and I think they locked her up one night or had her threatened so she and her sister got on a boat and went to Liverpool and then to the United States and then to Boston.

L: Your mother and her older sister?

I: Her younger sister. Then when they got to Boston they got a job in the LaPlant Shoe Factory. I think it's still there in Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts right over by Boston. They were making button shotes in those days. My mother marked the button, where the button should go and my aunt sewed them on. And I think they worked twelve hours a day, six days a week, except Sunday because that was a very staunch Catholic town and Sunday was a day to go to church. So they made $3.00 a week each. I remember the story she told me.

L: How was their trip over? Did your mother tell you about it?

I: Well, they got seasick and thought they were going to die. He was steerage. They brought their pillows with them. The down filled pillows. I may still have one. And down they thought was worth some money so they brought their down pillows and they came here virtually penniless, you know. In those days if you had $50, you were rich.

L: Did the rest of the family stay back in Lavia?

I: The rest of the family stayed in Lavia.

L: What did your mother feel like about leaving Lavia? Did she want to get out?

I: No, she loved her family but you read, you know, where you

were free in America and she always said the best thing she ever did in her life was come to America because after all she was free. She could say what she wanted, do what she wanted and and she always said that this the greatest country in the world. She wouldn't give you a dime for any other country. She felt free. She, and of course, those people, they had work ethics. Work ethics. They worked. They weren't afraid to work. And they save their little money. Not much but, you know, in those days you could get a sandwich and a glass of beer for a nickel and pennies meant something to them, you know. In those days you could get a coule of sticks of licorice for a penney. In fact I can go back quite a ways myself but at an rate, her sister, well, what happened to her family, 'cause I know, because I went back to Russia. I went to Russia in '61 and I found one, my mother's brother's daughter. All the rest of the family were killed by the Germans. Her three brothers and the rest of the family were machine-gunned. Killed all the Jewish people in Kraslava.

L: Kraslava was a small town then?

I: Uh huh. And I couldn't get into Kraslava when I went there 'cause my mother was telling me it was similar to Fort Douglas up here. The Cossacks used to have their barracks there. And the barons owned all the land in those days. And the baron would send his foreman or superintendent over and they'd say okay, we'll take so many bags of flaks, we'll take some of your cattle, we'll take so much of this and if you disagreed with them they just

chased you off the land and maybe kill you or call the Cossacks to come and chase you off the land and that was it.

L: What did your parents do for a livelihood, do you know?

I: Yes, they farmed.

L: They did farm?

I: And they had a little roadside inn where the army people, the Russian soldiers come over and have a glass of beer and a sandwich and a little meal and they also farmed. And had their cows and a few chickens, just like you see on Fiddler on the Roof. Same story.

L: Were they orthodox people or what?

I: Yes, they were, yes. But my mother really wasn't. After she got here. You know, they weren't that stric t.

L: After she left?

I: Yeah, after she came to Boston. You know, they observed the kosher deals but when I was born, they more or less had faded away from some of it.

L: Right. You were going to say, you went back in '61 and you found...

I: I found this one, see, I found letters which I still have in Russian. My mother would send $5.00 to her family which was a lot of money, you know, during the revolution and all that stuff, the Russian revolution and that meant a lot to those people. You know, they could at least use American money. I don't know what happened but anyway so I had a plan to take my mother to Russia. She was an American citizen and she was in her, she was 85. And then she had

a stroke in L.A. I happened to be there and she died at 86 so she never got to go so I decided, that was '59 at 86 years old. So I decided, I went back with a friend of mine who went to Rigalatve and Moscow and Leningrad and Kiev and just to see what it was like and I found this cousin who was a doctor and then it's the same old story. About you learn what happened and it's all been duplicated a hundred times on TV and so forth. The Nazi deal and the Russian revolution and the whole bit, you know. So she and her brother, of course, when they were going to school in Riga. Kraslava is a hundred miles southwest of Rigalatve. In the old days Rigastonia and Lithuania were democracy.

L: Not Rigastonia.

I: Rigastonia and Lithania, there's three of them up there in the Baltics. So at any rate, I wrote a letter and finally got ahold of this woman and I went back and when I got into Moscow, of course, why, I asked Interst. I'd heard all about the Iron Curtain. Is there any way I can call the United States? And the woman in Moscow in the hotel says, Of course, why do you ask? You know. So I went down to the telephone operator and she told me where to go and I gave her the number and she says, go to your room and we'll call you within an hour and in five minutes I was talking to my wife. In 1961. In fact I couldn't get in from the United States. I got in there, my visa was from Copenhagen.

L: You went right in the mist of those cold war years, '61.

I: Yeah, but they treat, the Russians did treat me well. I mean, they're very suspicious but they did treat me well.

And anyway, I called, I got my cousin on the phone. I'd never met her, from Moscow and she and her two boys and her husband were there greeting us with a bunch of flowers. At the airport.

L: How did you speak to her?

I: Well, she spoke Russian, Latvian and Yiddish. I had a guide who spoke English but her two boys, one fourteen and one sixteen, the sixteen year old were learning English, Latvian language. So I had never spoken Yiddish but I'd heard it around the house and my mother and father spoke Yiddish around the house and when they didn't want me to hear anything, they'd speak Russian. My mother spoke German and Latvian and English and Russian and Hebrew and Yiddish. She spoke about six languages. And she'd never been to school. Just learned it all at home. She'd have tutors come in and teach them. At any rate, to get a little continuity in this thing.

L: That's okay. You were still talking about being in Russia in '61.

I: Yeah. So, I met her there and then I started asking...

L: You were relating how you were speaking to her.

I: ...dad's picture and I said, do you speak Yiddish? In other words I can speak it but I can't speak it. So, we're started out and the first thing you know words that I had heard when I was six, seven or eight years old, all came back to me. The first thing you know I was speaking pig-latin Yiddish. You could understand everything I say. I remember trying to explain Kennedy and Kruschev and I'd

try to tell her who Kennedy was and your president, you know, Kruschev and Kennedy. And she'd tell me, you know, about the Nazis coming in and she had some cousins, maybe somebody living in Leningrad. She had an address. So, I went down to Intersts and I said, is there any reason I can't go to Leningrad? And take my cousin with me. They said, of course you can go. Why do you ask? You know, you'd heard about this Iron Curtain business so we get on a plane. Got a cab and went to this apartment, rang the doorbell and they slammed doors in our face. Nobody here by that name, you know. So we never did find thecousins. They were probably dead and wouldn't care anyway, you know. And some of them didn't want you around so we didn't find anybody else. So then I asked her what happened to her brother 'cause I knew she had a brother. Well, her story was another soap opera that you see every day. When the war started she was going to school in Kryslain, Riga and her folks were still in Kraslava and she was going to be a nurse and she took a course to be a nurse. And the boy went to school and then the Nazis invaded so they followed the army down to, all the way down to Isbachastan, they rode, they walked, they did everything. They retreated all the way down there. And being a nurse she worked in the hospital down in Isbachastan and went inthe quartermaster or the army. And she'd met this fellow by the name of Chugarman which is Sugarman and he was wounded so she took care of him and when he got out of the hospital she became good friends of the family. They go back to Riga to go

back to school and she decided to be a doctor. Her brother is the head of some union. They do have unions like, you know, like they do in Poland. They're not very effective but they are in a sense so he was out in some little village, something like going out to Heber and stayed at this inn and some, she called them hooligans in her way, come in and held up the innkeeper and all the guests, took them out in the forest there and shot them and robbed them. And that was the end of her brother. So she took me out to the graveyard. They did find him. The Russian government did find them and I think they got ten years or so. They were Russians. Some of the people they killed were Jews so that wasn't too important. So now she's left all alone. So Mary called her friend, the only friend she had in the world down there in the Ukraine and he came up on the train to help her with the burial and all that and help her in her sorrow. I'll be darn if they didn't marry.

I: They were married?

L: So they had two boys. Peter and Zinia. So anyway, I met the kids. We went out to the beach in Riga. Beautiful beach. And we'd undress and change into swimming trunks, in the forest. There you undress. You see somebody nude put on swimming suits you don't pay any attention to them. Then I asked her if she would like to go to the United States and bring the family. I think I could get them in. 'Cause I'd vouch for the financial status and she said, no, Stalin is no longer around here and we don't worry now about being picked up in the middle of the night. Kruschev

is here and it's a lot better for us now and she said, after all, I don't speak English. The medical profession is much higher than ours and I don't think I could get this kind of a job and I'm doing a good job for the people here so no, I don't want to go back. My husband works for the post office but he's got ulcers so I'd send them medicine from the United States. Went to the doctor and got prescriptions. Well anyway, I write her one day and I tell her I'm going to Israel and I'm not sure that I will get a chance to come up to Russia again. So she says, will you visit my sister-in-law who is now in Haifa. So I called her on the phone and I said, what do you mean your sister-in-law? Well, I never told you this but my brother was married. And when he got killed his wife was pregnant and they have a daughter who is now living in Israel but the daughter, when she's eighteen which is a few months from now, months from now, they will tell her that the fellow that she thinks is her father is just her stepfather. For some reason. I don't know why they wouldn't tell the girl. They told her on her eighteenth birthday. So I go to Haifa and I meet them and this girls' in the army and it's her eighteenth birthday and they tell her that my cousin was her father. Anyway, the reason they got out of Russia, the girl had, her sister-in-law had diverticulitis. They operated on her. Her husband had his heel shot off in the war so they were on pensions so they might as well let them out of there. What good are they to them.

L: They didn't want them.

I: And the boy, the young boy had cancer and just lost his leg. Fourteen year old. By then he was sixteen years old. So there was one boy left so they let them out. She showed me her piano, for example, which is probably like a Steinway and they had somebody take Steinway off and put Wurlitzer on there so they could take her piano with her. You know, they all have their little tricks so they got into Haifa. I met them and she was an accomplished pianist and he worked as an usher in an Israel theater and the boy, anyway, the other boy finally succumb to cancer at twenty years old so the other boy now works for the government. So, after the boy died I sent them a ticket to come to the United States and she and her boy came over and toured the--I have relatives in Washington and Boston and Cape Cod and Stanford and my sister lives in Beverly Hills. My other sister-in-law took her all down to the Grand Canyon. They had a hell of a time. They're back in Israel. So that's their story. She just retired from the Haddasa Hospital. I guess, so that's the story of that side of the family. The rest of them, so my dad and mother cam over to...

L: Your mom came over to Boston.

I: Yeah, in Boston and my dad was in Lawrence, Massachusetts and he had a fruit market.

L: Before you tell me what he had in this country, how did he come over. Why did he come?

I: Well, he was spoiled. He had a friend that went over and

told him what a wonderful place it was and he was a handsome, he was a handsome guy and adventurous and single so I guess he took off for America. He didn't do too well in his fruit market so he was in a rooming house in Boston...

L: That was taken in Salt Lake, wasn't it?

I: Yeah. So he and this friend of his stayed in the same rooming house/my mother and my aunt stayed in and they met and then they got married and his friend went to Portland, Oregon so they got on the train and went to Portland, Oregon. And when he got there why this fellow was peddling with a horse and wagon.

L: Your father's friend?

I: Mr. Harris. So, you know, they made a living. You know they'd make a buck a day or a dollar and a half a day or whatever and then Harris moved to Salt Lake City. I don't why or how but he came to 144 West Broadway.

L: Harris wasn't Jewish though was he?

I: Yes.

L: Harris was Jewish?

I: Uh huh. There was all kinds of Harris in the Jewish.

L: Harris was the name?

I: Yeah. There was all kinds of Harris in the Jewish. The name doesn't mean anything. There's Browns in Jewish. Used to be Brownstein. You cut out the Stein and a lot of people named Brownstein and they cut off the Brown and their name is Stein.

L: Okay.

I: So you have Goldenberg so the guy's name is Mr. Gold. The other guy is Benberg and you come into the old country

and your occupation's a tailor. So they ask you what you do and you tell them you're a tailor so you get named T-a-y-l-o-r. You're a Taylor. You're Mr. Taylor. You know, a lot of them couldn't speak English and the immigration service did the best they could with what they saw. You know, take Beakman, Pappas is Pappadokolas. So they shorten them. They change them. But at any rate and I think my mother's name was Yuddin which in Russian is Jewish. And Juden, in German Juden is Jew so they might have said, they're the Juden's. So that might have been, my, I think, my mother tried to explain, we came from Spain originally to Russia. Probably during the Spanish Inquisition. You'll never know. But anyway, so they came to Salt Lake City.

L: So your father, and they came to 144 West Temple?

I: No, that's where Mr. Harris came. 144 West Broadway. So, my dad found a room. The room that came to $6.00. They found a house at 4 something South 5th East. It's now, it used to be Butch and Gudgel.

L: Bush and Gudgel?

I: I know what it is now. It's right on 4th South.

L: How do you spell Gudgel.

I: G-u-d-g-e-l. But that's been changed. There's another company. There's a service station on the corner of 4th South and 5th East. The other's a country turkey place. Right on the south east corner is a service station. Just next to the service station is where my brother was born.

L: Abe.

I: Abe. So they stayed there for awhile and she told me she never had a bed. She slept on a mattress, on the floor but then Mr. Coleman, where the Neff Floral Company is, Mr. Coleman had a grocery store. A Jewish fellow and he gave them a dollar's worth of credit. She never forgot that as long as she lived. How he gave her a dollar's worth of credit, maybe about twenty bucks today for groc-ries. Then Harris had this deal so Harris told my dad to go over to Fisher Feed Yards which is now the, well, it's now part of that redevelopment agency where it's just above Struve Distributing. It's right across from the old Deseret Industries. So that was the Fisher Feed Yards. So for $2.00 you could rent a horse and wagon all day long. So my dad got a horse and wagon and he started to peddle. And then whenever the train came in we lived at 140--by that time we'd moved into 144 West Broadway with Harris.

L: So 144 West Broadway...

I: Which is now the Restaurant Store Equipment Company.

L: What is it now?

I: Restaurant Store Equipment Company.

L: Did you live upstairs?

I: Oh, no, it was just adobe house then.

L: Just an adobe house?

I: Yeah. Then, I'm going back many, many years. I'm going back seventy years or so. Just west of the Miles Hotel.

L: Okay.

I: There's a parking lot which I owned at one time and now there's the Restaurant Store Equipment Company is there.

L: Okay.

I: Which is Fetch 'cause I sold it to him. Anyway, so now we're only a block, two blocks from D&RG Depot. They unloaded bags, not bags but scrap or rags or whatever, bottles and then he'd go down and flip a sign over express and when the train would come in people have him move trunks so he'd take the trunks up where they were going and had an express business. And then he'd peddle too. So one day he was moving a grocery store. They lost their lease and they had to clean out the grocery store. They moved the ice boxes in those days, not refrigerators and the candy shelves and all that stuff. He was a pile of burlap bags over in the corner. You know, they had to empty sugar and potatoes. In those days they didn't have ten pounds mesh bags. You take a hundred pounds of potatoes and dump them up on a bin and then you'd have the empty burlap bag.

L: Right.

I: And the same thing with sugar. You had a sugar liner. White sugar liner, cotton inside of a burlap bag. You tear it apart and you dump the sugar in a big pin with a scoop. So asked the fellow what he wanted to do with the, what do you want to do with those bags? Oh, youcan have them. He said, what will I do with them? Well, he said, take them down to the junk yards, they'll buy them. We used to sell them to him. So he takes this hundred bags you might say. I don't know exactly 'cause my mother would always tell the story that she couldn't believe it, down

to the junk yard and he'd give him like 5¢ apiece. So for 100 bags that weighed 35 pounds he got $5.00 working all day long for $2.00. She couldn't believe it.

L: That was good money, yeah.

I: She said, are you sure you didn't make a mistake, Harry? No, I asked them if they'd buy some more and they said yes. She said, why don't you go around to the other grocery stores and see if they'll sell them to you. So he went around and he bought them for 2¢. He'd buy 200, 300 all day long and make $9.00. God, this was like getting rich fast. Then he gave up the express and went around picking up these bags. Then the first thing you know, why, my mother said, well, what is the junkyard selling? He says, I don't know. What do they do with them. So he finally found out that the junkyards sold them to Bailey and Sons.

L: Bailey and Sons?

I: Which was a seed company. Feed and seed. So my dad went to Bailey and Sons and they said, how many do you have? And he said, I might say 500 and he said, oh, how many can you use? He said, oh, 50,000, 100,000. He said well, this is just an eye opener. So he'd save up 500 and take them over to Bailey and Sons and they give him like 12¢ apiece. Now, he didn't need the junkyard anymore. Now, he was buying from the other peddlars. He'd give them 6¢ and he'd take them over and sell them for 12¢. First thing you know they were out there sizing them and bundling bags out in the backyard. Anyway, that's the way

the bag business started.

L: So you also had different sized bags?

I: Yeah, you'd have the sugar bag would be one size, grain bag would be another size, potato bag would be another size. Empty bean bag would be another size. You know, 100 pounds of beans takes a 20 by 36 bag. A 100 pounds of potato takes a 22 by 36. With different weights and grain bags 23 by 36. A feedbag is 24 by 40. So you'd go to farmers and, for example, they used to have Coon Chicken Inn. I remember going out with my dad. They had all these chickens, Coon Chicken Inn but they had their own chickens across the street on Highland Drive. They had a big chicken farm. They would raise and kill their own chickens. So then they used to feed them. Their was no bulk feeding. They'd buy feed from General Mills or Pillsbury which was then Gold Mills and they'd have all the empty bags. So my dad would buy them all and they devised a system with two sticks like this. Two broom-sticks.

L: Yeah.

I: And they'd put the bag on them and that would turn them inside out and all the feed would fall on the ground. Do you see what I mean? You turn the bag inside out and shake it so by the time they delivered they had one woman put along sticks and the other one take them off. That's the way they'd clean them and then they had the bags with the holes in them. Then they got an idea of patching them. They'd cut all the bags that were really ripped bad and

make patches out of them. Then patch the ones with holes in them. That would be a No. 2 bag. But they would still hold the feed. So then he found out where Bailey and Sons were selling. He followed a truck they loaded one day and they took them up to Globe Mills which is now Pillsbury in Ogden. So by then he had a T-model Ford that he drove up to Ogden and talked to Globe Mills and said I'm in the bag business and how many do you have? He said, well, I could give you, say, 10,000 or 15,000. He said what? He said, how many can you use? He said, 20 or 30 carloads.

L: 20 or 30 what?

I: Carloads.

L: You mean like train carloads?

I: Oh, yeah. So everything was sacked. Even grain. You never bulked grain on a truck. You put it in a bag and then you loaded the bags of grain on the trucks and you took them over to the granary, you cut the top open and dump them. Then take them back and refill them again. So then when he found that out he took a trip to Los Angeles. He heard about Los Angeles, found a company by the name of Shuken and Company.

L: What was the name?

I: There was all kinds of companies. Quite a few of them in Los Angeles.

L: How do you spell Shuken.

I: S-h-u-k-e-n. They're no longer in business. They quit about three years ago. And he met Mr. Shuken there and their grain season was June and July and ours started in

August so he would be able to buy five, ten cars of bags. So he'd buy them and call up, buy them in L.A. and call up Globe Mills, I can give you five cars of grain bags for delivery the 10th of August at so much money. And they'd buy them. Then he went over to General Mills.

L: How long did this process take him?

I: Huh?

L: How long did this whole process take him? How much time has gone by?

I: Hmm, I'd say probably maybe ten years, from 1905, I guess we started to selling a lot of bags, 1918, after the war. 1919, 1920.

L: When you were growing up as a kid, what did you do to help him out?

I: Nothing. Went to school. Worked and sold newspapers. Worked in a grocery store. Shined shoes. Worked for Grand Central, Maurice Warsaw when he started up.

L: But that was much later, wasn't it? I mean, by the time you were, let's say, eight, nine years old.

I: Eight and nine years old I was selling newspapers in the summer and going to school.

L: Yeah. Was your father's business already doing fairly well?

I: Oh, yeah, very well. But the only problem thathe had was like lots of other people, he had some weaknesses. Like poker, horse races, so as soon as he'd make it he'd spend it. We always had good clothes, a big Lincoln car but he never spent any money on the house.

L: There was a lot of gambling going on in those days?

I: There still is. Right. Everything was side open in those days.

L: Where would the gambling be in those days?

I: Uptown. Sure.

L: Where would they get together to gamble?

I: Oh, upstairs, on Main Street, 2nd South. Right downtown. Well, if you look at 1932 we indicted the mayor and the chief of police and lawyers. They went to jail.

L: That was right before Marcus, right?

I: After Marcus?

L: Right after Marcus?

I: Maybe before, yeah.

L: Marcus became mayor right after that.

I: Let's see, the mayor was Harry Finch. Harry Finch was the chief of police. Oh, he was an automobile man. I'll think of it. So, anyway, they even had horse racing at Lagoon. Legal. Then you get into prohibition. The bootleggers. And the houses of prostitution were all wide open.

L: I suppose gambling was wide open.

I: Yeah, but it still is. I don't but people bet football pools, basketball. There's a still a couple of bookies I guess around on the horses. I don't bet them. Now, of course, you got Las Vegas close by and Wendover. My secretary runs over to Wendover every month and drops a $100. So anyway, that was the way so he made money but as soon as the money would come in he'd spend it. He had a weakness for stock market, gambling, poker and he was usually a sucker. You know, he'd go up to these places and spec-

tators would stand behind you and you'd say, three fours and dad would look this way so you're playing you know he's got three fours so you lay your hand down. It was that same old pigeon deal. He died young, 52. That was the story so I save my money. I made $15 a week for my last job was at Grand Central in the summer on weekends.

L: Let me ask you this. In terms of getting those carloads over from Los Angeles to here, was that the last step in terms of the growth of the business for him?

I: No.

L: Was that pretty much as large as it got?

I: Uh huh. Well, yeah. That was as large as it got. Then he died in 1932. Of course, we were $5,000 in the hole.

L: And that was primarily because of his gambling?

I: Oh, yeah, all of it. Because if he'd kept his money we'd have been very wealthy. If he'd, you know, been, you know, you take our neighbors around the corner, Sweet Candy Company. They kept their money. McDonalds across the street which is now the Dixon Paper Company. Went backrupt. They were much wealthier than the Sweets. And bigger, world renown. There are very few people in business today that were in business fifty years ago. In Utah, Salt Lake. They're all gone. Consolidated Wagon is gone. There are so many people that you never hear of anymore.

L: Oh, the stores downtown.

I: Auerbach's is gone.

L: Frank's.

I: Arthur Frank sold out. They still have the name but...

L: Right.

I: Family's no longer in it. I don't know. Jack Findlay. He's out of business. The Paris. They sold out. They've been closed. Then there was a Wanawich.

L: I don't know about them.

I: That was a furniture store. There was Axelrad's. He's out of business. Sam died not too long ago.

L: Western.

I: Western. They're gone. Most of your hotels. Waters. Newhouse Hotel is gone.

L: The Waters had a hotel?

I: Waters family.

L: I didn't know they had a hotel.

I: Oh, not Jewish. I'm not talking Jewish. I'm talking about generally speaking.

L: Generally speaking.

I: Peery Hotel. The Perrys don't own any property here anymore.

L: How doyou spell that?

I: P-e-e-r-y. He was mayor of Ogden. I'm not talking about Jewish people.

L: Right, general.

I: I'm talking about generally. Walker Brothers drygoods. Walker Brothers bank is gone. McCormack Bank is gone. Very, very few people still in business say, fifty years ago. They've either merged or closed up. Or the family decided they made plenty of money and they'd move away.

L: Sold out?

I: Like Sam Newhouse went broke. That hotel set empty for six years. The Newhouse. They couldn't even put the windows in. And the original Newhouse Hotel, outside of the drawings, which looked like the Plaza in New York.

L: Really?

I: But he'd sent his sister-in-law the money in Paris so when he went broke he moved to Paris and lived in luxury with his sister. She took care of him and he died there. Old Sam Newhouse.

L: Did your parents know him?

I: Oh, I guess my dad had met him. Newhouse, his home was where the parking lot is for the Alta Club.

L: Which club?

I: The Alta Club parking lot. That was Sam Newhouse's home. Then it became the Catholic, what do you call that? I can't think of the Catholic Club. I don't remember. But at any rate, that's all there was to it.

L: But let me ask you. Your parents, your fatherdidn't come from an orthodox background or did he?

I: Yes, he did.

L: So they both did and they both...

I: My dad was fairly well orthodox. We couldn't bring bacon in the house. My brother would buy bacon and he'd buy the kosher beef bacon and put it in the same package and my dad was eating bacon and never knew it. But he wasn't that--I could go buy a hot dog at the baseball game. He wouldn't know. He wasn't that orthodox. He wasn't orthodox at all. And then, of course, we drifted away from,

you know, as far as the Biblical version of Judiasm is concerned, I eat bacon. I eat ham because I don't agree with them. In my opinion what they did in the old testament was something they needed. They didn't have FDA. Food and Drug. They didn't have refrigeration. You know. For their day, in my opinion, they were absolutely right. Today you don't have people having trichinosis from eating ham or bacon unless they leave it in the summer but people don't do that in this country. It's all refrigerated and so I think for their day healthwise I think they were right. Today I don't agree with them. Or having a certain set of dishes for the meat and the dairy and some people believe that and maybe they're right but, you know.

L: Did you have/that when you were growing up? Different dishes?

I: Oh, yes, to start with. But we drifted away from that even under my mother and father. See, we had some people, in the depression we had all these rooms on 144 West Broadway So we'd have a Russian fellow that came there and couldn't eat and my mother would feed him. First thing you know he's working for us for a dollar a day and we give him room and board. So he wanted pork chops, she'd buy pork chops for him. She'd cook them. And then we'd employ a lot of the Irish miners that in 1930, '29 and '30 when they closed the mines, you know. Depression. Some of the miners would come down and we'd hire them for a dollar a day. We had all kinds of Irish and we had Riley, McCarten. I even remember a lot of the names. In those days you had no health and welfare. You had no

time cards. You'd come to work at eight in the morning and quit at six at night and you'd give them a dollar. Whatever you take in, you know, you put your money in one pocket and you'd pay that out and what you took in you'd put in this pocket and what you had left was profit. A simple bookkeeping system. Very simple. But anyway, that was the way it was run and then when my dad died I was going to the University and I was going to be a lawyer. He died August of '32 so I quit and started to work.

L: Did that come as a shock, his death? Was that something...

I: Yeah, but you were too young at seventeen years old, you were busy playing tennis. When you'd get through work you'd go out and play tennis, you'd go out to Great Salt Lake on Sunday and swim out to Black Rock. We used to swim from Black Rock to Antelope Island.

L: From Black Rock to where?

I: Antelope Island.

L: Oh didyou?

I: Oh, it was no problem. You'd swim for fifteen minutes and you'd get tired, you'd just go to sleep. You know, just as long as you didn't get salt in your eyes and that was no problem.

L: You actually slept on the water?

I: Oh, yeah. Haven't you ever been to Great Salt Lake?

L: Yeah.

I: Just put your hands behind your head and stretch out and float. 22% salt, you can't sink.

L: I never tried to sleep on it.

I: Huh?

L: I never tried to sleep on it.

I: Close your eyes and go to sleep. Of course, you can sit down and play gin if you have rubber cards. You can't dive in it. You'd break your neck. 22% salt. The salt is pretty heavy but at any rate, that's about all there was to it. I came to work, my brother finished his year at the University and he came to work. My sister kept the books. We were all inthis little adobe house. WE owed the bank $5,000, Utah Savings and Trust. My mother went up and saw Heber J. Grant who was then president of the bank and also president of the Mormon Church and Herb Snow, Saltair Resort and he was president and I think Heber J. Grant was chairman of the board and Fred Mickelsen, they loaned my mother $5,000 unsecured.

L: Unsecured?

I: And all the banks were closing then.

L: Why? Why did they lend it to her.

I: Mickelsen had a lot of faith in my mother. Mr. Mickelsen did. And then after that then I would, I'd walk up with her and have her sign the note and after that I'd just take the note down and they loaned us whatever I wanted.

L: Is that right?

I: That bank loaned us money when nobody would loan us money. Then we needed a lot more money so we devised a way where we'd order bags, from Kaiser Warehouse at that time, which we own now finally. And I'm also in this, you know, you think about going backwards, Utah Savings and Trust is now

part of Zion's Bank.

L: Right.

I: And I'm on the executive committee of Zion's Utah Bank Corporation and also a director.

L: Of the bank?

I: Uh huh. This same bank that took care...

L: The same bank that took care of your mother?

I: Uh huh. So...

L: That's tremendous you got $5,000 in those days.

I: Oh, yeah, that was a lot of money. But they did it. We had no money. We had no security.

L: Did you own the house? Do you know?

I: We were buying it on time. Then we bought the lot next door for $3,500. WE paid $35 a month on it. Then we bought the lot to the west for $6,600 from Hogle and then we had the bank buy it forus. Mr. Mickelsen bought it for us 'cause I was afraid if Hogle knew we wanted it, we were next door, and if he figured we needed it, they'd charge more money so I went to the bank and they said, well, we'll buy it for you. So I bought that, then, of course, I bought everything around the Miles Hotel. All that property, one piece from Julian Bamberger. They were tought. Another piece from another guy and the first thing you know we owned all of that. We built on and we tore down the Adobe House. The first thing I did was put a little front, brick front on the old adobe house so I painted a sign, The Wagner Bag Company on it, then the rooms we had, you know, we converted those to a little room like this

with just a room in the house and we put three sewing machines in there. Why the place never burned I don't know. We had a little monkey stove over in the corner with tin around it so, you know, so sparks wouldn't set it on fire and we had people working there. No air conditioning. The adobe was cool.

L: Adobe was cool.

I: But anyway...

L: So you had a system going in that building I guess where the people sewed bags and repaired bags?

I: No, we repaired the ones and then we'd sort them in a big shed. I built a galvanized iron shed and I didn't know you needed a building permit so I built that. Then later on I bought the Carver Sheetmetal Company next door.

L: What Sheetmetal?

I: Carver.

L: C-a-r-v-e-r.

I: Uh huh. They're still in business. And then I bought, before that I bought--then I bought, just before Pearl Harbor, I built a building for 16,000 square feet which is still standing, which is part of the Restorative Historical. I thought that was the biggest building in the world. Really, my God. A dollar a foot. I was my own contractor. 16,000 square feet. Paid a dollar a foot, it's going to cost me.

L: What did you build it for?

I: To expand, our business. To put in cleaners, see we have vacuum cleaners now. Big vacuum cleaners with a galvanized

iron spout so you, put the feedbag inside out, suck all the dust out of it and throw it in a big collector.

L: Speed up the process.

I: Oh, yeah. You had one woman on one side and one on the other. One would put one in and pull it out. The other one put another one in and pull it out and just kept going all day long. Then we had sticks where you'd measure the size of the bag. And we'd have all these different 20 by 36 go in one pile. No. 1, No. 2. go in anothersack. The ones to be passed go into another deal and so you'd have about fifteen, ten or fifteen sizes. We used onion bags. You'd pick up after they dumped the onion bags. There was no bulk in those days. You go down to Springville where the cannery was.

L: Everybody sold bags?

I: Yeah, if they had onions, you dumped the onions and you take them back up and then you'd sell them to the onion farmer again. You didn't worry about all these labels and stuff. Today everything's label U.S. No. 1 potato. I'd better go see what that is.

SIDE 2

I: So anyway, that's a lot more to it, you know. I mean, details. But, for example, Newhouse Hotel, during the twenties, they bootlegged. So they'd have coke bottles. They'd have White Satin Scotch. They'd have bootleggers, they'd have all this stuff they'd bring in. The bellhops would

save all the empty bottles and we'd pick them up, my brother would go and pick up a load by truck.

L: So then what would you do with the bottles?

I: Then we would wash them at night. We had guys washing bottles. So they'd wash the whiskey bottles and sell them back to the bootlegger.

L: In the hotel, Newhouse, they sold the bootleg whiskey that way to its customers, you're saying.

I: The bellhops, not the hotel. We used to get a truckload out of the Hotel Utah every night. Whiskey bottles.

L: Sounds like a profitable business all the way around.

I: Well, it was, but we'd take the bottles and wash them and then we'd buy cartons from the Western Paper Products. We'd wash them and put them in the box, then we started selling the corks.

L: You selled corks too?

I: Yeah, we'd buy a five pound bag of corks, Myer F. Smear and Company in San Francisco. Then we'd each of the bottles, we'd sell them to whoever wanted them. We didn't ask them if they were bootlegger, a guy come in and want some pint whiskey bottles and if we had forty cases, we'd sell them to him.

L: But you must have begun to get to know the guys around town who bought the bottles, you must have gotten to know the people.

I: We'd know the bellhops around, sure. I mean, we'd know the guys that promote, the engineer usually, actually it was the engineer, the building engineer. We'd pay him,

we wouldn't pay the hotel. He'd pick them all, you know. Just like you might say, you're selling like the Country Club, they sell cans of coke and beer. A guy take a coke out on the course with him, then he throws it in the receptacle. Alright, then the girls, say, they go around with a plastic bag and pick them up and recycle them and sell them to the recycle. Even now.

L: Yeah, right.

I: The same thing. Of course, then, there was more to it. Milano Slide up the street, underneath the Miles Hotel which was then the Peery, he had a print shop and we'd take the White Satin, say White Satin gin or Gordon's Dry Gin bottles, you know. And he'd make new labels. The bootlegger would stick them on there and put the bathtub gin in it. It was Johnny Wiser up at the Windsor Hotel. Oh, I shouldn't say that. Because I don't want to get sued.

L: Well, we can remove that later.

I: Let me take that name out.

L: I'm saying, we'll type this up and then we can take it out. Later.

I: So, what they would do, he would take these, buy the labels, counterfeit labels actually and put Gordon's Dry Gin on them, put is bathtub gin in there, put a cork in it and put the leadfoil over it.

L: What over it?

I: Leadfoil. You know, like, you know, you know what leadfoil is, don't you?

L: No.

I: Do you ever drink?

L: Yeah.

I: Ever buy a bottle of wine?

L: Yeah.

I: When you pull off the lid.

L: You mean, yeah, I never knew what it was called.

I: That's leadfoil.

L: Leadfoil.

I: Yeah, they just crimp it. So that's the way it would look.

L: It would look brand new.

I: See, if I had these empty bottles, this is actually champagne but let's say, you make your own wine. You let it settle, why, you crimp that label win and you'd call it what's the name of the company, B&B. Or Christian Brothers. So you'd have labels printed, slap them on it, put your cheap wine in, crimp it, sell it as the regular stuff. Yeah, the bellhop would sell it as the regular stuff. Who knows? So, some of those people did pretty well. The bellhops. They were driving big cars and so forth. That was just a part, a little part of the business. You know, that's whatever we would accumulate and then...

L: I'm surprised though to find out by the way that many people from the Jewish community were still peddling in those days. About half of them.

I: Oh, yes, but you had on the other hand, they had to do something to get started, you know, after all, the Eastern Iron and Metal Company, which is EIMCO today. That's where they got the name, Rosenblatts, they started out with a

little teeny yard and then they expanded and expanded. Hafer's. You have Hafer's. Hafer's Metals.

L: Were most of the peddlars taking stuff over at that time, as you remember, to Eimco?

I: Oh, yeah. Utah Junk was part of Eimco.

L: Were most of the peddlars taking their stuff over there?

I: Yeah. They had competition. They had Eimco, Eastern Iron and Metal, Utah Junk which they acquired and you take even Isen over here, the barrel man. You take Utah Barrel. Cuppers. So they started out with barrels and then they the guys would bring a few wooden barrels, oil drums. They'd buy those and clean them and the first thing you'd know they were buying, the peddlars would bring you ten drums you'd have a hundred pounds of iron. So that's how they got in the scrap iron business. One thing leads to another.

L: Right. But you had these peddlars coming to you primarily for bags and bottles. Right?

I: Yeah. Primarily bags and they'd have bottles and then the first thing you know they had a whole load of bottles, we'd buy them.

L: Do you remember any interesting personalities.

I: They were all interesting personalities. Yanofsky used to sing, hold his ear and sing. We'd have something over at Pioneer Park or some kind of a deal he'd come and sing a song in Russian at night. I could look up his name 'cause I accumulated some of these old Polk Directories. That's where I remember the names.

L: Old phone directories?

I: Polk, Polk. You know, you have the Polk Directories. City Directories.

L: Business directories?

I: No, the city directories.

L: The phone directories?

I: No, the Salt Lake City directories. I have a couple here.

L: Show me what you mean. Show me what you mean.

I: I have an 1883.

L: What made you collect Polk?

I: Polk's the only one.

L: Is it the only business directory?

I: Not only business but everybody that lives here. You're in it. How long you lived here?

L: Nine years.

I: You're here. You're in the new one. Here's Wagner. Here's Wagner Manufacturing Company, my brother.

L: Right.

I: Wagner Bag Company.Irving Wagner, president, I.J. Wagner.

L: Irving, that's what it is.

I: Barbara.

L: You're Irving, right?

I: Yeah, I don't go by it.

SIDE 1

L: There were a couple of comments you made last time I'd like to follow up on.

I: Okay.

L: One of the things you mentioned was the fact that your sister was eventually sent away to school because she, your mother wanted to get her out of the environment.

I: Well, the environment was, you know, after all we lived in this adobe house on the west side, the railroad tracks behind us, you know. So, my aunt, my mother's sister lived in Boston so she thought it would be good place to send my sister so she went back there.

L: What was the west side like? I mean, to be sent away from?

I: Well, when we lived there we were downtown and, you know, low income, not low income, but people who worked on the railroad. See, we lived a block, two blocks from D&RG Depot and across the street we had the Italians and the Greeks and people that worked on the railroad. They worked in the roundhouse and so forth. Pretty nice. You know, when I say nice, quarter of a block away was the Miles Hotel at that time, the Peery Hotel.

L: The what hotel?

I: Peery. And now it's, of course, it's the Miles Hotel and it was a pretty nice hotel in those days. And across the street was the J.G. McDonald Candy Factory, which was the

largest candy factory west of the Mississippi, I believe. Very successful. They took out bankruptcy in 1932, I believe. '34. So that became the Dixon Paper Company. And in about 1927 the houses of prostitution started moving in that area. Around the corner and over on West Temple. Charlie Popper who was the, you've read about him, the Jewish butcher that came in 1860. He lived on West Temple in a pretentious home right next to the Valley Bank on 3rd South and West Temple. And across the street was a very nice home and one of the gentleman, a real estate agent in California was born there. We talked about it. I bought some property from him. And he had a yellow home there and that turned into a house of prostitution, right north of the Miles Hotel. Then across the street they moved in. Then the Bristol-Helm Hotel moved in. And then down the street two houses another girl moved in so all around us they started, they became houses of prostitution.

L: So about four or five of them came in all at once.

I: Oh, yeah. They were all in that neighborhood.

L: And they all came in in the late twenties?

I: Yeah. '27, '29, '30, '32, '34, '36.

L: That's interesting.

I: Yeah, they all moved right in that area. I would say down there on West Temple where the Tong is, you know, across from, well, how do I explain that to you. Across the street from the New Yorker on West Temple, the Chinese Tong. That was Margaret Hall's house. Prostitution.

You go around the corner and...

L: She was the madam, Margaret Hall?

I: Uh huh. They were all madams. And around the corner was another one. I can't think of her name. Then the Bristol Hotel was Kitty Eisner. She was Jewish.

L: Kitty Eisner, huh?

I: Uh huh. She just died. In a rest home.

L: E-i-s-n-e-r?

I: Uh huh. Her husband was Sam Spiegel, they called him. His name was Ichhock Eisner. They called him Sam Spiegel because he used to always look in the mirror at himself. Sam was famous in town for being the sucker that bought counterfeiting machine from Count Dick Gillespie who was Fannie Brice's husband cohort. They used to ply the Carnage Line from New York to Paris and London. Play poker and con these guys out of their money. Let's see, Funny Girl. I'm trying to think of the fellow's name. He died just recently in L.A. He went to prison. Fannie Brice's husband. That's where My Man became famous. While he was in prison Fannie Brice sang that song. I'll think of his name. I want to say Weinstock but that's not it. But anyway, I'll think of it.

L: So Fannie Brice was a madam too?

I: No, no, no. She was a famous Broadway Ziegfield star. In New york. But this guy that I'm talking about sold Sam Spiegel a counterfeiting machine. He was a con man along with Fannie Brice's husband in New York.

L: I get you now.

I: And he came through Salt Lake with a counterfeiting machine.

L: I get you. And he sold it to this guy?

I: Uh huh. For $7,000. Of course, my mother, we lived across the street and somebody said she had money which she didn't have so they tried to sell it to her. Count Victor Lustig. He died in -- I have the book. The man who sold the Eiffel Tower and I think I just loaned it, sent it over to Jack Galavin at the Tribune. Maybe Betty has it. It was Fannie Brice. She was the star of Ziegfield Follies and then she made a couple of movies, then she went on the radio as Baby Snooks.

L: You're saying she was one of the most famous Jewish stars.

I: Uh huh.

L: Of that time.

I: And her husband...

L: How do you spell his name?

I: I'm trying to find it. The last name is Lustig.

L: Count Lustig.

I: Uh huh. Victor Lustig. That was his name but he was just a con man. He sold the Eiffel Tower twice. He was in Salt Lake and sold this counterfeiting machine so he tried to sell it to my mother and she said, why should I buy it? And he said, well, you can make all this money. See, what they do is have twenty dollar bills brand new in there. And you put the money in the compartment and then just wind it out from the bills and take it up to the bank and there's nothing in there but just pushes out the good bill. They'd say, well, that's perfect so he'd sell this, he said, now,

I'll leave you a supply of paper and ink, green ink and then you get in touch with me in Chicago whenever you need more paper and I'll make my money that way. So Sam bought it. He borrowed $4,000 from Ben Harmon, over at the Mint Cafe. Ben since has committed suicide but my mother said if you have two of them why do you need me. You can make it twice as fast. You don't need me. So he sold it to Sam.

L: So the con was that when he rolled the machine he had real bills coming out of it.

I: Yes.

L: But as soon as he tried to do one it wouldn't print it.

I: Uh huh. That's right. This name is right on my tongue. It's driving me absolutely crazy. Nickie Arnstein. Nickie Arnstein. I just mentioned this to this fellow who came in and tried to sell this counterfeit machine and sold it. That was Sam Spiegel. He was looking for Victor Lustig till the day he died and Lustig died in Alcatraz. For counterfeiting. This is a very interesting book. It's out of print.

L: It is out of print, huh?

I: But anyway...

L: We were talking about the west side. You were talking about the...

I: Yeah, the west side, see, the reason, everybody did everything for a certain reason. And mainly transportation. So most of the Jewish people who lived here, lived in Custer Court or they lived around the synagogue. They couldn't ride to work on Shabuoth or Sabbath so they had to walk. So they

all lived close to the church. Not only that they couldn't ride. Most of them only had a horse or wagon or a horse and buggy and a good part of them didn't even have that. So they had to take the old streetcar or walk. And you couldn't ride to church anyway so you had to walk.

L: You don't mean church?

I: Synagogue. Well, it's a church. A form of a church. Synagogues, shul, whatever you want to call it. So they lived in Custer Court and they lived on, Kaplans lived a quarter of a block away from the old Shari-Sedeck and Kaplan was a butcher. Reuben Kaplan was a butcher. I'm going back into 1915, 1935 and on up.

L: From 19 when?

I: Probably '15 till 1940 or whatever.

L: He was around.

I: Yeah, he died. He was a butcher. A kosher butcher and they didn't really have a kosher butcher and when they didn't have a Rabbi well, Reuben Kaplan would run the services.

L: This was Shari-Sedeck and during that time your family was involved in that?

I: Yeah, my dad belonged to the Congregation and over to the other one and back to the other one. You know, they had three churches I told you that before.

L: What was Shari-Sedeck like? How do you remember it?

I: It's still overthere.

L: I know but how do you remember it as a kid?

I: I played the violin once down the basement. They'd have a

dinner back there to raise a few bucks and just about the way it is now upstairs. It's just wooden benches. It's the American Legion Hall now. But they broke away the poor people. They called them nicknames. They had the conservatives which they called the German Jews. Oh, it was started by Bamberger. And a group. That was the old Royal Palace now. The Royal Palace Restaurant. B'nai Israel. That was the rich Jews. Then the middle class, Congregation Montefiore, that was the orthodox and the Shari-Sedeck they called Communists. Those are the ones that broke away from

L: They called them the what?

I: Communists.

L: The Commies. Uh huh.

I: They were mostly Russian Jews. And that was the classes they had. First class, second class, third class.

L: How did the name fit them, Commies?

I: That just a derogatory remark. That was the name the Congregation Montefiore, the way I heard it, they'd call them all those Communist Jews over there. You know. So they all got along but they didn't get along, you know. Like Fiddler on the Roof. Some men call it a horse and some historic--nobody would go fistfighting, you woulnd't have any of that. Nobody would turn anybody down for a meal no matter what. Then they had the hand in hand association.

L: That's interesting, yes.

I: That was when anybody would come through there with no money, they'd loan him money. $5.00 to get a horse and a

wagon and they could start peddling. Called the hand in hand association.

L: How do you remember that?

I: Because I know the people used to send them over to get money.

L: What do you remember?

I: Oh, my dad, people come there. My mother always give them something to eat but they'd send them overto the shul, whoever run that and they'd go there and loan them a couple of bucks, a guy was coming through and he was stranded. They'd help him get out of town and serve him some meals. None of the Jewish people ever went hungry here. Because they took care of their own. The best I can remember because we got a lot of people to our house. A lot of people. They used to come through from the Zionist, you know, Hasedem. With the long beards and so forth so my mother used to give them money. You know, in those days it was tough. You'd give them a buck, two bucks. She'd always feed them and they always said she had the money for Jerusaleman, Jerusalem would tell these stories about Zionists and so forth so mother would give one of them one dollar and another one three dollars and four dollars. I said, Mother, how do you figure out which one to give? The long beard I give four dollars, the one with the middle beards I give three dollars, and the one with the short beard I give them on dollar. That's the way she paid them, according to size of their beard.

L: That's a good way to do it. That's a funny way to do it.

I: Oh, I guess, you know, he was more important if he took the time to grow a long beard and I doubt if those guys ever gave a dime to Zionist. Might give you these little receipts. They'd come in from New York and I'm sure that was just a racket, travel around the country, get some people to put them up to sleep. Maybe they did send a few bucks back to Israel.

L: Was the west side harder in those days?
Was it a tough place?

I: Oh, yeah. Well, it was really tough from Pioneer Park. We used to have our fistfights down there. We learned to fight, we learned to swim and box. I used go swimming down there. I used to be on the swimming team. I fought once at McKella's arena, I mean, not McKella'a, arena, Hippodrome when I was seven years old.

L: You boxed?

I: Uh huh.

L: At the age of seven?

I: Yeah, they never laid a glove on me. So we wrestled down there. WE'd play softball, soccer, you know, you name it.

L: What made it so tough?

I: We had a tough element down there. A lot of the kids went to prison. You know, after all, the depression, those kids didn't have anything to eat. It was tough. After all, you take some of those kids from foreign families, their dad would get laid off, they'd steal. If you saw a little stand down there we had at Pioneer Park, you know, the little hot dog stand, that was completely surrounded by with wire, a

fencing material. If you wanted to order something you had before the kids would steal, someone would say, hey, give me a coke, you know. When you went over to give them a nickel coke, the other kid would reach over and grab a bar and run. So she'd be over there and they finally put this stuff around there. They learned to steal.

L: How did you make out on the west side?

I: Good. Mother told...

L: Fight a lot?

I: ...Oh, yeah, we did a lot of fighting, a lot of fighting but nobody ever used chains. It was always with your fists.

L: You just fought with your hands.

I: We had free silent movies down there. And then we'd have the band.

L: Did people call you names because you were Jewish?

I: Oh, sure, we always had that. My mother used to tell me, they called me Christ killer and she said, tell them he wasn't even buried. They didn't even know him. So you'd have that. And we had that and then we had, now, one thing we didn't have though, the racial discrimination about the blacks. We'd go to school and grade school and you'd play ball with them and some of the kids would call them snowball but I remember on Sundays, we'd have them in the neighborhood so we'd go to the nickel theater up here. The Victory Theater and we'd go in and the black kids would have to go upstairs which we called nigger heaven. We had no reason to know why they went upstairs but nobody asked, nobody'd say anything and then we'd meet

after and go out and wrestle or play ball.

L: The same group that would come in, one bunch would go up in the balcony.

I: We had the same thing here. I mean, Marian Anderson came here to sing. She couldn't stay at the Hotel Utah. We had all the discrimination in the world. I don't recall anybody, any Jewish person ever working in a bank here. Or black, or Mexican. Talking about the old, I'm talking about the time I remember or hear about from 1918 up until the thirties.

L: How would you handle it when a kid called you Christ killer. What would you do?

I: Bust him in the nose.

L: Did it work?

I: Oh, sure, it worked. As I told you, we were tough kids. Once in awhile, I never got whipped. Not once. Fast. Because we were athletic too, you know. Everybody was little then. You didn't have the, even if they were six foot tall wouldn't make any difference to you.

L: You didn't have these six foot, eight giants then?

I: No, we had a couple of six footer but, you know, if you hit them in the right place, you didn't have to reach very hard. But we didn't have that many fights. We'd get along pretty good, generally speaking. The Italians and the Greeks and the Jews. We all got along well.

L: Did you have a chance to have contact with the prostitutes or did the Jewish men have anything, or did the madam get to know you guys?

I: Oh, sure, I knew her well. In fact I used to run errands for them all. The first watch I ever got was given to me by a madam, Jewel Miller. You'd run errans for her. They wouldn't want to leave their, they wouldn't want to leave the window. They called them window tappers. You'd put a thimble and tap at guys in the window. They'd sit right out on the street, like the Bristol Hotel was situated right on the street, so they'd sit in this window and it would steadily close and pull the curtain over and tap and some guy would walk in and he'd turn around. We used to watch them walk in all the time.

L: They'd tap the window with a thimble?

I: Yeah, on their hand, make a little noise. So we did that. We watched a lot of people go in there that shouldn't have. Good religious people.

L: No kidding.

I: There's no difference today. Nothing's changed in the world that way. See, I'd run up, I'd get through school at three thirty and then they'd call. They'd call the drugstore up on the corner there which is now the Zephyr. Do you know where the Zephyr private club is? That was the Rex Drug so Mr. Anstee, Ernie, his son is still living would make these...

L: How do you spell his name?

I: A-n-s-t-e-e. Rex Drug Company. So Ernie's dad, they'd call in and Ernie's dad would make them tuna fish sandwich and then I'd go up with a pint bottle, they'd have a pint bottle, milk bottle washed and they'd put coffee and two

teaspoons of sugar in it and I want so much cream in it and I want some potato chips and so he'd give me all these bags and I'd take them over to Margaret hall which was two doors from where we lived, two doors north right next to Chicago Sheet and Metal Company. I bought all that property later on and she'd give me 50¢.

L: Tip?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: That's a great tip.

I: Well, because if she lost a trick in window she'd lose $2. So she couldn't afford to leave. Sometimes I guess by the time, by the time she called, got her sandwich, brought it back, she probably made $4.

L: Did the madams work too?

I: No. Oh, they did earlier, yeah. And some of them were both, you know. They'd run out of merchandise why they'd probably, you know, substitute for one of the girls. But you had quite a few in that district. And then, of course, later on, you had Sadie, I can't think of her last name. She had the Blackstone. There were about, that I remember, there were two, I can't remember their names. Sadie, Kitty, and two others, there were three or four madams that I knew of in this town. Jewish.

L: Wow.

I: Yeah, Kitty at the Bristol. Sadie, I'll find hername. Sadie and those other two. I guess there was only four of them.

L: What were they like, the madams?

I: Nice people. They wore a fur coat. Very generous. They'd always give money, they'd give money to the shul for sacramental wine and moxes. Some of them would be fairly orthodox at Passover time.

L: Would the people at the shul take the money?

I: Oh, sure. In fact, some of the guys were their best customers. I used to watch a lot of them, some of the younger fellows march down and used to sell them furniture and take it out in furniture. So you had, a lot of the Jewish people or men patronized them. And some Mormons. And Greeks. We'd laugh about the Mormons. I think the Mormons were great to the Jewish people. After all, were can you have a man elected governor like Simon Bangerter in 1917. We're at war with Germany and he's got a German accent. Born in Germany, he's Jewish and he becomes governor. And in 1932 we elected Lewis Marcus, who had a chain of theaters. As mayor so you had your share of prominent people. Clarence Bangerter I believe was elected to the legislative. Sure he was.

L: Simon, who's that?

I: Clarence Bangerter. Simon was governor. That was Clarence's uncle.

L: Was it Clarence who was elected or was it one of Simon's boys?

I: No, Simon's nephew.

L: Simon's nephew.

I: C.B. That's who we're talking about. He's 97 now.

L: That was Betsy's father? Betsy Bangerter?

I: Yeah, Kirk's sister.

L: Yeah. What made the Mormons so friendly toward the Jews, though?

I: Well, they believe that they're the chosen people. In fact, LeGrande Richards, I gave him some money to plant trees in Israel. We planted a lot of trees. They've got a whole forest there. In Israel. Of course, on the other hand, it depends on how you interpret it but as far as I'm concerned you read the Book of Mormon it's practically the same as the Talmud. Everything they have in there is taken from the Jewish.

L: You mean the Bible?

I: The Book of Mormon. Yeah, the Torah. Yeah, not the Talmud, the Torah. Pretty close. You read them both and you'll find out how close they are.

L: Really?

I: In fact recopied, probably.

L: I heard some people say portions of it all. Portions of it were sort of copied.

I: So, you know. So that's a matter of opinion but I've always found...

L: Let me ask you, this is an interesting thing. You mentioned your father once belonged to Shari-Sedeck. You also mentioned your parents grew less religious over time.

I: Well, religious. My dad was always, he'd go to shul all the time and they always, but as we grew older we didn't have to keep a kosher house. Of course, my dad died when I was seventeen.

L: What caused the change to happen, do you know?

I: I guess you got Americanized. I mean, my dad started getting in business. He'd go to a restaurant to eat, you know, so he wouldn't sit there and weat his hat in a restaurant so he didn't even wear his hat in the house.

L: He took it off?

I: I don't even remember, ever since I can remember he never wore a hat in the house. And he was quite well educated for being, you know, coming out of Russia. He spoke, he could read or write Hebrew very well and Yiddish and he was very good at figures.

L: Who were you closest to? Which one of your parents?

I: Oh, mother, by far.

L: Your mother?

I: I spent more time with her, you know. Took her, my dad died when I was seventeen, well, when you're a kid, you'd go to Lagoon and you go to Saltair and you go on a few picnics like 4th of July or 24th of July we'd get inthe Lincoln car and go down to Springville or down by Provo to watch the fireworks and so forth. A bunch of the Jewish people would all get together, we'd used to go to Beck's Hot Springs. Every Sunday, practically the place was taken over by Jewish people. Beck's Hot Springs was north of the warm springs which is now the children's museum and that's where I learned to swim was at warm springs when I was two years old. Everybody in the family learned to swim. My mother was a good swimmer and my dad was a good swimmer so we learned very young to swim. And on Sundays they'd all

go out there and sit around the hot pools and they'd talk. You know, and they'd talk about Russia and they'd talk about their grandkids and their uncles and their aunts in Europe and the whole, you know, everybody had a story to tell 'cause they had no TV, they had no radio so they would just tell stories and then they'd go to Liberty park and they'd have the women from the church would go their on picnics. They'd bring their own food. Saltair was always a place to go to. The old Saltair, we used to swim there. I think I have pictures of my dad out at Saltair and my mother.

L: You've got pictures of that?

I: Yeah, a postcard, 1915, '14, '16, all inthere. We used to go out there. I remember when my dad bought the truck we would take two by fours across the body of the old open truck and they'd take probably eight or nine people. They'd sit on the back of the truck, on the two by fours. Do you know what I mean?

L: Yeah. Put them right across the back?

I: Uh huh. We'd all sit on that thing and go to Beck's Hot Springs. So that's where we'd go.

L: How would you describe the personalities of your parents?

I: My mother was very, very strong minded. I mean, she had guts. I remember when the madam moved, Jewel, she told her she was going to move and she was going to move uptown. So she said, I've got to buy new furniture and mother said, what's wrong with that furniture? She said, well, it won't fit. How much do you want for it? So she'dgo buy it.

Then she'd move it into the house and sometimes we'd have two or three dressers and she put a sign outside in front, furniture for sale. So she'd sell it and make a hundred dollars. Fifty dollars, twenty dollars, whatever. In those days, money was, you know, very valuable. You'd go and get a big stick of licorice for a penney.

L: Right.

I: Get grapes, six pounds for a quarter. Seedless grapes.

L: Your mother wasn't afraid to deal.

I: No, she was always...

L: It came natural to her.

I: Yeah, she'd buy anything. My dad was a super salesman. But he was weak as far as gambling was concerned. He couldn't hold onto a dollar. He'd get in a poker game. He'd go down to the Elks Lodge, Eagles Lodge which is now the Aetna Life Insurance. We only lived a block from there. And he'd go down there and lose his money in poker. He never had any money. As soon as he'd get money it was gone. He'd buy a Lincoln car. He'd buy a Rio car, seven passenger Lincoln, he'd buy good clothes. He was always well dressed. As far as the house was concerned he wouldn't spend a dime. My mother would, they'd kind of split. My mother moved in with my, my mother moved out and moved in with my aunt. See, my aunt had the old Devereux home as a rooming house.

L: She owned that?

I: She leased it.

L: She leased it.

I: You know this Devereux home, first it was the Devereux home, then it was a Keeley Institute for alcoholics.

L: How do you spell Keeley?

I: K-e-e-l-e-y. Probably in the historical register. And then she leased this. Two doors to the south my dad had the H. Wagner Bag Company when they split and my mother kept the Wagner Bag Company in the old adobe house on 3rd South so in a sense they were competitors. He had the H. Wagner Company and...

L: She just had the WagnerCompany.

I: Uh huh. And then they moved back in.

L: And then they reconciled?

I: Yeah. He went into partners with somebody and the bookkeeper stole a lot of money, Vogler Seed Company and the bookeeper, I think the name was Smith, I shouldn't say the name. But anyway, he absonded with some money and my dad went, not bankrupt but folded up that one and moved back in.

L: So your father's gambling caused a lot of problems when you were growing up?

I: Yeah. I'd take him to bookies all the time. The day he died, I took him down to the bookies to bet, he was on a cane. He had cancer of the stomach. The day before he died I took him down. I learned to drive a car.

L: He made a bet the day before he died?

I: Uh huh. Either poker and he was a sucker all the time. I mean, they took advantage of him. I think had my dad been prudent like any other businessman, we would probably

have been one of the richest families in this town. Rather than that, when he died, we were $5,000 in the hole.

L: Because of his gambling debts or the money that was taken from him?

I: Oh, it was just what he owed suppliers and people.

L: Oh, I see.

I: Owed the bank. The bank loaned us money after he died. After, in fact, the irony of it is the fact that Utah Savings and Trust Company, the chairman of the board was Heber J. Grant who was president of the Mormon Church. Herb Snow who owned the, his family owned the Portland Cement Company and Saltair and Fred Mickelsen was a cashier. They loaned my mother $5,000 in August of 1932 when all the banks were closing. Unsecured. That's how much faith they had in her. So that's what kept us alive. We really didn't have anything. My dad would never go and buy furniture. He didn't have any money. As soon as a check would come in he was up to the bookies. If he didn't go to the bookie, the bookie would come down and see him. So I would say the last, in August of '32 he probably, if I could find those books, he probably made $30,000 which is worth $300,000 now, minimum. Maybe $400,000. But all the money he made...

L: Why did he gamble? Did he ever talk about it?

I: He had a disease. No. Loved his gambling. Just like anybody else that gambles. Like alcohol. It's a disease. How many people go broke in Vegas.

L: So you must have had a lot of schnorrers coming too?

I: Oh, we had them. Like I told you, we had everyone of them would come to our place. And she'd feed them all. Not even Jewish. She'd feed all the bums that come through. A lot of them have morris bottles of sortsides, you know. But they all, because we weren't too far from the railroad tracks so they'd, you know, what we'd call the hobo jungles and they'd be hungry and they'd knock on the door, lady, could you give me a piece of bread, you know. So she'd go without. I don't know, we got all kinds of stumble bums.

L: Let me ask you, we talked a little bit about the peddlars.

I: Yeah.

L: Could you remember now a couple of them? Tell me some names and some personalities?

I: My brother was here. He's in Russia right now.

L: Okay. We can ask him later.

I: Yeah. But Dave Alder would know them all.

L: Well, just the ones you remember.

I: I mean, I've told you those before.

L: No, no. But let me get them one more time.

I: The fellows coming in peddling to us would be Sam Bernstein's father-in-law. You know, Jackie Bernstein?

L: Okay. I know of him.

I: I can't think of his first name. I can look it up. Z-l-a-o-t-n-i-c-k. Then we had Max Guss and...

L: Herschel Guss.

I: Yeah, Herschell Guss. Was Max Guss' dad. He used to come and peddle. Then we had a guy come in from New York, we just called him Pascha. I don't know his last name. Just Pascha. Then we had another guy who wasn't a peddlar but he was in hides and wool. His name was Aaron Sheffer. Because I know my mother loaned him about $50 and he never did pay her. He was honest but he died. There was Aaron Sheffer. He'd come in with a few bags once in awhile but generally he had hides and pelts.

L: What's the kind of stuff those guys would bring you besides bags?

I: They would bring you bottles. They would bring you bags. They would bring you little junk, a couple of batteries. Or a little copper. No iron. We never handled any iron. Lead, things that they'd pick up, they didn't, it was too late to go down to Joe Rosenblatt's dad, Nathan Rosenblatt.

L: You mean you'd buy it off of them?

I: We'd buy it off of them then we'd get enough for, you know, a thousand pounds or so, we'd take it down.

L: Would you weigh the stuff?

I: Oh, sure.

L: Buy it by weight?

I: Uh huh. A battery weighed so much anyway. All about the same size. Yeah, we had a little scales. Platform scales. A little Fairbanks scales. So we'd take the stuff down there.

L: How did you speak with these guys? In what language would you speak in?

I: Well, they'd speak broken English or if they talk Yiddish to us, we could understand them. My mother spoke German, Latin, Russian, English, Hebrew. She was pretty well educated for a girl who never went to school.

L: Did she speak that?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: So how did she speak with these guys?

I: She spoke Yiddish.

L: She spoke Yiddish too.

I: She spoke them all. She could speak German with the best of them. Russian with the best of them. She could read and write well. I've still got letters I think, I've got a lot of Russian letters that...

L: That she wrote?

I: Yeah, some she wrote. But the ones she, that her sisters and brothers wrote from Russia back in 1916, 17, 18. I've got a whole carton of them.

L: You've got a whole stack of them? Could we take a look at them?

I: Yeah.

L: Maybe we could get them translated.

I: I think, I had my cousin from Russia...

L: Are they translated already?

I: No, no, but she'd send a couple of bucks to them when money was scarce, you know.

L: Who wrote these?

I: The letters came from Russia, Kraslava.

L: To your mother?

I: Her brothers.

L: From her brothers and sisters and they're writing it in Russian?

I: Uh huh. I think there's a stamp or two on them.

L: That's really surprising that they were in Russian.

I: Yeah.

L: Because that meant they were educated.

I: Oh, yeah, all my family, on mother's side were very well education and my dad's side.

L: Surprising.

I: Yeah, 'cause he wrote, they had a tough time spelling because my mother could never, didn't understand why pneumonia was pn. It should be peneumonia.

L: That's right.

I: Pneumonia.

L: It should be aneumonia without the p. Pneumonia.

I: Yeah. She was a very beautiful writer too. She'd write beautiful Russian and Yiddish.

L: So how did these peddlar guys dress? How do you remember them being dressed?

I: They dressed just their old pants and a hat. Everybody had a hat on. Some of them wore an old pair of overalls. Most of them just had pants and shirt, just the way you're dressed.

L: About the way I'm dressed.

I: Yeah. Hawk Sam Bagelman was a peddlar. Sam Bagelman was interesting. He married a woman whose former husband was named Tanship. They came to Salt Lake City in the thir-

ties because I peddled with him.

L: Oh, yeah?

I: So he came here. Sam, I guess, I don't know why he got out here. But he probably wasn't broke but the Tanchucks. came out here and he was married to the girl.

L: How do you spell Tanchuck?

I: T-a-n-c-h-u-c-k. Mannie Tanchuck. Their family has moved away since so he was married to Mrs. Tanchuck. I guess her husband died. Sam Bagelman to me was a very brilliant peddler. He knew all about wool. He knew about brass. And he opened up a junkyard here. Sam Bagelman.

L: Do you remember going out with him?

I: Oh, hell, yes. I remember. That's one of the vivid parts of my life.

L: Could you tell me about that?

I: Sam Bagelman came here from New York and started bringing some stuff. Sam Bagelman's, Mrs. Tanchuck's daughter, Sam Bagelman's stepdaughter married, just a minute, a silent movie star of Tarzan of the Apes.

L: Weismiller?

I: No, this was the silent movies. I got the books on it. In fact he came here and worked in the junkyard. Edgar Rice Burroughs, the author kept him during the depression I understand. His name was,...Tanchuck's, Sam Bagelman's stepdaughter, he moved to California and she married the silent movie star who was the original Tarzan of the Apes. Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan. His name was Elmo Lincoln and he was the star. One of the great stars of Hollywood

stars in 1915, 14, 13. Those Charlie Chaplin days. Silent. So I went to Hollywood and met him one time. Well, he was still getting some funds from Edgar Rice Burroughs. He didn't do well during the depression, came to Salt Lake and worked in the junkyard for Sam Bagelman for some time. Then he went back to Hollywood and I guess he just, you know. Like old movie stars is like a retired purchasing agent, you know, who pays any attention to you.

L: How would you and Sam peddle?

I: Well, I only went with him once. It was February, the dead of winter and it was colder than a landlord's heart. I remember that. Ooh, it was cold. So I had a '29 Chev truck. We'd paid $125 for it. This was about 1933 but I think it was '32. '33. It'd be February of '33. So he told my mother that you could buy all these damaged pots and pans he'd found them at the Salt Lake Hardware. So we were to buy those. We had the truck and he put up half the money which wasn't anything but we went out to LaPoint, out by Roosevelt, Utah. Duchesne. Out that way. You couldn't give hides away or wool in those days so we went to these little LaPoint, for example, and we'd knock on the doors of these farmers, some of them had dirt floors and even a couple of hogs or pigs were in the same room with the people. I remember that vividly. It was cold so we traded pots and pans for hides and wool. And we had that whole truck loaded and I remember we had the old windshield wiper by hand and Sam would hold the gear-

shift in low because it would pop out so we had to do that. We didn't have a heater. We had alcohol in the car. I remember going over some summit, oh, boy, was that...

L: That was in the summer?

I: No, right here, on the way to Park City.

L: Oh, I see.

I: And anyway, we made it. Come back and I think we made about $120 apiece.

L: That's great.

I: For three days' work.

L: That was tremendous.

I: We stayed in the hotel at Roosevelt. I think it was 75¢ for a room. That was in '33.

L: You must have seen some of the Indians down there.

I: Oh, yeah. Indians you saw, you know, you see today. We saw Indians everywhere.

L: You saw the reservation?

I: You had the reservation out there.

L: Right. Dealing.

I: Whiterocks. We went to Whiterocks. Indian Reservation.

L: Did you get any hides there?

I: Oh, yeah. So we did pretty well on that. Then he opened up his junkyard here and started doing very, very well. I don't know what happened to Sam.

L: You were saying he was brilliant, huh?

I: Uh huh. Sam Bagelman. I thought he had a great personality too. But he knew everything. And he knew how to cry. I mean, he could actually stay there and say, I'm a poor

man and my family isn't making it and the tears would just roll out of his eyes. And then he'd get back in the car and say, well, that wasn't such a bad deal. He was an actor. Then we had, well, in time, you had the Wenger, I can't think of his first name but I can look it up. Wenger, W-e-n-g-e-r. He was a shoemaker. He had a beard like you have. And then we had old man Haydn, Big Four Furniture company. Sam Haydn. Sam was the president of Shari-sedeck.

L: What was he like?

I: Sam was a rough, tough guy. But he got in a little trouble and wound up in Leavenworth. From defrauding his creditors.

L: Oh yeah?

I: He had a store over there in Miles Hotel. About half a block from us. Sam made some money and the kids did very well. They're still here, the grandkids are.

L: His kids are gone?

I: His kids, well, there was Morris Haydn who died here a few years ago. There was Bill Haydn who died in Portland. There's Harry Haydn who's done very well in Portland. Moved to Portland and Ben Haydn who just died here last year. Then there's his daughter Lena. I bought some property from up in Ogden. She lived in California if she's still living. Haydns lived in, they had a nice home on 1st South, right back of the, where the governor's plaza is on 1st South, right through the block. But Sam had the big floor furniture and the boys had the...

L: What do you call it, the big floor?

I: Big four . Because they had Harry, Louie, Bill and Morris, four boys.

L: Yeah.

I: They called it the Big Four Furniture.

L: What made Sam so tough?

I: Well, he was just built tough and he was a tough business-man. He served that little term in prison. I shouldn't put that in there because that's past. That isn't good publicity.

L: How did it happen?

I: Oh, it happened but he was innocent, according to Sam. Maybe he was, I don't know. But I guess when he filed bankruptcy some of the things he had on hand he didn't report. I guess, that's called defrauding creditors in those days. Today he would have had a good lawyer and he would have settled it for $500.

L: Right. He was the president of the shul, right?

I: Yeah, for awhile. Then you had Eisenberg that sold used clothing.

L: There used to be a guy who used to be the butt of people's jokes here. A peddler that they used to make fun of.

I: Eisenberg was one.

L: Eisenberg was one?

I: He used to spit in your face when he talked. Jabber, jabber, and when he'd say one word, S or whatever it was, everytime he used an S you'd have to sidestep he'd spit in your face. We had a bunch of real characters. I remember just about all of them. I mean, there were so many of them and then

we had the Peppers in the barrel business. And we had...

L: What made for a successful peddlar?

I: Buying cheap and selling high. You know, the idea was to buy cheap and just work. Make calls. You'd go one place, one battery. Another place you'd get five, five pounds of coffee. Go another place and you get twenty pounds of coffee. To another place and get two hundred and you keep going around, knock at every door.

L: So they just went from house to house?

I: They'd buy rags. They'd buy bags. They'd buy bottles. Fruit jars. My mother used to--we sell a lot of fruit jars.

L: What could you do with rags?

I: Sell them to American Linen.

L: And they would wash them out?

I: Wash them out...

SIDE 2

L: Some of the families. I assume, you can't count somebody else's money, you know. But you take the Utah Barrel down there, the Peppers. Sandy Pepper, his grandfather started it. Then his brother was the other Pepper across the street, Jerome Pepper's dad. And then you had Izzy Eisen that had the American Barrel. I think they're related. Ed Eisen is still here running it.

L: Right.

I: Max Eisen was his brother. He's teaching school. And

the other Eisen is selling real estate but they had...

L: You know, things in those days sound wide open, business possibilities.

I: Oh, I think there's more opportunity today than every in our time.

L: You mean now?

I: Today, oh, yes. Anybody who wants to work can make it. Anybody that wants to work. But most people today, a lot of them, don't want to sacrifice. They don't want to work. Look, today, take the average worker. I was in Vienna oh, a couple of years ago. So you go through the Schonberg Palace, the average worker today lives better than any king ever lived. Much better than any king. He eats better than any king ever ate. In every way, he's better off than a king. Number one, he gets an automobile. Right?

L: Right.

I: He gets on an airplane for a $189 and flies round trip. I mean, the rates have gone up to Hawaii. The average worker down at the plant has a camper. He has a couple of TV sets. Radios.

L: Right. But there were no radios and TVS in those days.

I: But he has Health and Welfare. He has better, I'm saying he's living better today. He has Health and Welfare. Better doctors, better medicine, better food. Lives longer.

L: That's all true.

I: So, I mean, he's sitting on top of the world compared to

the best king in the world. The Czar.

L: Yeah, you're right. If you put the average worker with all he's got together with the king of those days, he'd come out better.

I: Yeah.

L: But you can't change the times.

I: Yeah, from then to the present but I'm, alright, take the rich man and the middle class and take what you might call the working class today.

L: Well, a king from those days compared to, taking his wealth and put in the terms of today, would be like the shah was.

I: Yes, except what I'm saying is, the king with all his money,and the peasant in his day, 'course, a lot of peasants starved. But I'm saying the king and the present, all workers today is so much better than the peasant under the king.

L: Definitely.

I: Or, our middle class, our workers are even better off than the king. In every way. Every single way. But those days, yes, he had something to eat and they didn't. He had the big ceramic stove over in a corner, would get pneumonia in those big halls. Have you been to Europe?

L: Oh, yes.

I: Alright, you know what I'm talking about.

L: I was born in Europe.

I: So what did they have? What part of Europe were you born?

L: In Hungary.

I: Oh, yeah, you told me. So what did they have?

L: Well, but is it?

I: Franz Joseph? What did he have?

L: Franz Joseph had enormous wealth.

I: I know, but he couldn't use it as well as our workmen.

L: Well, but you're simplifying it just a little bit because they had greater armies. They could keep warm. They had the best tailors.

I: Sure, they had the best tailors.

L: They had great cooks. They had people cook for them.

I: Yeah, but we have great cooks today. You can go down and get great food and the food is prepared under the Board of Health.

L: No, no, no.

I: Everything you say, they might have had velvet drapes and the guys got just ordinary curtains. But I mean, certain things like that, yes, but I'm talking about the actual day to day living. The comfort. Air conditioning in the house. They didn't have air conditioning in the palace. He had a hourse.

L: No air conditioning, definitely.

I: And heat. Couldn't keep an even temperature. They had to put bricks in the bed with them. Warm bricks.

L: Oh, yes, true.

I: So all I'm saying today the workers...

L: But they had fur too. They could wrap themselves in fur.

I: Yeah, but we don't need it. Get out of an American air-conditioned car into an air conditioned house, into an

air conditioned restaurant.

L: But the thing, you know, this is a funny kind of comparison but a king's life, grandiose was the fact that he had all those servants. He had people doing thousands of things for him.

I: That's right. But you have them doing it for you now. In a sense. Anything you want, you have a servant. You have a woman come in a clean your house. They didn't have to clean their house because the queen, the castle, but today you got a vacuum cleaner and in two seconds, you got a duster and you got anything you want. I live better than a king ever lived.

L: Well, you do, you do. You live better than those kings did. You don't live better than today's kings though, necessarily.

I: Probably as good. Probably better. I probably live better than they do.

L: Yeah.

I: What king are you talking about? King of England? Have you been in the Windsor Palace? Where they have to sleep. Compared to my home?

L: No.

I: No comparison. I wouldn't change Buckingham Palace for any room in my house. It's all night but the air conditioning isn't as good. I get percipitrons. What do they have that I don't have? They've got to do things that are horrible. They've got to go and parade. They've got to live stiff collars. Helmets and they got to kiss people's

hands.I live better than any king in the world.

L: People kiss their hands.

I: They have to kiss hands too. The babies. They're politicians. A king doesn't live as good as I do. There isn't anything in the world that he can do that I can't do. Except for rule the people and he doesn't rule them anyway. Just a figurehead. I can get on a plane and go to Hawaii. I can eat food as good as he can eat. Which I probably do. I can eat it when I want it. I don't have to make appointments with parliament. I can do what I want, when I want.

L: Your point is well taken. But there's one big difference. When you think about it. The fact that kings and queens have the air about them. They are royalty. They're symbols.

I: Yeah, it's a symbol. But that's right. So you're a symbol in your own little community with some people.

L: Oh, definitely.

I: But the symbol doesn't mean anything. It isn't good for them unless maybe their ego but his isn't. They get assassinated. You know, actually, I wouldn't trade places-- I wouldn't want to be the governor, if they handed it to me tomorrow. I wouldn't take it. I wouldn't take a U.S. Senate job if they gave it to me and give me a million dollars a year.

L: Really?

I: No, what for? Anybody can be a senator. All they have to get is enough votes. Nothing would be great about being a

senator. Look at all the crooks who got in the Senate and the Congress.

L: That doesn't mean that's it's nothing great. It just means that...

I: What's great about being elected? You run against one or two other people. So you got a choice. You either like this bum or that bum.

L: Right.

I: So, that's all there is to it.

L: But, in your position...

I: What would I want to be senator for? What possible reason would you want to be senator.

L: Well, it's simple.

I: You got to live in Washington. You got to write all these people letters every complaint. You got to go ahead and sit there and listen to those boring meetings inthe Senate. Some of them are interesting and most of them are boring.

L: Yeah, but you have the opportunity to make laws that affect millions of people.

I: But you only have one vote.

L: True, but you have the opportunity to influence.

I: They only vote the way their constituents tell them to. They don't vote the way they want. They vote, the only way they vote generally speaking and I've seen it a great majority of time, is to where they're not going to lose any votes. They're not going to vote against the people that want them to vote another way.

L: They won't take the chance but the opportunity is there

to take the chances. To say things that have...

I: Most of them react to their constituents. Why be a player when you can be a coach.

L: Well, right. Most of them are worried about being reelected.

I: That's all they worry about.

L: And maintaining their...

I: Generally speaking, that's what they all worry about. Look at your senators. You've got some brilliant people but generally speaking, the Congres, what kind of people do you have?

L: So what we would need is people that don't worry about being reelected only.

I: They should be elected for six years, elected for six years and then no way they could be reelected unless it's ten years later or twelve years later. That way they can do what they have to do. They'renot worrying about, they do what they think is right. /Not what is politically expedient.

L: That way you can't make a career out of it.

I: Yeah, I wouldn't take the presidency of the United States. Life is too short to waste ten years. What for? There are so many other things that are more fun, in my opinion. Do you think it's fun meeting with them, day after day and fly you here and fly you there. Maybe. I wouldn't want it. I'd rather go out to the golf course and play eighteen holes of golf, play gin with the guys, go to Hawaii. Lay out on the beach. Go to lunch like I did

today with a couple of people. Nobody questioned me for anything. No pressure.

L: It's great. You're right.

I: They don't have a good life. They're in a glass house. Take a Congressman. He goes ahead and sleeps with some girl or whatever and it's all over the country. I mean, businessmen in this town and other towns have mistresses and nobody ever hears about it because nobody cares.

L: I know.

I: Who's going to write about, you've got three mistresses. Who cares? Who's going to write about you? If you're the mayor you're news. That's all. To the public. In my case I don't care. To me, it's just a waste of time. I don 't even know how many times Elizabeth Taylor's been married. I don't even read about it. To me, I have no interest. It doesn't affect my life. What good is it?

L: I agree.

I: You know. You're taking the wrong thing now.

L: Let me get back to a couple of things with you. During the depression, you were $5,000 in debt, you were saying. How did you begin to rebuild the business. I assume people didn't want bags during the depression.

I: Oh, there were always people eating. No matter what kind of a depression you have, people have to eat. So, it's like our recession. Where you used to sell 1,000 bags, you sell 500. You sell 250. Somebody is selling something. Of course, when I had my brother, Abe, and my mother and myself and my sister, of course, had moved

away. Before that she did keep the books. We could all type. So I could take shorthand and type. Abe coule type well. So, I would drive the truck and make a delivery and Abe would stay down there and buy and my mother would buy from the peddlars and then Abe would drive the truck to Ogden and I'd go out and sell stuff. Call on the customers.

L: How large was the business in those days?

I: Very small.

L: How much money were you turning over per week? Do you remember at all?

I: In 1942 I can go back further than that. That's forty years. In 1942 I had a networth of $17,000.

L: For the year?

I: Networth. Everything. That was all we were worth. Which we thought was pretty good. $17,000.

L: But how much of a turnover did that mean per week in terms of bags?

I: I might even go look it up. But I would say we'd do, of course you're talking about bags. Today they're 40¢, 3¢ apiece.

L: In those days?

I: So you'd buy them, pay 2½¢ and sell them for 3¢. So if you sold a 1,000 bags you made $5.00. So you take 5,000 bags to Gold Mills or Pillsbury, you'd make $25.00 gross. You're paying your guy to bag for $1.00 a day, to sort bags. You paid no withholding. You paid no social security. You paid no insurance. You paid no holidays.

You paid no dental, no medical.

L: You just paid local day flat?

I: Get all the help you wanted for $1.00 a day.

L: You paid the person, per day, each day?

I: If they needed it. $7.00 a week. They worked Saturday. Some of them we gave, the Russian we had, we gave him room and board. We had an Irishman. The Russian he had been in a mine accident. We hired him. Give him room and board and $1.00 a day and then we hired Jim McCarten, who was a miner at Park City. He used to wash bottles. We gave him a $1.00 a day and room and board. My mother would even cook for them. So we had this adobe house with all those rooms. So we built on a galvanized iron shed. Then we put in a bag cleaner instead of the broomsticks. And then we bought a sewing machine from Ben Redman. Ben Redman who was, I bought that sewing machine from for $25.00. Ben was the president of Redman Van and Storage. Five foot tall. He was the first passenger on Western Airlines in 1927 to L.A. Ben had a lot of money. He did well. I mean, it wasn't too long after, in the late thirties I remember, Ben had a card, office hours eleven to twelve, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He'd go open up his mail uptown. Let's see, we were talking about.

L: We were talking about the turnovers of the bags.

I: Turnover. Yeah, well, let me see. We'd take an order, we'd buy a carload of bags, 50,000 bags that cost about $2,000. So if you made 1½¢ apiece you made $250. I'd say if we did that, if we turned two cars a month, we

were doing pretty good. $7,500. But don't forget, my brother, my sister and my mother, we all ate off the same table.

L: Right.

I: We all lived in the same house. We had one automobile. About $25, $27.

L: You worked for $25.

I: Then I later, in 1932 I bought a 1930 Plymouth for $400. I'll give you a better one than that. In 1939 I bought a convertible Chevrolet. For $800. New. Then I bought a new truck for $800. A Ford, ton and a half in 1933. In fact I kept that truck so long, when I merged with Sandries Paper Company, in 1958, they bought it from me. That car was twenty-six years old. We still run it. Put a new motor in it 'cause it's like a horse. I don't care what it looks like. We weren't worried about new cars. Then of course we got a '39 Stukdebaker, things picked up. Then we got a '41 and we bought, after the war I bought a '45 convertible Oldsmobile. Then we bought a Buick for my mother and Abe. Then we bought a Cadillac later on for my mother. Moved out, bought a home out in Sugar House for mother. And her aunt. Her sister who lived with us. And then I got married. My sister got married.

L: Let me ask you before you talk about getting married or anything. You were, I assume, an eighteen year old kid. How would you describe yourself in those years? What kind of a kid were you?

I: Cocky. Very cocky. Very handsome. A lot of girl friends. At eighteen, of course, you had to go to work. But, then I opened different businesses. I had interest in a night-club. I had a restaurant when I was nineteen. I never told you that. In L.A. I had a half interest in a beer tavern.

L: Where was that?

I: New Grand Hotel.

L: Which hotel?

I: New Grand. 4th South and Main.

L: Okay.

I: Across from the post office. Then the Manhattan Club was my nightclub, which was called the Chi Chi Club.

L: Chi Chi?

I: Chi Chi.

L: How did that go?

I: Good. Well, I opened it up and sold out for, opened that in December of '41, Christmas Eve and sold it in January after my New Year's Eve, got all my money back and sold it for $1,000 'cause I enlisted in the Marine Corps. And I didn't want to keep it and come back and maybe find out a bootlegger or bartender was bootlegging something and some-body had a judgment against me. You were responsible for your help. So I got out of that in a hurry.

L: Why did you enlist?

I: Pardon?

L: Why did you enlist?

I: 'Cause I was mad at the Germans. And the Japanese. I got

in the Marine Corps instead of the Army. I showed you those pictures.

L: Why the Marines?

I: Oh, I liked the uniform. The blue uniform. I had this beer tavern there. I had Beer Barrel too. That was the New Grand Hotel, across from the post office and all the Marine and Navy recruiters used to come in and have beer. So I'd sit and have a glass of beer with them. They'd tell me all these moving stories about China and the Philippines. The best duty in the world was China. You got $21 a month and for $5 a month you could get a house and a maid and she'd get the food out of that. They always talked about their duty in China which was every Marine thought that was the greatest place in the world. So that's how you make the Marines.

L: So what happened to you when you joined? Where did you go?

I: I went down to San Diego through bootcamp. And then we were shipped out to Guadalcanal which was the first offensive action against the Japanese. And from Guadalcanal we were to go to Tarawa and I got malaria fever, put me in the hospital in New Zealand and then I got ready to go out again and I get another attack. And finally they shipped me home for limited duty.

L: What's an attack like? With malaria fever?

I: Malaria fever?

L: Yeah.

I: You'd get chills. You just get so cold no matter how much

then you break into a fever of 104, 105, 106. And then you're wringing wet, then you get a little delirious. You don't know where you are. Sometimes. It depends on the severity of the attack. I had about forty-five attacks.

L: Forty-five?

I: And then they sent me home for limited duty at Clearfield. And I had the guard at Clearfield. I was a Sergeant then. Then I went, I had another attack and they sent me down to Oakland and they discharged me in '45. So I was in there for three years.

L: Were you involved in the Guadalcanal?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: What do you remember about that? About fighting there?

I: Horrible. But that was a horrible deal. But you get used to it. You can get used to anything if you have to. It's just something you get used to. Here's pictures of Guadalcanal. In those days you really had personalities and characters. Whatever you want to call them. They were fun to be around even if they were a peddlar. You could sit there and they'd tell you stories, you know. And some of them would get loaded and you'd have to get them out of jail. They did a little bit of everything. But nobody was really, what we'd call criminal. I don't know of any Jewish people that I can remember that went to jail. In those days.

L: It sounds like people knew each other too.

I: Oh, yeah. Somebody want to borrow two bucks, you loan

them two bucks. You'd always get it back, generally speaking. And we had Block and Guss Packing Company. That's another. Guss Packing Company down there now. Jordan Meat. So they were in business. You had, amazing thing about me, you take Sy Remo. Sy Remo, once was from Salt Lake. His dad had a clothing store on East 1st South. Ben Remo at 28 East 1st South. Sy Remo went on to be the world's leading missile expert. And Sy Remo made milliones of dollars. You've heard of the Bunco Remo Company? That's Sy Remo from Salt Lake. Then you had people from Salt Lake that became--let me get this. Most people were interesting people coming here from everywhere. They came from Russia into Boston, into New York, into Detroit, into California and they all converged here. A lot of them stayed and became very successful merchants, you know. And like Sy Remo and Ben Remo, a little men's clothing store. To the world's famous missile expert. Then you had very prominent attorneys here. Wally Sandack.

L: Bernstein?

I: Sam Bernstine, Harry Goldberg moved and became a successful jeweler in California and then wound up in L.A.

L: What's his last name?

I: Harry Godberg. There were two brothers. Hary and Bill. They moved to California. Bill is still living in Beverly Hills, I believe. Then Big Four Furniture, the Haydns.

L: Look, would it be okay. I'd still like to talk to you a little bit more. A couple of things I'd like to talk about. In the future.

I: My mother ran the house and we lived in the house and my dad had a business. Farmers would come and wake us up at four in the morning to buy bags. On their way to the market. The Grower's Market was there originally on 2nd West which is now 300 West, Pierpont Street, where they're talking about making that art gallery. You know, where the New Orleans Cafe is?

L: Oh, yeah.

I: Or that little street just south of it. That used to be Grower's Market. Then they moved over to, between 4th and 5th South on West Temple, went through the whole block which is now the Hilton Hotel. Okay?

L: Okay.

I: That was Grower's Market. All these people come down, these farmers would come down with their produce at four o'clock in the morning. Come down in a horse and wagon and in their little T- model cars and they'd stop in and wake us up 'cause they need 200 bags, 400 bags and we'd wake up and give them to them or they'd come after the market was over, one o'clock, two o'clock on theway home. So that's one way you learn. You learn to count bags.

L: You learned to do the business with the farmers?

I: Yeah. It was a cash business. Some of them give you a check, you know. I don't recall anybody ever giving us a bad one. Just general, they paid cash. So, that's the

way you started and then when dad died naturally, I used to do his letters and Abe used to do some and my sister used to do some.

L: You used to do your dad's letters?

I: I took shorthand and typing in high school.

L: Oh, no kidding?

I: In fact that's what I did in the Marine Corps. I was a general's secretary. At Camp Elliott. Then I went overseas and became, I did the typing for operations. In Guadalcanal. I showed you those pictures.

L: Yes.

I: Of Guadalcanal, didn't I?

L: Yes.

I: That's where I started that. But the rest you learn, you know. You went to school, you were good in arithmetic. You could figure in your head 6,000 x 4½¢ each would be $270. That's easy to figure. It's easy for me. It's hard for someone else. A quarter of a cent, eighth of a cent. You knew an eighth was .125 and if you want to know 1/16 is .0625. You learn all these little--those are the simple things. We didn't have computers and you didn't have these adding machines which I hardly use now unless I get lazy. I'd rather do it with a pencil. It's a lot faster. So that's the way we learned.

L: Learned to compute in your head so you could do the business?

I: Yeah.

L: Calculations.

I: Yeah, in other words, if somebody wanted 10,000 bags or 5,000 bags. Ten is easier to figure 'cause somebody wanted 4,000 bags and they were 6½¢ each. That's $270. Pardon me, $260. So that's $260 and if you made a half cent a piece on 4,000 you made $20.

L: A half cent?

I: On 4,000 items, yeah. That's $20.

L: Isn't that $200?

I: $200 would be 5¢ each. 4,000 five cent pieces is $200. 4,000 half cent pieces is $20.

L: Okay.

I: So you'd figure that talking on the phone, okay, I'll take them, you know. You sit there and figure just a minute, you do it automatically. Abe's good on figures too. My sister is good on figures. Anyway, when my dad died, of course, we quit school and you got a little truck, $125 truck 'cause we didn't have a truck. He was bankrupt. He owed the bank $5,000. We didn't take out bankruptcy. We paid off everybody so we'd come down and buy 5,000 bags and pay you and you'd buy the stuff from the peddlars and you'd ship stuff in from California and started building up a business.

L: Yes. When did you get involved in a nightclub too?

I: Oh, that was all later. That was after seventeen, eighteen, you'd see Clark Gable in San Francisco where he owned a nightclub and he was dressed in a tuxedo and had the glamor, you know. You were kids, not kids, but I'd say teenagers so you get involved in a lot of things. You'd

try everything. Try a restaurant. Try a nightclub. You get involved in...

L: A lot of people go to them. People don't serve you open.

I: No, but you get acquainted with people. You go to them. Then they say, see this fellow's driving a big car, there must be money in it. You have no idea and maybe he doesn't pay for the car or maybe he won it in a horserace or poker game. So you just try that. And you try restaurants. You try a lot of things. You try buying a little real estate. And you make a little money and then you go buy another piece. You get involved. In other words, it is just a matter of curiosity, I guess. You're curious about a lot of things. We handle paint. You know. Yeah, we had a little store. I think I got a picture of that somewhere too. We had Wagner Bag Company and we had Fuller Paints. W.P. Fuller Company. Painters would come and buy a couple of the drop clothes and wouldbuy the paint. Well, that didn't go well so we got out of the paint business because painters drank and didn't pay. Generally, I can't cast, you know, aspersions on the character of all painters. But the ones we knew, I guess, they inhaled so much of that paint they had to drink the bourbon to wash it down. But most of them that we got would always get loaded and then we found out they didn't pay very well. So we got out of that business. It's just the same old incubation. You build one little building and then you get one machine and then two machines. I did find some slides where I had about twenty machines in the old place.

L: What kind of machines?

I: Sewing machines.

L: Sewing machines? You did find them?

I: Uh huh.

L: Did you bring them with you?

I: I might have some--Betty might have one of the--this would be later on, maybe like '52 or something. Betty, do you remember those pictures we had of at the old bag plant? What the heck did I do with those? Yeah, that's the one. Yeah, alright. Would you bring them into me. Did you find them?

L: Do you ever look back on yourself and wonder what drove you? To try these things? What made you curious?

I: Well, I think what happened, see, we lived across the street from what we considered one of the richest men in town, J.G. McDonald Candy Company. J.G. McDonald had the Dixon Paper Company which is no longer Dixon. 150 West 3rd South. You know the new Boston Jazz Ranches, the little restaurant that opened up in the old Boston Hotel that burned not too long ago?

L: Jazz Ranch?

I: Uh huh. It's about 130--this little Italian woman's opened it up. It's about--my aunt had it as a hotel. The Boston Hotel. Across from the restaurant store. It's still there. They opened a little restaurant there. The upstairs is still empty. Well, right to it was a big building and that was the J.G. McDonald Candy Factory. We used to buy the empty coco bean bags so they'd

take coco bean bags and make cocoa out of it and they made chocolate so we'd buy all those empty bags and buy the empty burlap sugar bags and the liners that went with them and they had the most gorgeous roof garden in the world up there, and they won prizes all over the world for the best candy in the world. They were much bigger than Sweet.

L: Really? You were going to describe the building ant what it contained.

I: Well, see when we moved there originally, when my mother moved off of 5th East, they moved into this house about 1913. Right after Abe was born. And there was an adobe house there and a fellow by the name of Harris lived there. And Harris was a fellow my dad knew from Boston. And my dad followed him to Portland, then he came to Salt Lake.

L: Why did your dad follow him, anyway?

I: Because they were friends from back in Boston. You know, he went from Boston to Portland and Harris was there and I never did, maybe Abe might know, whatever happened to Harris. He was a Jewish man. And then I was born in that adobe house there. Now, this adobe house there, we didn't have any water in the house. So we had one of these castiron spigots out in front. We used to wrap it in burlap so it wouldn't freeze. And then our toilet facilities were in the back, one of those pull chains. We had to wrap that in burlap all winter so it wouldn't freeze. We had no heat so we lived there and we used to

pack the water in and the little kids would bathe in these little galvanized iron tubs. They'd heat the water on the stove and pour it in the tub.

L: You had a cold stove?

I: A cold stove and a monkey stove in the summer to heat the hot water trench. And then we built onto those adobe, we used the old rooms were there and we used them for, to store bags in then we put in inside plumbing. And then we built a little office out in front. I've got a picture of that somewhere. It was a modern office. Part of it is still here. The back of it. Then we bought, then later on, of course, this was the first cigar factory. Part of the building, the east side of the building which was part of the cigar store. Then it became Jack's Paint Shop., then it became Carver Sheet and Metal and then I bought it from Carver, then we put this other floor on top.

L: So the cigar factory really basically...

I: If you look at the brick, you can see how old they are.

L: Yes, they just went up to the where the present windows begin.

I: Yeah, and then we built on the back.

L: Yeah.

I: That was a cigar factory. We faced it with brick. Then we built all of this, all these offices on top.

L: What did you do to the old walls? Did you raise them? Did you tear them down?

I: Yeah, except the front wall. The front wall is still

adobe back of this...

L: You mean, back of the brick?

I: Uh huh. And then we built all this for our plate department. To cut plates. This top floor we rented to the American Gilsenite Company and then we had trackage back there and these were our docks. We didn't have enough money to go dock high so we had a ramp so we used to pull the stuff up to the truck with a rope.

L: Right.

I: We finally got a lift truck when we started making it. Then lateron we bought the property next to us from Julian Bamberger, Bamberger Railroad Company. Then we bought the property behind us from, I can't remember his name. We bought that and then we outgrew this. So we bought the property down in Wagner Park and leased this out to Napa Automobile Parts.

L: When was that that you moved from there to the Wagner Industrial Park?

I: 1960. Then we leased this and then we sold it to the Restaurant Store Equipment. Because they lost their property on condemnation of the Salt Palace. So they're still there. The Kletches. The fact that is interesting about that sign. Wager Bag sign--I made it out of stainless steel 'cause I thought it was beautiful so we moved it down to St. Regis. You know, we moved it down to Wagner Park. Wager Bag Company sign. Then we put St. Regis Paper Company, Wagner Bag Company was a subsidiary of St. Regis Paper Company. Then we had St. REgis Paper Company, Wagner

Bag Company. Then they took off a part of this sign and called it Wagner Plant, St. Regis Paper Company. Then they took the sign off. Then when we decided, when Abe left, I bought this, well, he gave it to me really. The Wagner Bag Company but St. Regis had the name Wagner Bag. So then I had, I took the CO and I added RP and called it Wagner Corporation. So then we moved that sign down on West 2nd South. Hank Milano's got some pictures that you ought to see, really. Real old pictures.

L: At the plant there?

I: Uh huh. And we called it Wagner Corporation.

L: Who's Hank Milano?

I: He's the kid you saw on the ball team. He's my vice-president and general manager of Wagner Corporation. He runs it.

L: I didn't know.

I: Yeah, he's the manager. Abe's president and Hank runs it. Then we moved this sign down on West 2nd South, 703 West 2nd South which is part of Eimco now. So we moved that sign, Wagner Corporation down there. Then we moved the sign to the Expo Mart which is across the Salt Palace. When I bought that property. We moved Wagner Corporation there. Then we sold that and moved down to Wagner Park and then moved the sign over there. So that same sign's been moved since 19--thirty-one years, that same Wagner's sign's been moved around. A lucky sign. I should have made it out of a horseshoe.

L: Maybe you did.

I: So we built onto it until we sold it and that's where we started manufacturing our new bags.

L: At that same place?

I: Uh huh. Then we ran this as a parking lot, around the Miles Hotel. That was an interesting deal. Most of them, we've had very prominent attorneys and we'd had people like Sy Remo, JosephRosenblatt and his family. A call on me has nothing that really, you might say I've done. I really haven't done anything spectacular. Just made a good living. Thanks to my mother. You know. It started here and if it wasn't for her we wouldn't have anything. She kept the place going when my dad died. And he spent all his money. He lost it as fast as he could make it. And faster. Because he liked to gamble.

L: So you're saying if it wasn't for your mother you wouldn't.

I: No. I'd probably, I probably would have worked my way through law school 'cause Abe and I didn't mind working. We worked every summer. You know, when we got old enough. Worked after school. In fact I remember Abe would go to California when he was sixteen or seventeen. Work all summer in California at a fruit market and then he'd come back and give mother the money. That's what we all did. Everything we made we'd give her the money and then say, listen I got a date, can I have a dollar. Of course, a dollar was more than you'd need. You could go to a show for a dime. So you'd take a girl to a show for a dime and get on the bus for maybe a nickel or a dime and you could buy a coke for a nickel. Buy a hamburger for a dime.

So, you didn't need a lot of money. But, of course, on the other hand, it was a lot of money because a bank teller would make $60 a month. And he was raising a family on that. I remember the house we bought in Sugar House. I bought it in, when we moved out of 3rd South. See, we lived there, we were still doing business, the bags were in the back and we galvanized iron sheds and the trucks were in the back and we were open twenty-four hours a day, you might say. A farmer wanted to ring the bell at two o'clock in the morning and need some bags we'd get up and give them to him. So we were awake, you know, different hours if someone was in town and he wanted some bags and he had to go to Logan, why, we'd go out and help him load. But actually I bought a home in, I think it was 1939, 1940, homeowner's loan out in Sugarhouse. It's now part of Walker Bank.

L: Your home?

I: Yeah. The old home out there on 10th East. It was a nice brick home. We bought it for $4,400 on a homeowner's loan. We give them $440 down and $44 a month. Then we finally sold that for around $30,000 and moved mother up in Federal Heights. Then she rented the downstairs and she had this downstairs kitchen and all so we rented that. But if it weren't for her I don't know. Maybe I would have been more successful but I doubt it very much. I'd probably have had a good education and then I would have made it.

L: When you came back from the war, in what shape was the

Wager Bag Company?

I: It was in pretty good shape. 1942, I still have it. We had a networth of $17,000. That's all of us together, Abe and my mother and all of us. So we had a networth of $17,000.

L: Which is fairly good for those days?

I: Yeah. All it was was a warehouse where we didn't have any help.

L: You didn't hire anybody at that time?

I: Abe had one guy at the warehouse and had one girl in the office and himself. And then if he had some bags cleaned he'd take them down to the Utah Poultry. They had some cleaners of their own and they'd do them for them. I guess I'll have to ask Abe how he did that but that's the way I think it was handled.

L: What did you do after the war years?

I: After the war years? Well, I got married. I got married in San Diego.

L: Right after you came back?

I: No, before. Got married one night and shipped overseas the next morning.

L: You got married just before you left?

I: Uh huh. In San Diego. I'd been going with her for how many years? I'd already sold the nightclub. My half interest before I went overseas. See, I enlisted in the Marine Corps. So I went to bootcamp. Out of bootcamp and over to CAmp Elliott and then from CAmp Elliott we shipped into Samoa and New Zealand and Guadalcanal. And

all the other stops, New Caledonia, Vesuva, Fijiis and so forth. And at Guadalcanal I contracted malaria fever. I had about forty-five attacks. So the next push was on to Tarawa. That's where most of my company got killed.

L: Did you go with them?

I: No, because I just boarded ship and they shipped me back to a hospital with malaria fever so they left without me. If it wasn't for the little mosquito, I don't slap them anymore, I just pet them.

L: What percentage casulty did your company take?

I: Oh, at Guadalcanal. It was tremendous, terrible. We lost a lot of people. Of my company?

L: Yes, your company.

I: Oh, Simpson is gone. I would say we must have had over twenty percent anyway. About one fifth of them are gone. Not only wounded. We lost track. The lieutenant colonel I worked for was in operations and he got hit in Tarawa and in Tarawa he got the Congressional Medal of Honor. For bravery. I would give him credit for capturing the enemy. Not singlehandedly but they were pinned down and nobody would get up and a couple of guys started to charge and they'd get hit and nobody would go so Shupe says, come on, let's go and he got up there and he got knocked, got hit and bleeding, fell down, got up and said, come on, you sons of bitches, let's go. And they followed him. And that was the end of the Japanese. They were really entrnched. You know, you've seen all the flame throwers but we didn't have any tanks. We didn't have any planes

to speak of. And the jungle is pretty rough on airplanes. You can't see anything unless the little mountains. The Japanese were good soldiers, tough.

L: Did you actually get on the island? After awhile. Yourself, or did you stay behind in the hospital?

I: I was at Guadalcanal. That's where I got the, yeah, I showed you some pictures of Guadalcanal, didn't I? Of Guadalcanal?

L: I saw those pictures but how much of that did you actually see?

I: I was there. I saw it all. Yeah, I went on patrols. And saw all the dead bodies and stepped in them and shot at them. Yeah. I was on the island. I mean, everybody in the Marine Corps is in combat. I don't care who you are. You're a combat soldier. That's those pictures. Those are things you went through. If you want to read the book, I can give it to you.

L: What was it like for a kid coming from Salt Lake, going through that?

I: What do you mean?

L: What happened to you?

I: Well, you were in good shape. You were mad at the Germans so you enlist in the Marine Corps. You don't know anything. After all, you don't know, you like the Marine uniform. They were blue and you looked pretty. You had a white cap, which you they never gave you. If you wanted the blue uniforms, unless you, that was just for the

recruiters. They're the only ones who got a blue uniform. So when you got in you got your green one and if you wanted the other, if you wanted the cap, the hat, you had to go and buy it. All you got was a little, you got the little folded hat.

L: You never got the blue uniform.

I: Yeah, I bought one when I got out of boot camp, after I got out of the hospital in--I finally got one when I got out of the hospital in San Diego. I got out of the hosp-ital, went back in the hospital, out of the hospital, finally wound up in Clearfield on limited duty.

L: How did you take Guadalcanal, though? Emotionally, how did you take it?

I: Well, number one, they toughen you up. In the first place, you're young, you're twenty-six years old and you're tough and you're cocky. I mean, you're used to prize fights so you, it wasn't any problem. Used to play baseball, used to play football, played soccer. You wrestled, used to swim, you know. High dive. You weren't afraid of any-thing. I remember in 1937 when I got my, still have it, my little camera, Eastman 16 millimeter camera. I went out to the airport and paid a guy to take me over the city and I got out on the wings on the strut, wrapped my feet with no rope or anything, took pictures around the city.

L: No kidding?

I: Yeah. I mean, you have no fear. How old are you?

L: Thirty-four.

I: Yeah, that's when you started getting fear. After you get

older, you want to live longer. When you're young you don't care about anything. As kids, we'd hope the freight trains here. We'd hop the freight train by Pioneer Park and jump off past the Morton Salt Company after. We used to have a little place called Bird's Island. It's all covered with water and we'd go out there and swim and catch the next train that slowed down at Morton's. See how they'd load salt. We'd go over there and catch the next train into Salt Lake. And you'd jump off of them while they were moving.

L: You said one of your friends got hurt that way?

I: Yeah, lost his leg.

L: But you're saying that during the time you were in Guadalcanal you weren't frightened by what happened there?

I: Oh, yeah, you're frightened. The first thing, you hear a fellow shoot. They used to tell me if you can hear them, they don't hurt you. If you hear an explosion they're not going to hurt you 'cause you're dead.

L: Right.

I: Simultaneously. The minute it hurts you so if you hear them, don't worry about them. It's the ones you don't hear you worry about. So if you hear somebody fire, if a rifle's fired, let's say, two hundred feet, by the time you hear that, it's hit you. If you don't hear it, you're dead. So you learn certain things. Why, certainly you are afraid. Everybody's afraid for their life. But you learn to cope with it. You'd get in a foxhole and

they'd drop all around you. You got to talk to somebody and he's not there. You know, that's the, it's a war. You know you're in a war. You've been trained for it. They teach you right in boot camp, you know. We had a guy from Brooklyn. He says, youse guys don't know nothing, no how. This is the recruiting sergeant from Brooklyn. He says, I'm going to teach youse guys how to kill and if you don't learn, you're going to get killed yourself. I ain't going to give you no guarantee no how that you ain't never going to get killed. And that's the way they talked. And they really gave you tough treatment. But it was good for you. You learned to depend on the other guy. You went to the firing range, you learned how to fall on your face and shoot. You learned all those things.

L: You learned some teamwork in the process?

I: Yeah, it was all teamwork. You had to, that's why they teach you how to march and they say, left flank, march. The reason they say all that to you, when you get an order, fall, you know, hit the deck, you don't turn around and say, huh? What? You hit the deck. Automatically you follow an order. And that's the way the Marine Corps operates. When I say, jump, you jump. You don't ask questions. You jump. I think probably the, you're with a bunch of guys too and nobody wants to appear chicken so everybody's brave. And you're not brave. You see all these people jawing away and how brave they are. Hell, you're not brave. You get, you climb down the side of a

ship. Okay, hell, it must be as tall as the Hotel Utah is. Maybe not quite that tall. Okay? So you climb down a rope ladder and you get your pack. Everything you own on that bag and you got your rifle. You got your, you got your grenades. You're loaded down with belts of amunition. You get in a Higgins boat. The ones we had you to jumpe over the side. They didn't open up on a platform. So it's just like any other, like you see in the movies. Except where does the bravery come in? You climb down and what's the dangerous part is looking down and if you'd fall, you know, you're a dead duck or you'd break your back. So you get in a Higgins boat, you crouch down and the away you go. So you hit the beach. Well, before you hit the beach actually. You jump off the side. I'm a little guy, 5' 6", so that I have to hold up the rifle. That's one thing you learn. So you get on the beach and you build a foxhole so that people are shelling, you don't know whether they're coming from our people or where they're coming? But generally, you hear the ships throw the shells. Anyway, it's like you see in the movies so you get there, now you're brave. Let me tell you how brave you are. You have two choies, go forward and take a chance getting shot or whatever or go backward because the Higgins boat take off for the next load or go back in the ocean and drown. So what do you do. You're brave, you go forward. That's how simple bravery is. Sure, you read these stories about a guy that sees a hand grenade and falls on it and he saves twenty guy's lives. I don't believe that. I think a guy's got

excited and didn't think if he smothers it, you know, that it'll explode. We're all inexperienced when you're out there in the first battle. You know, you read instruction books and people talk to you but I've seen people pick a grenade up and throw it away. He could have had his hand blown off. That's bravery or didn't think but if he got it away, I don't think you see all that bravery as much as people say. I think Shupe was brave. He knew we had to take that damn thing. He said, let's go. I wasn't there. But the Japanese, hell, they were brave.

L: Did it change you, being in it, being in the Marines?

I: I think it was good for me, yeah. I wasn't as cocky and I realized that I wasn't God's gift to the world, you know. I mean, you know, you got in with other people. You learned teamwork. I was, I always kind of liked to go alone. Not necessarily go alone but I didn't mix with a lot of friends. I don't have a lot of friends now. As such. My wife and I, we sit home a whole weekend and we won't get two calls. Unless someone wants to play golf. So we don't have people we got, well, we don't have people we go out every week with. Every two weeks with certain people. We have different friends and some people we'll go out with once in six months. We get a lot of invitations and some of them we have to pay back. No, we don't go that much socially anymore. You know, we got to the Country Club. Sometimes a party of eight, sometimes by ourselves. Yeah, I think it was good for me. You asked

me that question. I think it was very good. I learned how to take orders. I learned how to work with people. 'Cause you had to work with people. The other way I was the boss. I did what I wanted to do. Open a restaurant, I run it. Open a bar, I run it. You got so you listened to a lot of people, I guess. But it was good for me. In fact, I'm glad I went through it. I think it was better for me. If I had it all over again, I'd go through it again. But I'd have, you know, experiences and history of all my past mistakes so you wouldn't repeat some of the things you did. I wouldn't be talking in line when I shouldn't have been and have to do two hundred pushups. There were so many things you wouldn't have done. You're still a teenager, in a way. 'Cause you always lived home. You always had your mother with you. I didn't like being separated from her or my wife. After all, three years in the Marine Corps. I went with her three years before I married her. I don't know if I told you this but I think the most interesting remark that my mother ever made and really tickles me was the Guss family. Mrs. Guss was quite religious. That was the Block and Guss Packing Company. And I'd pick him up and drive them to Shule, you know, the synagogue. They'd have their old parties and cheese and whatever they had and I'd pick Mrs. Guss up and my mother. My mother was telling me when I called her in San Diego and told her I was getting married, she went to Shule, synagogue and Mrs. Guss says, Mrs. Wagner,

how could you let a nice Jewish boy like Izzy marry a Shikse, a Gentile. My mother said, Mrs. Guss, when I was married, I didn't ask my children's advice, why should they ask mine. I think that's really great. Yet I married a Mormon girl. We've been married now over forty-one years, this month.

L: Your mother had a much more liberal point of view.

I: Oh, yeah. She would rather I had married a Jewish girl. You know, but I didn't. And she and Jenae were good friends. They go to dinner all the time and go to the house together and my mother liked her and Jenae liked my mother. We took trips together. You know. To California together. We get along great.

L: What happened with the incident with the shoes?

I: Well, didn't you read it there?

L: You said it was a longer story.

I: Well, I get in the war surplus business right after the war too. That's another business so I had my veteran's priority, certificate where you could buy some of the--the veterans got a priority over the civilian.

L: What was the war surplus business?

I: Well, after the war, I got out in February of '45. I went in January of '42. So after the war they had all these surplus materials all over the country. In fact, all over the world for that matter. Some of the bags you just saw in that flooddown there?

L: Yeah.

I: Well, forty years old, out of England.

L: You're talking about the bags down on State Street here?

I: Uh huh. Well, some of those green bags are forty years old. Mildew proof sandbags from England.

L: Where had they been all this time?

I: Right over in England. A fellow by the name of Irwin Jacobs, Northwestern Bag Company, who is, you've seen the Wallstreet Journal recently. He took over Pabst Brewery Company and so forth. Irwin's dad had the Northwestern Bag Company. Secondhand bag company in Minneapolis. So we did some business with him. He found all these sandbags still in England. He and another fellow and they bought forty million of them. For practically nothing. Because they should have been rotten. They took them back to North Carolina and Minneapolis and resorted the good ones, then sold them all over the United States for floods and they held. The mildew proof kept them from mildewing.

L: How long ago were they bought?

I: Forty years ago.

L: Forty years ago and distributed only today?

I: No, well, there were more than that. England had them. They were all over London. All over England. Strategic spots for sandbagging, during the war, to sandbag the front of buildings so they had forty million more than they needed. See, they don't have floods in England.

L: But that forty million was bought after the war?

I: It was bought here just a few years ago.

L: Just a few years ago. That's what I'm trying to see.

I: Yeah, they were in England for forty years and they sold them as surplus. The English government decided they didn't need them anymore. Why don't we get rid of them. We're not going to get in another war. So they sold them to Irwin Jacobs.

L: How did Salt Lake get them from Jacobs?

I: We bought them.

L: We bought them from Jacobs?

I: Yeah, we've been buying them for three years from him. We buy 50,000, 100,000 of them. We used them for parts bags. We use them for, you know, somebody needs 1,000 bags to dike something. We wouldn't buy a lot of them then when this thing started we bought some from him but he'd sold them all. He sold them all to California floods, most of his bags?

L: During the war, this is what diverted down Main Street here?

I: A lot of those were from forty year old bags from England. During World War II.

L: Did Wilson or somebody approach you or did you just go ahead and buy them.

I: Oh, we'd bought them before the floods. We'd bought them three years ago.

L: So you had them on hand, you're saying?

I: No, just some. No, we don't carry that many sandbags.

No, you might carry 50,000, 60,000 on hand because you sell them out 500, 100 at a time. And the only way you can buy them so you can make any money, just buy them in carloads so you can get the freight rate. But anyway, I got in the war surplus business. So you had, everything that they bought, you had Army shoes, you had Army clothes. You had blankets. They don't need it anymore. After all, the war's over. What do you need ten million blankets for? They're just taking up space in warehouses. Right?

L: Sure.

I: What do you need 10,000 jeeps for? New ones coming on anyway and, you know, automatic shifts and all this stuff, you don't need them. So there was just a war surplus business that a lot of people got into. We got into it and this is the long story. So, anyway, we go ahead and buy I can't remember the amount but it was, just to say, 20,000 white Navy blankets. U.S. Navy on them. War surplus and I think the price was probably $9.50 each. So we thought it was a good buy. So we bought them and so I went with a fellow, Morey Guss, who was one of the Block and Guss. He worked for me. So we went back to Denver Dry Goods. Sold them a few 'cause there weren't any blankets on the market. The mills had still been running everything for the government so the cheap price, they would buy them say, $11.25, $14.95. Whatever price. Went back to Brooklyn, Abraham Strauss, we sold them some. We sold in Boston, Kaleen's. I can't remember. So we went back and

sold these blankets and Morey and I are back in New York. He's got an aunt in Brooklyn so he wants to know if I want to go over and see her and I say, no, it's your relative, you go. I'll just go over and get some tickets to see the last night game of the season. Bobbie Feller. Pitching. So, it's at the stadium. I don't know. Yankee Stadium then from Ebbett's Field. So I had a pair, the only pair of shoes, I didn't have any shoe stamps when I get back. I had a, I was able to buy a pair of yellow shoes and I mean yellow. With pointed toes. The only shoes I could get. So I bought those. I didn't have any shoe stamps and I had my gabardine suit on. A beautiful gabardine suit so I said you go ahead. So I go over to the ticket office at the hotel and I said, can you give me some tickets to the ballgame. He said, no, he said, that's probably going to be sold out. Go downtown and you might get some. So, I said, okay, so I go down. I stayed at the Statler Hotel which was then the Statler now, then it was the Pennsylvania Hotel, across from the Pennsylvania station. So I walked uptown. I think we were about 37th Street and I walked up 47th Street and a guy said, no, there's no tickets. It's sold out. The best thing you can do is go to the stadium and he said, if you want to pay ten bucks, it's a lot of money, if you want to take, there's all kinds of scalpers and you can buy a ticket. So I said, what time is the game start and he told me and I said, well, it's only seven o'clock and

they had this little shoeshine deal and the guy's got the shoes dyed. So there was a little black boy and I walked in. Right off 42nd Street. I said, how long does it take you to dye a pair of shoes? He said, oh, it'll take me about a half hour. I said, fine. I said, how much? He said, well, I'm going to have to charge you fifty cents. You know, this is almost forty years ago. I said, fine. So I started reading a magazine. He shines them and takes them out and puts them on the windowsill to dry. Then I'm still reading there, reading that and, hey, about my shoes? Yessir, they ought to be dry by now. Go out on the windowsill, they're gone. Somebody walked by and just lifted the shoes. He put them right on the window. So here I am with no shoes, no stamps. So I tell Morey, I said, that's crazy. I said, what am I supposed to do? He said, I don't know, I only work here? I said, where's the boss? He comes at seven in the morning. I said, what am I supposed to do do? I don't know, mister. I'm sorry. I said, well, you've got some shoes. Somebody must have some shoes for a customer. Naw, I don't have any. I said, how about yours? You can't have my shoes. I don't care. Any kind of shoes. Anyway, I got the address and so forth. I just said, what can I do? The best thing to do is get a cab and go back to the hotel, you know, and see what I can do. Then I thought, well, where's a shoe store? Well, the Florsheim right on the corner down there. So I go into Florsheim. They were open.

They were open until nine o'clock. I think it was at night. Whatever night it was. Walked up barefooted. I rolled up my gabardine pants, my socks drooling and the fellow says, what can I do for you? He looks around and sees me and I told him the whole story. He said, well, I don't know. I said, look, I'm a veteran and so forth. The war is over. I've got to have some shoes. So he did sell me a pair of socks and a pair of shoes. Then I get in the cab and this is really a story. So I get in the cab and most of the cabs have ropes on the doors to hold them from flying apart. You know, they're all beat to hell, you know. There weren't any new cars. So I hail a cab. And he's got a brand new one. Just got it out of the garage and I said, I want to see the ballgame tonight. I said, do you know where the stadium is? He said, what are you talking about? I've been driving a cab forty years. You ask me if I know where the stadium in Brooklyn. God give me hell for asking him. I said, would you mind taking me there. And he says--I see this nice cab and he tells me yes, this is one of the first one and so forth. Anyway, I just drive and drive. The first thing he tells me it's $2.50. He stops in front of the ball park. I said, God, it wasn't very far. $2.50. I give him the $2.50. I rush up to the window, reserved section. I said, have you got any seats? He said, sure. No scalper. I said, I forgot what the tickets were. They were like $3.00. Maybe $4.00. He said, where do you want to sit? I said, how about on the first base line? No problem.

And I said, how come they're all sold out? What's wrong? So I get a ticket and I go in and I sit, they put me right down on the first base. There's a ring on the pitcher's box. A boxing ring. So I thought, well, maybe it's the last night game. Maybe the mayor or the governor or somebody's going to give a talk. You know, I'm naive as hell.

SIDE 2

What's going on? He says, this is Sugar, I can't remember his name.

L: Sugar Ray Robinson?

I: No, no. Oh, he wasn't even heard of then. Lou Novak and Violent Ray were fighting. So he tells me I'm in Ebbetts Field. So, what happened, the cab driver knew I wanted to see a baseball game and he wanted to see the prizefights. So, he says, here's a greenhorn, I'll just drop him off at Ebbett's Field and take off. He'll never see me again. You know. So, in the meantime, now I'd lost my shoes. I'd paid I don't what it was for the shoes. It must have been, God, it must have been $20 for the shoes.

L: You paid that much?

I: In those days, yeah. Floresheims. The best they make. I pay a hundred or something now so I paid $20 for the shoes, plus the socks. I get out there and one minute and thirty seconds. I almost remembered, I used to remember it of the first round, Violet Ray knocks out Novak. No,

Lou Nova, N-o-v-a. He was the contender for the championship of the world. Max Baer almost killed him once.

L: Max who?

I: Max Baer who was champion of the world at one time.

L: B-a-e-r, right?

I: Yeah. So anyway, that's the end of the fight. That's how long the thing lasted. So the fight's all over. I missed the preliminaries. So I get back and hail another cab and he takes me back to another route. He charged me $3.50 to get back. Because I didn't know New York that well. I'd been there about '37. I'd only been there twice before. Only a couple of nights because I'd go to Boston. That's how I got my shoes and that's how I saw the prizefight. And that's where I sold the blankets. But there was was more to it than that. On the blanket end.

L: It sounds like it was a tough thing.

I: But there's no use saying that because we handled a lot of violins. We handled a lot of...

L: But the basic thing I'm curious about is how you did in the surplus business. And how that influenced other business ventures.

I: Well, we did well because we, you know, you handled all kinds of things. You had friction tape in cans. You bought. And a lot of things you just sell it cheap and you go up and you'd see how much a roll of tape was, if you could buy it and then here you'd have ten rolls in a

can, vacuum packed. See, they packed the tapes so it wouldn't deteriorate. They had all kinds of things. You bought tape, you bought jacks, you bought blankets, you bought, Abe bought a carload of used film.

L: Used film?

I: Yeah.

L: And you sold most of that in Salt Lake or did you sell it ...

I: No, Benny Grelek had Salt Lake Junk Company. We'd go in partners with him on a few things or deals. So they had this used film on aluminum rolls and nobody had bid on them. So we talked to Benny about it. We'd seen him. I said, Benny--Benny said, we can take them out here by the airport. You know, nothing was out there. International Center. He said haul them out there and I can set them on fire. We didn't have any environmentalists. So we decided to buy them and set them on fire, burn the film and then pick up the aluminum reels for scrap. So I think of the whole carload, we did $24 on it. For a whole carload. And nobody else bid. That was the third bid so they gave them to us. So we decided to bring them into our yard which we had next, well, right next to this place, before this, that was our yard. We'd store stuff outside.

L: Is that the west side corner?

I: Uh huh. The west side of part of that building. We put barbed wire fence, six foot tall around it and we'd store

our stuff that we didn't know what to do with, you know. Until we could find find. We'd buy stuff. We knew it was worth something. We had to find a market. We even had fire hose, carloads of fire hose we bought. I'll tell you the story about that one day too. That was sold in Brooklyn, New York. But anyway, we would, on this particular film and so Abe decided, let's see if we'd buy scrap burlap. We've always bought scrap burlap.

L: Just pieces of burlap?

I: Yeah, all torn burlap. So we would save a carload of it, sell it down to the Oriental Rug Cushion Company in Los Angeles. A fellow by the name of Izzy Singler. What they would do, they'd take it and wash it and grind it up into fiber and make these rug pads before we had the rubber rug pads. They were all made out of burlap.

L: Right.

I: I don't know what else they put in it so we would sell it so Abe thought, well, let's see if they can make scrap burlap. Maybe scrap film so he sent a letter to Eastman Kodak and told him what we had, used film. So Eastman Kodak came back and for that $24 carload of used film, they gave us over $3,000.

L: So you hadn't burnt it yet?

I: No.

L: You were going to?

I: Yeah, we didn't have time so we go ahead and sell it to them. Do you know what that was worth?

L: No.

I: Found out later. Would you believe it was worth almost $15,000.

L: Why?

I: For the nitrate of silver. They just took the nitrate of silver out of the film. All film has, I don't know now, has nitrate of silver. They take the silver out of it. And use it again. Reprocess it.

L: What an idea.

I: I mean, these are all stories anybody could tell you. So, I say, there's nothing unusual. It's just, every buiness has their tricks. And their secrets.

L: But you've got to realize that for most people, you know, they're not in a position to be dealing like this. You know, they're not in a position.

I: No, but see, what you did. You knew, you know what lead was worth. You knew what aluminum was worth. Because you bought from the peddlars. You knew what brass was. You knew if it was iron, if there was iron in something, the magnet would pick it up. So we always had a magnet. You know, a guy would sellyou something aluminum and it was steel. Aluminum won't pick up, the magnet won't pick up anything but iron.

L: It will pick up steel?

I: Steel iron. Sure. But somebody couldn't sell you something, say it's lead or say it's, lead, copper, anything would--

L: It won't pick up...

I: You had stuff that was coated with copper and you put the magnet to it and it would, it was just like brass. You take brass, most of your brass is not solid brass. It's coated with brass. So you put the magnet to it and there's steel underneath it so if you bought it for brass you'd lose your shirt.

L: What did you do with money acquired from the war surplus?

I: Bought another sewing machine, bought another sewing machine. Bought a truck, bought a lift truck, put on another addition to the building. Bought a new bailer.

L: How long did the war surplus business go on? How long?

I: It's still going on.

L: Are the materials still there?

I: Oh, yeah, we're selling more surplus up there all the time. Hill Field, they have stuff that's obsolete. They don't use it anymore. They put it out for sale. We don't bother with it anymore. But they had so many, many thousands and thousands of items and pounds, millions of pounds of everything.

L: But here you are coming back from the war. You never got into law school. You could have gone back into law school.

I: No, I couldn't. I had to make a living. I only had my mother and my brother.

L: They were probably making out alright.

I: Well, we weren't making that kind of money then. Not in '45. No, we needed all the help we could get.

L: So you went back into the business.

I: Yeah, it was too late then. After all, you're now twenty-six years old, now you're twenty-nine years old. Who's going to law school at twenty-nine. And I didn't have that desire. I was only in business.

L: It's been done.

I: Oh, I know, but I told you about that restaurant I had when I was nineteen in L.A. So you just, just think of something and say, I'm going to try this, try that and you try everything you can. Even today, look what I'm doing. Building that new sober test, you know.

L: A what deal?

I: I showed you that deal. For test your sobriety.

L: Oh, yeah.

I: I just picked this up. I just saw this little thing. I saw this, it's just a card so now I'm going to change that over to, put this, one of our deals like this in here at the right size. And put them on the counter. This doesn't work. It's not long enough and soyou'll see them on every counter.

L: What is it going to say?

I: Well, it's going to say, sober test. Try new sober sticks. But, we changed all this to sober test. This is the thing I showed you where you blow in it. I showed you that.

L: No.

I: Didn't I really?

L: No.

I: I thought I showed you last time we were taping this.

L: You showed me briefly but I'm not, I didn't take you comple riously.

I: Well, what we changed the name and the wording and everyt se now. So this is the size of car I found I w t has different print on it. Put them on all th ers and you've got a hole to stick on the racks er way.

L: And it's o make people, to find out if they're according new police standard if they're sober or not.

I: Yeah, th ust, that's right.

L: Who's go manufacture this stuff?

I: They're them here now but we stopped them. It's just a many we're forming.

L: Through ner Corporation?

I: No, this e myself and a few other people.

L: Why are ng it though?

I: Well, I number one, most people want money from you for . You make it somewhere. Why am I doing it? Bec think it's a good item and it's fun. Because n. In other words, uh, after your one pair of you don't need another one, do you? After you get u don't need three. So you wear them because th un. Why do you have that necklace on? What goc it do for you?

L: I've got ne because I got it as a gift actually.

I: Alright hy do you wear it? What does it do for you?

L: I usually wear it with my star but the star cut off temporarily and I'm getting it back on so...

I: Yeah, but...

L: I wear it usually as a little symbol.

I: Yeah, because it's fun. You like it.

L: Yeah, it pleases me.

I: Why do you have a beard?

L: That pleases me too.

I: Well, alright, it's the way everybody does everything then. A simple answer. Because it's fun you like to do it. It doesn't do anything for you. Some things make money and some people and I did. See if the over the hill gang can still make a living.

L: So you think you're part of the over the hill gang?

I: Oh, I know I am. Sixty-nine in March. See that little item there?

L: Right.

I: Fifteen minutes after your last drink and you blow in that, if that turns blue, don't drive, 'cause you've hit the point .08. If you want to drive fine but they'll pick you up and you're going to lose your license for ninety days, automatically and you get forty-eight hours in jail automatically. And then you go to trial and you lose your license for a year.

L: So fifteen minutes after you...

I: It'll be on a card like that. It works. It's a breathalizer.

L: Right.

I: We got some other things in this company that we're putting together but...

L: So back to the bag business with you?

I: So why do you do anything? Oh, the bag business is secondary.

L: Back to the bag business in the forties. What was your aim at that time? With the bag business? What did you think you could do with it?

I: Well, we thought we'd got in the new bag business. We didn't start manufacturing new bags until 1952.

L: Okay, but what were you aiming to do with the business as a family?

I: To make money so we could live well. After all, you see other people living well. They have air conditioning. They have...

I: That's right. The air conditioning were just coming around in those days.

L: They had air conditioning. They had two car garages. They had two cars. You don't have to--Abe want to take the car one night and my mother would want to go somewhere, we'd have to put her on a streetcar so you wanted two cars. You wanted comfort. You'd like to have a couple of suits like other people had. You'd liked to take a trip to California. You liked to spend, in those days, you liked to spend three or four days at Catalina Island. Send my mother back to the world' fair a couple of times.

L: You were mentioning before the guy that made the chocolate. McDonald?

I: Uh huh. He went bankrupt.

L: He influenced you in some way though?

I: Well, you'd see him with a chauffeur. He had a Filipino chauffeur. He had, not a Rolls Royce, but a, isn't that funny how, it wasn't a Packard, it was a, I'll think of the name of it, but he had a...

L: Bentley?

I: Oh, no, it was a very expensive car. And a chauffeur to open the door. They had a home in, I believe they had a home in Chicago. They had a home up here on the East side. You know, I started dating girls, you know, when I lived in that adobe house. I started dating girls that lived on the East side and it was kind of embarrassing. We still had the coal stove so then we took that out and put the, this is before the forties. Then we had gas piped in the house. We put inside plumbing. You built a makeshift shower. We didn't have any tile so we plastered the sides and then we took a nail and marked it off and made tiles with the nail and then painted it so we had a shower which was a luxury.

L: You made a tile looking thing?

I: Yes.

L: And you painted it to look like tiles?

I: All you do and take a yardstick and go across the wall while it was wet.

L: You just made a line?

I: Made a line and then you made another one and you made squares and then painted it and so, you know, And there was your tile. But, the reason you make money, because money's only good for a couple of things. Money's good for the pleasures and conveniences that it buys for you. And the good you can do with it. Outside of that, it has no value. I had money in Guadalcanal. We got paid later on in the island in cash. What good was it? No PX. You couldn't buy a thing. We'd just start betting on land crabs, a buck to see who, well, we'd race them. Pick up these crabs and hold them and then that was yours and you bet a dollar on it, you know, to keep from being bored. You asked me what for? So I said money is only good for the pleasures and conveniences it buys for you.

L: Yes.

I: And the good you can do with it. And then some people. I guess the Kennedys use it and others use it, for power. 'Cause you know generally in the old days and even today you buy a Senator, you buy a Congressman. They say no. But why does a man take two million dollars, why did Nixon take two million dollars from the exutive back in New York. Chicago? Stone was his name? I don't know. All these big donations. Why do they give a president that kind of money to get elected. Why do people, why does it cost a million dollars for a Congressman to get elected? Why do people give him money? I'll ask you. Out of the goodness of their heart? You read the political

donations. Now, they've got it down to where you can't give them what, a thousand dollars and you have to report it.

L: Right.

I: But in those days you'd give $50,000, $100,000. I didn't. I never would. I give political contributions to people here in the past because one man I can talk to and he'll get something done. Not that it benefits me but it benefits the public. If I want billboards--I talk to--what you think, well, it's up to the airport authority. Let's get something done at the airport. The other fellow I couldn't talk to. So I gave money to Ted Wilson. I told Ted, if you get elected, will you form an airport authority of business people? So we can get that airport off the ground. Yes. I have no interest. Personally, I'm not making any money out of the airport.

L: What's wrong with influencing people with money, assuming that...

I: Well, I think it should be done on its perits. In other words, you sway people with money. I personally believe that there ought to be so much free radio time for anybody and TV and limit it to anybody that wants to run.

L: The money wouldn't be...

I: I think don't anybody has to give anybody a dime. And I don't think they ought to serve over four years. Maybe six. Can't be reelected. Then you're going to do what you think is good for the country. What doyou care who you offend. You're not going to run for reelection anyway.

L: It just seems to me that as long as there are people with enormous amounts of money in this country...

I: But we're talking about politics now. We're not talking about...

L: Yeah, I know, but I'm saying as long as....

IZZY WAGNER 8-26-83

SIDE 1

L: Were you bar mitzvah?

I: No.

L: No.? Was Abe bar mitz vah?

I: I think Abe was. I'm sure he was. But I don't remember that.

L: Why weren't you?

I: I left Shule when I was about eight years old and never went back. The only time I've ever been in Shule since is when somebody died or bar mitz vah. Or a wedding.

L: Why did you leave?

I: Well, I'm sure his name was Mr. Ougouf. He was a Hebrew teacher. So he starts this Genesis, you know, God said, let there be land and there was land and so forth. I put my hand up and said, Sir, where was God when he said it? At the beginning of the world. Put out your hands. I put out my hand and he took a little baton and hit me on the hands.

L: What did you ask him?

I: If that was the beginning of the world, where was God when it started?

L: Where was God when he started?

I: Where was God when he started the world, the beginning of the world? Where was he? You don't have a world so where was God when he started it? There was nothing here.

Could he be in Heaven? He started everything. God said, let there be land, there was land. Where was he when He said that? There was no land, there's no water so where is he? Where is God? So nobody knows. He was a flating spirit up there, I guess. So from that day on I never did go back. Even my mother, my father, nobody could make me go back. That was the end of my Hebrew education. I remember that. And a few words, you know. So, that was the end of it. Hell, you ask a guy a question, why should he hit my hand. I'm not going to get hit again. They had stern teachers in those days.

L: What's that?

I: Stern teachers. They were stern.

L: Let me move this a little closer to you. You're too far back.

I: Oh, you're asking me questions. I didn't know I was on this thing. I said the teachers were stern.

L: Yes. Did your parents want you to go back?

I: Yeah. I said I wasn't going to go back. I learned a long time ago, you're not going to hit me on the head with a hammer twice. Once is enough. That's what I call experience. So, I don't regret it. The only thing I do regret is the fact that I never learned Hebrew and I do like languages. You know, took Spanish in school. Took Latin in school. That was my Hebrew education.

L: Did you, during the time you were growing up, did you maintain any connection with the Jewish Community?

I: Oh, yeah. I mean, once in awhile I'd take mother to Shule, drop her off. Oh, yeah, we had a lot of friends were Jewish. You know, we used to play poker with them. We used to go to ballgames with them. We'd always get some action in ballgames or crap games or poker games. No, we used to hang out. We all used to hang out on the Thornton Drug corner which is now the corner of the Manhattan Club. We'd go down to the hotel or the drugstore there.

L: Which hotel?

I: The New Grand, on 4th South and Main. It's still there.

L: Okay.

I: On the corner, there's a restaurant now, it used to be Thornton Drugstore. A lot of them used to congregate there.

L: That was a good meeting place, huh?

I: Yeah. You could always go in and get a cup of coffee and there'd always be someone there. As far as dating girls?

L: Yeah.

I: Yeah, I dated a few. Not many. Jewish girls. I didn't...

L: Somebody was saying you couldn't date a Jewish girl too much because if you dated her more than twice, they'd expect you to marry her.

I: Oh, yeah. It never got to that point but they were on the other side. The few I dated were on the East side of town and we still lived in an adobe house so we weren't, you know, we weren't, I guess we weren't in the same financial place.

L: Did you feel looked down upon the Jews on the East side?

I: No. I never looked down on anybody. I've never been impressed by wealth and position. The only thing I envy right now is youth and the only thing then I envied was talent and I still envy talent. If a man is rich, that doesn't mean anything. Anybody can get rich. Money doesn'et give a damn who it belongs to. You see that all over the country. Gamblers, cocaine peddlars all over Florida. Millions of dollars and a lot of these people have a lot of money. So money, because someone has a lot of money, really doesn't mean anything. It's what they do with it. You know. As I told you before, money is only good for the pleasures and conveniences that it buys for you or the good you can do with it. In some case, some people use it for power. You know. You can't take it with you. And with the estate tax, you can't leave it here so you might as well spend it while you can. What good is it? I was paid in Guadalcanal, the last parts of Guadalcanal. We're paid with cash, out in the jungle, no PX, get the cash, what do you do? Can't even buy an apple. For $100.

L: Roll it up, send it home.

I: Yeah, we did that too. No, I think a lot of people still today, they do, they get some money, they think they're very important. They think they're important because they have money. You know, what is society, really? What is society? What is a blue blood? What's a member of the 400? You come over here / with no money, can't speak English, you make

some money, like August Belmont if you read history. All of a sudden he's a member of this exclusive club. What do you mean by exclusive? Exclusive of what? Exclusive of poor people. In most cases. That's what they were. The Knickerbocker Club in New York. You know. Trouble with a middle class income, you weren't invited to join. In the first place you couldn't afford to join. You know, he doesn't have his polo ponies and his yacht. It's the same. There are a lot of people in jail with a lot of money. People are going to jail like DeLorean. Maybe he won't go to jail. It's nice to have. There's nothing wrong with it. Like my mother always said, son, she said, I'd rather be rich and sick than poor and sick. You know, after all, if you're going to be sick, it's nice to have a penthouse up in the L.D.S. Hospital, private room with a TV than have eight people in a ward with you all groaning and won't let you sleep. At two o'clock in the morning, they get a pain and they groan and you're trying to sleep. So it's better. No question about it. I'd rather drive a Rolls Royce than I would a second hand Ford. I get more pleasure out of it than I would a second hand one. Of course, I've had both. But anyway, that's just life. It hasn't changed. Boys in the Roman Empire had the fancieat chariot and poor people walked. Right? So what's changed?

L: They had some powerful armies to back up the chariots too.

I: Well, they have here too. We have some fancy tanks. Air-

planes. They're not protecting the richer at all. They are protecting a way of life. Our way of life which is a good way of life. There isn't another country in the world that enjoys the freedom that we have. I don't care where it is. Nowhere at all. Greatest place in the world. Russia and all the countries, some of the countries are better than they've ever been. Russia, and I was there and, of course, fourteen days in Russia don't make you an expert. But the average Russian is better off today than they've ever been in their history. The average. Of course, in Russia's history, of course, that was the people that were really affluent were the few members of the court. Ninety percent of the peasants couldn't read or write and they starved to death actually, they starved to death.

L: Your mother ever go back?

I: Well, we were going to go back before she died. I think she would have wanted to go back. You know, after all, everybody's born somewhere you want to go back and say, I was born there. You take yesterday. Last night we took a ride for about an hour and a half and we went over the West side in my little convertible and I said, well, that alley down there, used to have about fifteen homes in it and they were all Greeks and Georgie Morris lived there. Papadopolis lived there. Italians, Greeks, who worked on the railroads. This is a court. Rigby Court. That was a court that had houses. We used to play down

there. Pioneer Park had two swimming pools. Used to go down and swim. Go down to the West side and under the viaduct, the police were there. There were a bunch of hobos under there. And all these lost souls. I remember pretty well all the houses on the West side. Where they were, who lived there. But Salt Lake had its--see, where we lived and don't forget we were only a block and a half from the heart of town. We were,actually lived downtown. Near the railroad track. Where the Salt Palace is.

L: What's the importance of that?

I: Didn't have a car. And, of course, a lot of people, well, in an adobe house at that time and probably in those days, you probably had a little ground there and farmed it. You take the Romney block where Burger King is there? Continental bank? That was the Romney's farm. They still own it, the Romney family.

L: You mean the land, I mean, the Burger King on 2nd South?

I: That was Romney, Joe Romney's farm. When they first came here. The pioneers. The Romney family still owns it. They lease it to Burger King.

L: What was it like when you were growing up? That area?

I: Oh, that was the one hundred percent creme de cocoa Wiegell's place. Well, I think Continental bank was built probably in 1927 and the Cliff Building was built in about 1911. That's one we just sold. We owned it. In fact, on the third floor of that 10 Broadway, I believe it is now.

L: Oh, the one on 3rd South?

I: Uh huh.

L: What is that one called?

I: Pardon?

L: The Cliff Building?

I: Yeah.

L: You sold that one?

I: Yeah, we just sold it. A year or so ago. But when I broke my arm Dr. Hugh B. Sprague was there on the 3rd floor and that's where I had my arm set. And then, what sixty years later I wind up buying the building. Crazy. Do you know how long it takes to pay him for that. Probably charges $10 for setting that. My arm in plaster of paris. But all down that block you had the Peery Hotel. Which is now the Miles and that was a nice hotel. And all the homes around us, don't forget, at one time, were very fancy. Where the Sheraton is now, well, it's not the Sheraton, it's just South of the new Sheraton, the entrance to the Valley Bank. That was Charlie Popper's beautiful home. Who was a Jewish butcher. Who owned all of Federal Heights. That was his cattle ranch. All of Federal Heights. Arlington Drive. All of that. If you look at the abstracts it will say Popperton subdivision.

L: No kidding?

I: Charlie Popper owned all of that. He was a Jewish butcher. He raised his own cattle. Owned a slaughterhouse. You read it in Pioneer Jews of Utah. You've read that book haven't you?

L: Yeah, I did read that book. I can't remember that.

I: Well, I know that because we bought mother a home up in Federal Heights.

L: Did you buy it from Charlie then?

I: From whom?

L: Did you buy a land from Charlie then too?

I: Oh, no. He was dead. He left here in 1880 something. He was one of the pioneer Jews of Utah.

L: He left in 1880?

I: One of the first, yeah. I think he wound up dying in New York. Or Europe. He made quite a bit of money here and moved away. What I'm saying is, the home, I remember a yellow frame home, two story and in its day it was elegant. When I went in the house, of course, it was more like a rooming house. Like the Devereux home was, you know. Of course, a hundred years ago it was a pretty nice looking home. Compared to log cabins. But with today's standards, you wouldn't want to live there. The Devereux home was elegant like Schonberg Palace or Prince Ushuv's Palace in Vienna.

L: The Devereux is the one...

I: Over here by the Triad.

L: Oh, that's the one. Triad's working on. What about the one where they put the Governor's uh...

I: That was Kearns.

L: Kearns. The Kearns Mansion.

I: See, now, Kearns was, I don't think we even got it out of grade school. David Keith and the Kearns, I think the

Comstock Lode, they worked there as miners, then they came here and they became foremen or superintendents. You know, through their experiences as miners and then the two of them went off and bought some stakes in mining properties in Park City and hit silver and made millions out of it.

L: Let me ask you, when you were growing up, who were the wealthy Jews in town? Who did the people look up to?

I: Well, you know, we called wealth then, you know, we called wealth--I think, well, I think the Bambergs naturally. What we would call, you know, you hear Louie Marcus owned the theaters here. He became mayor. He was in pretty good shape. I mean, his kids, they were rich. And they had a big home and one or two automobiles. And maids. I would say Rosenblatts, at that time weren't wealthy. You know, what I mean, they weren't what you call the wealthy people. And Herbert Hershman was doing pretty well till the depression wiped him out. He was in the shoe business. His family, Moses Hershman was one of the pioneer Jews in Utah. He went broke and he started over again when he was around sixty, trying to sell me insurance and he made a success of it. He started out in his sixties. Uh, Auerbach's, the Paris, Dreyfuss. We considered them wealthy. It's hard to count somebody else's money. But their reputation said they were wealthy. I guess that's the way to put it. And you had, of course, anybody that lived on the East side, we'd call wealthy.

In those days. And you had, then we called them wealthy. They had Finley, you know. They had Hudson Bay store. No, Plomo had the Hudson Store. Finley had it too, I guess. Jack Finley. I think Jack supposedly commited suicide. And Arthur Frank was supposedly had money. I'm talking about in the twenties. Sure, they had money then. He had to have had. They all lived up on the East side of town. Nice homes. And in my day, let's see, who else was there who had money. So many of them were wiped out in the depression. Like anyone else, you know. You were rich today, poor tomorrow. 1929 you were rich on paper and two days later you were bankrupt. Because you had all your money in stocks. You stock, Eddie Cantor, he went absolutely flat. In '29. Broke. He wasn't from Salt Lake naturally but he was absolutely wiped in '29. Many, many others. Of course, Morris Warshaw was broke then. In those days he didn't have fifty dollars.

L: In the twenties?

I: Uh huh. I started working for him in '29. he didn't have any money then. I don't think he could have come up with two hundred dollars cash.

L: When you started working for Warshaw, what did he have at that time?

I: Well, you know the Midas Mufflers on 9th South and Main?

L: Yeah.

I: He rented the land there and he had a little fruit market.

L: He rented the corner there?

I: Uh huh. Had a fruit market there. Warshaw's.

L: How big.

I: Probably, well, it was all open air, just had stands and like bleachers you put your stuff on it. Two tiers of bleachers, put your strawberries and then later on, he put a little old refrigerated case in. Butter and I know he used to sell grapes for six pounds for a quarter. Butter, we had a special I think for around twelve cents a pound. So many pounds and the next pound went up to eighteen cents a pound at a regular price. People would come there to buy that butter.

L: Twelve cents a pound?

I: That was his leader. Well, that was probably two cents cheaper than he paid for it.

L: How would he do that now?

I: He'd get, he'd sell a hundred pounds of butter in pound packages for say, twelve cents. It cost him fourteen. So the people come in and you're out of butter they stopped and bought some brawberries. It was just a leader.

L: Right.

I: Oh, I guess Jimmy White was a lawyer. I guess Arnavitch had a few bucks. Supposedly. They lived up on the East side.

L: They did some real estate dealings. They owned some property for awhile.

I: Uh huh. And I guess in the twenties, I guess Del Seepos' family wasn't what we called rich but they were, what

you would call comfortable. I guess. Then you had Dan Alexander who was a lawyer and they owned Alexander Apartments. I'm going by memory but I think Dan committed suicide. Alexander.

L: Let me ask you something else. You talked a little bit last time about when you came back you said you bought an army surplus. After the army surplus deal ran out. It doesn't sound like you did for more than a couple of years.

I: No. Well, I got too heavily involved in the bag business.

L: How did you build up the bag business from the money gathered from the army surplus?

I: Well, we'd already started to build it up. We already were worth $17,000 which was a lot of money, you know, to us.

L: $17,000 in those days would be equivalent of what today, do you think?

I: My guess would be $170,000. Because you bought everything so cheap. You know, everything was cheap. Let's see, what did I pay for my, I bought a 1939 Chev convertible for $800. New.

L: Right.

I: I bought a new, I just found a bill on it, a new '47 Oldsmobile convertible for $2,700.

L: A new Oldsmobile '47? For $2,700.

I: A convertible.

L: That's a lot of money for those days.

I: Sure it was, but that was a big car.

I: A convertible. With an electric top.

L: You mean it came...it went up and down.

I: I showed you what my rpices were in 1934 in my restaurant. You could get a hamberger for, the most expensive hamburger was a dime, coffee was a nickel. Coffee is what now? Fifty cents?

L: Fifty cents.

I: See, that's ten times. Hamburger is at least a dollar, isn't it?

L: At least. Or maybe more. $1.20.

I: See, I don't buy hamburgers so I don't know. I pay $4.95 for a hamburger.

L: You pay what?

I: $4.95.

L: $4.95? What do you mean?

I: That's what I pay for hamburgers.

L: Why?

I: That's what the prices are, at the Country Club.

L: Five bucks for a hamburger?

I: Uh huh. But you get a big, quite a bit of beef and then you get your vegetable with it and french fries with it. Still, you know, you can put three of those McConald patties in one.

L: Right. Well, you could have got one of those meals like that in the thirties maybe for a quarter.

I: Oh, yeah.

L: Right? Twenty cents or a quarter.

I: Well, I told you at the Roof Garden at Hotel Utah was only

two bucks to eat. Take a girl up there for two bucks and that's about all you had to spend. You could still dance.

L: Let me ask you so then, okay, so your business was worth $17,000 and you had, whatever surplus funds you've got from the army store.

I: Yeah, what we did, I'd make fifty dollars a week and Abe would do fifty dollars a week. Probably in, oh, I guess about 1947.

L: But how did you expand though? What was the next step?

I: Well, we'd buy another machine and buy another machine and another machine until you didn't have any more room and then you start looking where you can put some more machines.

L: So now all this time were you buying only used bags or did you go into the new bag business?

I: No, the way we started in the new bag business, I had a friend in Oakland, American Bag Company. So they started making new bags so we'd buy a few from them, sell for them. Then I decided that we'd better print our own. You know, we had thse customers who would come in and say, the Japanese farmers, they'd need 1,000 potato bags. They couldn't go get plates with their name printed on them. So we had to have U.S. No. 1 Utah potatoes. U.S. No. 2. You know.

L: Why?

I: That was a law. Idaho, right now, you buy potatoes, it's

got to say the grade on the bag or you can't ship them out.

L: The grade of potato?

I: U.S. No. 1, U.S. No. 2.

L: Okay.

I: So we devised a way for Max Glove, in Oakland, we give him the money to buy the burlap for us. If we wanted a 100,000 bags, we'd buy 75 bales of burlap. We'd give him the money, then he wouldn't charge us for the burlap, he'd just charge us for manufacturing. We had to make plain bags, then I bought this $4,000 handfed press. You'd print by hand. If I needed 1,000 I'd just had a stock brand plate, Utah Mountain Grown and picture a mountain on it and I'd have another plate made for J.O. Oakey. John Newtson, that's in Ogden. And then we'd put that nameplate in packed by whatever his name was. Work it that way. So then we started putting our own and then we were more than competitive on the small shipments because our competitives back in the forty million dollar company at that time was Vemis. They're still in business. And they'd start a big roll and start the machines but it was hard to stop it at a thousand. Even at a thousand, you're going to have so many misprints by the time you registered, you know, the printing completely, correctly and in the meantime all we had to do was just feed them through and maybe we'd feed a couple of used bags through first, make sure the impression was right and then run them through. So

with that premium for setting up their big machine we'd make money setting up the little one. Then after we got that much business then we had enough business to make our own bags. Like somebody else's problem, burlap too, as lon as you're paying for it so we start buying our own burlap and cutting our own.

L: Where did you buy it from?

I: India?

L: Where?

I: India.

L: In India. So you had to import the burlap?

I: It's still imported.

L: Who did you sell the bags to? What area did you sell.

I: Utah and Idaho.

L: Just that?

I: Uh huh.

L: What about going East to Colorado?

I: I used to ship some bean bags to San Juan Valley. I think it was San Juan.

L: In New Mexico?

I: No, Colorado.

L: Just Colorado? What about New Nexico, Arizona?

I: No, freight wouldn't allow us to go there. It was mostly Utah and Idaho. But most of the people I knew were in the secondhand bag business were Jewish. Out of a hundred members, there were ten out of them weren't Jewish, I'd be surprised.

L: A hundred members of what?

I: People that bought secondhand bags. You'd get your burlap through an East Asiatic company. People that are importers and you buy your burlap, bring it into San Francisco or Los Angeles by boat and then bring it into Salt Lake. It comes 100 yard bolts and all you do is break them open and stitch twenty bolts together and put them in a 2,000 roll. Spray it through with water as you roll it, the mist to get the wrinkles out of it. Just run it through the machine and print cuts and fold it and take the folded gags to the girls and they'd sew them and you have them turned inside out 'cause they're sewed inside out, bail them and ship them and try to collect your money. That's all there was to it.

L: From the pictures that I've got, the Wagner Bag Company, the new bags meant that you had to put up a new plant more or less. Where did the capital come from?

I: Well, the first time we put one machine in the old plant. So we made money.

L: You made money on the bags, on the used bags?

I: Yeah, you'd make money on the one and you'd buy a couple more machines and then you'd build a new building to house it.

L: You chose to borrow more money doing that?

I: No. We always borrowed money to run our business but not for the building. We paid cash for the building.

L: You always borrowed money?

I: Huh?

L: You always borrowed money?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: Why?

I: Well, you've got Accounts Receivable for a million dollars. You've got inventory of a couple of million dollars. How do you keep going? You've got to pay taxes on your profit.

L: So you're constantly balancing and borrow on the incoming money?

I: Yeah, you'd always borrow. As soon as you made money, you'd borrow on it. Did you ever see the hooker? Dave gave me that. I'm showing that on the tape.

L: It won't be visible on the tape.

I: But it's like any other simple business. You just, if you're a baker, your wife bakes twenty loaves at home. Okay? So she's got one stove. In between cooking she bakes bread. So somebody goes out and sells it. Then you get orders for forty loaves so she buys another stove. Then she gets an order for 300 loaves, then she trades those two ovens and gets a bigger stove.

L: You're saying, in order to get those new stoves, you borrow money, in part?

I: Yeah, you always borrow money. For your inventory. Because you keep increasing your inventory and you kept increasing your Accounts Receivable. You have more people working so you had a bigger payroll to meet. There's nothing different than any other business. Snelgrove's Ice Cream. You name it. Candy factories. They all use

equipment so something new comes in and will do it twice as fast. Then you borrow money on it.

L: Right. What you're saying basically the accounts, the accounts of the money coming in has to be able to take care of the amount you borrow. You have to be constantly aware of it.

I: Yeah. Takes care of the old part.

L: The old part plus the new part.

I: Uh huh. Then you go again. So we fill that up with one two, three, four, five, six machines. Now, we have no room so we decided to make paper 'cause paper was making inroads on burlap. So we found this location out there in Wagner Park, 21st South and 9th West, bought 300 acres on time from the railroad, put our building up, starting manufacturing on a larger scale, and then sold it to Sammy's Paper Company. Abe stayed and worked for them and I stayed and worked for them for awhile. A couple of years. About twenty-five years.

L: Okay. Let me ask you sort of a huge question. And I'm not quite sure where to fit the answer into it. You know, the thing in Utah Holiday, the article, Mormons and Gentiles. Has a list of people here in Salt Lake who wield power. And a lot of people, not only in that thing, but a lot of people see you as wielding power now. Is this something you would agree with?

I: Well, I don't really wield power. Power with whom?

L: That's a good question. What do you think they mean?

I: I don't know what you're talking about. Power. I have no power. I mean, if I have to talk to the governor, anybody can talk to him. I just call up and get an appointment with him.

L: Okay.

I: If I want to talk to, if I want to talk to Bishop Brown, I'll call up and get an appointment with him. If I want to talk to President Kimball, I'll get an appointment with him.

L: I asked you this large, general question about power. Now, here's this magazine coming out in Salt Lake.

I: What are people going to write about. They're talking about power, you know, if you want to read stories, you read about the Inquiry. The average journalist writes what's in his mind, what he thinks is going on. It's not always necessarily true.

L: Let me ask you this. You come back to the scene in the bag company in the fifties. When you look at Salt Lake at the scene in Salt Lake in the fifties, who are the big people in town here. Who are the people that have a say in what's happening.

I: Well, the governor. The governor, the speaker of the house. The majority leader in the legislature, the senate and the house. The mayor, the commissioner. Politically, they're the leaders. They're in office. They might not be leaders four years from now. They're sure as hell leaders now.

L: I'm not talking about now, today. I'm talking about, let's say, as the bag business is growing in the fifties, as you look back.

I: Well, the leaders in the community then were my customers. That's what I call leaders. I wasn't too interested in what's going on in the city. Because I had no reason. Oh, yes, people would come to me for donations. Used to have Hymie Guss was in the assessor's office, as a deputy assessor, you know, assistant. And he'd come to you and want his boss to get reelected and ask you for ten dollars or twenty of fifty or whatever you want to give him so you got to know people in politics. And you'd do him a favor 'cause you knew him. And it was his job. You don't raise money, you don't get elected. If you don't get elected, you don't have a job.

L: Who was he raising money for? Campaign?

I: Campaign for the assessor. See, the assessor is elected. The treasurer is elected. The auditor is elected, which is absolutely ridiculous. Why do you elected an auditor. What do you care if he's a Democrat or a Republican? Money doesn't care what party you belong to. You check books, you check books. So, on the other hand, there's a lot, the auditor hires a lot of people. In the office. The workers, that work for the party.

L: Maybe that's why it's elected.

I: That's why it's elected. In other words, in my opinion, you just go out and say okay we have a contract with, you

take all the CPA's in the city, in Salt Lake, Mayne Herdman...you know, when you talk about voting for an assessor, you've got two people running for assessor, how do you know any of them are qualified. And the thing's pretty well set. You don't go change everything there. You have your rolls, why should the county recorder, the city recorder, county clerk be a Democrat or a Republican. What difference does it make? But that's the way it's always been and I guess I'm not the one to go about changing it. 'Cause it's not that important to me. But it's silly. In my opinion, you take the Mayne Herdman, as I started to say or Price Waterhouse or who ever happened to be around here. Elmer Fox. So you go ahead and you get all the CPA firms that can handle it. You ask them if they'd like to bid on it, you know. Well, maybe it should be bid on. You ask them how much an hour or whatever. And you draw the names, $50 an hour, throw in the hat. Your lowest bid. And ask them if they can handle it. 'Cause they're all CPA's. They've all passed the test. They're all good. And most of them are national. Locals will be national if they're not, somebody will buy them. So you give them the job for four years and the after the next four years you get a new accountant in. Why do they have to be elected? Why do you have all those people down there working for you? That's my opinion. It doesn't mean it's right but I see no reason to have them elected. All they do is set budgets and go over your budgets. You take all

your accounts payable and you screen them, check them. The invoice price is wrong, instead of paying out $20,000 maybe you only owe $2,000. Then you have to audit everything. So that's the only way I got involved. A few little donations and then you give a little more time and you see something you don't like so you go to the other boss. Who might be the governor. Or you have someone who knows the governor and you get introduced to him. If it happens that way. But they don't, or you talk to a legislatures. Inventory tax. We all got together and got that repealed. That was a silly tax.

L: You were taxed on the inventory?

I: What you had on hand December 31st so what does it do for us? Nothing. The first part of December you ship nothing in the state. You get down to the bottom of necessities. Why?

L: You're not caught with anything in stock.

I: That's right. So on December 31st, you ship everything you need out of L.A. So it would be in L.A. on December 31st, then it'd be here on January 2nd. So that whole month or a month and a half, business has slowed down and the truckers wouldn't get that much business because you weren't going to ship anything in there because you're going to pay tax on everything on your floor. So then they had an inventory tax in March, March 1st, I believe, in California. So what you do you keep your burlap that you didn't need in December over there. And then in February you ship it over here. You had to play games.

And there's no sense in taxing and your people, say in Colorado or others, Nevada, didn't have an inventory tax. So, they had a distinct advantage over you in price. They could sell cheaper than you could. They abolosihed that. They did tax you on your equipment though.

L: They do?

I: Uh huh. We used to have personal property tax on your home.

L: They still do that.

I: No, not on furniture.

L: On furtniture, you had a tax?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: How would they tax that? What would you do, declare the value of it?

I: Uh huh.

L: And then they would tax you each year?

I: Uh huh.

L: I didn't know that.

I: They have it in other places too.

L: Really? I never knew that. They never had that in New York or in the Eastern states.

I: They'd have it in other places. Personal property. I think it's ridiculous is to pay, another ridiculous tax to me is license. I buy a Rolls Royce. I buy a Rolls Royce, let's say, $100,000. Okay, you pay a sales tax on it. $5,000 sales tax. You now go get a license. You pay the same license that you do for the other but you pay another, every year you pay a tax on it.

L: On the car?

I: Yeah. Why should you pay tax on the car. If all it is is wheels. Why should I pay a greater tax on a $100,000 Rolls Royce. I'm not talking about insurance. The tax than you do on your wheels? You get to the same place just as fast. My point is I earned that money in all these years I earned money I paid tax to accumulate that $100,000. I paid state income tax. And I paid federal income tax. What money I had left, saved because I'd go down to Vegas and lose, I bought a car with it. If I went down to Vegas, I wouldn't get a dime out of it. Because I invested in a car I pay tax on it.

L: What is the tax called?

I: It's a vehicle tax.

L: A vehicle tax?

I: You pay it.

L: And it's based on how much you paid for the car?

I: Uh huh. What it's worth. Yeah. It depreciated every year but I think when I paid $25,000 for mine I figured my tax was $800 and something in 1972. After I saved my money so I could buy it. Paid taxes on it. But the license is the same for a Rolls Royce or a Ford. But those are all, that has nothing to do with your interview.

L: Yeah.

I: So no use going into that. 'Cause you're taping it.

L: That's okay.

I: Because everybody has different ideas. That's where you get letters to the editor every day, not necessarily right

but they express their ideas. And they do change. They do change the laws.

L: When did you get interested in buying real estate in town here?

I: Well, the first piece we bought was in 1934, next to our little adobe house. A man was stepping off the property. We asked him what he was doing. We were using it. We were putting barrels and bottles on there. We didn't have anyplace to put them. He said he was going to sell it. Mr. Broff's son-in-law who owned the Utah Soap Company. And he wanted to get rid of this property so we bought it.

L: Pardon me. How do you spell Broff?

I: B-r-o-f-f. He was president of Utah Soap Company. He was very well to do but maybe then, the timing, he might have, you know, in the thirties, he might have been in a position where he needed money to start to sell off some of his real estate. So we bought that for $3,500, fifty feet.

L: Fifty feet, eh?

I: Uh huh. We gave him $350 down and $35 a month. I forgot how many years until it was paid for. Probably the interest rate was four percent. So that was part of the expansion of the bag company. On 3rd South. In fact it's the East end of the, no, it's in between the old cigar factory and the bag company there. A big overhead door that goes in there. Anyway, that was part of the plant. That's how we bought one piece. And then the next piece we bought was to the West. It was owned by J.A. Hogle Company. I was home on

furlough then, when we bought that.

SIDE 2

I: Yeah. Mr. Mikkelsen was vice president of the bank. I asked him to buy it for us because if Hogle knew we wanted it, he might charge us more. Because we had to expand. So they bought that for us for $6,600. And that wasn't enough then I bought the next piece right East of us which is now still a parking lot between Miles Hotel and the restaurant store equipment. I bought that 92 feet from Julian Bamberger. Bamberger railroad. They needed money and decided to sell it off. That was going to be their site for the old Bamberger railroad. That was going to be the depot.

L: No kidding?

I: Because the tracks were behind it.

L: The tracks were behind the building?

I: Uh huh. They had all those big beams laying on their too. Years ago. We used to play on them. They had all these big steel beams they were going to upright that they were going to build the building with. They finally built it where the Salt Lake Palace is. Where the Symphony Hall is. That was the Bamberger depot for years and years.

L: Where the Symphony Hall is now?

I: Right now. Uh huh. That was the Bamberger depot that took you to Saltair. I mean, not Saltair, that took you

to Lagoon.

L: Right. It went all the way up to Hill Air Force Base. Right?

I: Yeah. Uh huh, at one time. Then Ogden at one time. That was the old Bamberger electric railroad. In fact there's quite a story on those beams. After '29, the crash, my dad owed the bank some money so the banker came down to look over the old place where he saw a lot of bags in the old rooming house behind, we had these rooms with bags in them. The old room like this, the size would have bales of bags stacked in them. Another room would have some sticks to turn them inside out in the winter. In the summer you took them outside. Turned them inside out. And he said to my dad, well, what about this steel out here? He knew we had a little junk but he never knew we didn't handle steel beams. We didn't have a crane or anything else. My dad said, there's probably at least $50,000 worth of beams there. He said, you know, Mr. Mikkelsen, I couldn't sell those today if I wanted to sell them. Which you couldn't. He didn't own them. He looked at them. And made him a loan. Didn't lie to him, just didn't tell him they didn't belong to him. That's a funny story.

L: Did Mikkelsen think that they were owned by your dad?

I: Uh huh. They were actually Bamberger's. He had them stacked all over. You were talking about real estate. Yeah, so then, the next thing you do, you're going to expand, so you buy that piece. And they had the piece behind

us on Pierpont which is now the service station.

L: On the corner there?

I: Uh huh. Just South of the new Shiloh Inn which was directly across from the Sheraton.

L: The Sheraton corner is like kiddy corner from that twin type building? Where they had the twin type?

I: Well, the American Towers?

L: Yeah.

I: Well, it's right across the street from the New Sheraton Hotel on West Temple.

L: Yeah, okay.

I: So I bought that. We bought that for $100,000.

L: You bought that for $100,000?

I: Uh huh.

L: How much of a down payment?

I: Not very much. I know, we ran it as a parking lot for years. Hoping one day we might have to build on and we had no place to go. We had a packing warehouse uptown. See, Zellerbach Paper was where the Salt Palace is.

L: Zellerbach Paper?

I: Uh huh. They had tracks there. Railroad tracks. That block was all manufacturing. The Pike Manufacturing Company was there on 2nd South. Do you know where the parking ramp, they're building the parking ramp structure for the Salt Palace right now?

L: Yeah.

I: Do you know the Green Parrot is?

L: Yeah.

I: Right across the street. Patrick Drygoods across the street from there is where the Pyke Dual Manufacturing Company was. They made all the...

L: What manufacturing company?

I: They made dresses.

L: What did you call them?

I: Pyke-Druehal Company. Mr. Druehal and Mr. Pyke owned that.

L: So that whole area is a kind of an industrial site?

I: Yeah.

L: More or less. Okay, now. What year did you start making paper bags? When?

I: Well, I started selling paper bags in the forties, the late forties.

L: For whom?

I: I mean in the fifties. For Hudson.

L: So you had your own bag company at that time?

I: No, yeah, but we'd buy paper bags.

L: You were buying paper bags? From Pine Bluff, Arkansas and we'd compete with the people that manufacture. Then we'd do the same way. Same thing. See, we always believed that pioneers don't make money. They just have hardships. So we'd let someone else pioneer and that looks good, then we'd get into it. I don't going to buy a machine and make polyethylene and then find out it's obsolete. Or it doesn't work. Let somebody else or maybe ten companies make a lot of money, then it's easy to copy.

L: It's easy to get into once it's proven.

I: Yeah, then you improve the service, the product or the price or both. Or all three of them and you're in business.

L: Right.

I: You know, it's done now but for a hundred years, that's nothing new in Salt Lake or with us. So then we started we'd order paper equipment and we'd take a lot of business away from St. Regis. Then I represented Fulton Bag Company in California. We started buying from them. Pine Bluff was quite a ways away to service. And out of L.A. Then, I'd get a call from St. Regis. They wanted to come out and talk to us. Then we wind up selling them the business.

L: They made you that good of an offer?

I: Uh huh. I wanted to quit anyway. I always said I'd quit when I was forty.

L: Why did you want to quit? Or why did you intend to quit?

I: You know, what fun is it? Business isn't any fun. Same old thing. Everything's the same in business. You're either selling stockings or you're selling whole sale groceries if you've got a warehouse. Or you're manufacturing clothing. What's the difference. What's the big thrill after you've done it once, why keep doing it? There's other fields you can get into. Why should I got to work every morning at six or seven o'clock and quit at seven at night, come back from a show at three o'clock, eleven

o'clock at night and go around the back and see if anybody's goofing off. You're spending all your time. The main reason I just figured every time I kept growing. So, I had seven big machines and those machines weren't cheap in those days. They were $35,000, $40,000 apiece.

L: Which machines are you describing?

I: That make bags. The printing press I bought was $125,000. Six color press. Today that machine's a half million dollars. So I could see expanding and expanding and still living down in the little duplex we had and no money because of buying a home I needed the money for another machine. So rather than have a bunch of scrap iron is what I call it, I got a nice home. Let somebody else have the scrap iron. There's a time to buy and there's a time to sell. In my opinion. In my opinion it was time to sell.

L: Right.

I: And then the burlap business I didn't like because I could see it dying slowly, paper was making inroads. Corrugated boxes, a lot of your potatoes are shipped in boxes now, not bags. And most of your beans now are going into paper. Your fertilizer is all paper. Your cement i all paper. Used to be cotton. Cement bags used to be made of cotton. Duck. So I could just see it going down and change so I wanted to get out. And I did. Finding a buyer wasn't easy. The only way you can find a buyer is take his business away, he gets mad enough, you'll buy you. It's cheaper for him to buy you than try to break you.

L: Was St. Regis the only competition you had in the area here?

I: Oh, no.

L: What competition did you have making bags?

I: Here? Oh, manufacturing here. No, we had no competition. Still the only manufacturer West of Denver. To California. They don't have one in Arizona.

L: So you were the only one in the area?

I: Yeah, but we still had people manufacturing bags in Portland. Shipped, the big market was Idaho. Idaho potatoes. Idaho beans. But we happened to be here so we paid freight. See, in other words, you shipped the burlap into Salt Lake. There's one freight. Then you made the burlap into bags and shipped to Idaho. That's another freight. A fellow from Portland could ship it, get in at the dock and ship it into, make it into bags and ship it into Idaho with one freight. So we had two freights so we were at a disadvantage. We did have better labor and no union. And that's one reason I merged, I didn't want a union. We had three union elections and we knew they'd never give up. So if I had anybody tell me that I had to pay everybody the same price. With seven machines, you've got seven different salary jobs. And a good reason. So the reason you sell out and everybody's different. I don't have any children that is interested in the business. Don't have any children, period. Abe doesn't have any. He has two girls so there wasn't...

L: He has some adopted children, right?

I: Two, yes.

L: Adopted children.

I: But there's no reason to keep the business. You know. Abe has a nice home. If we had kept the business we would have expanded it and expanded it and maybe by now we'd be able to get a nice home but I've been living in my home for almost twenty years now. And I don't go down at six in the morning. I mean, I'm up at five in the morning every morning but usually I have a couple of breakfast meetings. You know, sometimes one at seven, another at eight and I don't have to go anywhere. When you run a plant and you get 350 people working for you...

L: How many people did you have working when you sold out?

I: I think we had about 300. See, actually, interviewing me in a sense, I think you're just wasting your time because there is really nothing that happens here that didn't happen in L.A. That didn't happen in San Francisco. Doesn't happen in Denver. You know, before we made new bags too we represented the Grawlins Company out of Denver in 1940, '41. They made onion bags. We sold for them.

L: You sold their bags?

I: Yeah, but everybody, same story, they came over here as peddlars or whatever they did and got into secondhand bag business and made some money. A.D. Radinski, he became the biggest wiping rag manufacturer and then he

bought secondhand shirts and clothes and everything and chopped them into wiping rags. He made jobs so there's different, junk, scrap iron, Rosenblatt started in scrap iron and he expanded into mining machinery manufacturing. Eimco Company.

L: Let me ask you, how much did you sell to--St. Regis?

I: We took stock.

L: Pardon?

I: We took their stock.

L: You took stock in their company?

I: Remember we sold it off shortly after.

L: Did you also have the agreement that you would get jobs. With the company?

I: No, I wouldn't take that kind. I didn't even want to stay. I did lease the building to them for awhile and then they bought the building too.

L: You went to work for them, didn't you?

I: Uh huh. So did Abe. I stayed and managed the plant for a year. For a couple of years.

L: So was that part of the agreement that you made?

I: No. Verbal.

L: Verbal agreement.

I: I couldn't wait to get out of there. Abe didn't have a lot to do. Sit and work crossword puzzles. So we opened this little Wagner Corporation.

L: You opened Wagner Incorporated right after that?

I: Yeah. When Abe left, St. Regis gave him the burlap business and the secondhand bag business and something they

didn't know anything about. It was one of those things you run on the seat of your pants. You don't run, there's no way you can buy and sell secondhand bags. And set a policy because with your purchasing people. 'Cause there are so many places to buy and you've got to know the suppliers and it's only through experience that you can do it. There aren't enough people experienced in that line.

L: You're just doing it.

I: We bought a little place over 10,000 feet we leased from the D&RG Railraod on West 2nd South. That's part of Eimco now. And we started with 10,000 feet. We just had one girl and a salesman. Just a place to hang his hat. And then we decided later, well, as long as we're there we might as well have another salesman and another one and then we needed more space so we moved them into the Expo Mart. The old Safeway grocery warehouse.

L: Right.

I: Then we sold that and moved to where it is now.

L: So then burlap bags have made a bit of a recovery, they've come back?

I: No, we went into packaging business but always carried the bag line too. As long as you paid your rent?

L: What kind of packaging did you do?

I: Oh, over there now we sell a million items. Steel strapping and... It doesn't make a difference what you sell. Everything's the same. All business. The format in my business is exactly the same when you're selling used cars,

used bags, steel strapping, polyethylene bags, toilet tissues. Everything's the same.

L: Isn't there a difference though in terms of what you're going to sell?

I: In other words it wouldn't make any difference. Today I could go and sell TVs. It wouldn't make any difference what product. I have to learn my product.

L: But I mean in terms of beginning a business. If you began a TV business, you began a bag business, it would be very different at the beginning.

I: I don't think so.

L: Finding your market would be different.

I: No, but you look around. All you do is look in the telephone book, how many people are in it. The way I would do it, then I'd got to Dun and Bradstreet and find out what all these people are worth. If there's thirty of them in it and ten of them are making a lot of money, the higher rating and ten are just in between, mediocre, and ten are struggling, I know there's enough money in it because I'm going to be one of the top ten. But if thirty of the, none of them are worth very much, you know, just mediocre, I wouldn't go in that business.

L: Because you would think there wouldn't be the potential?

I: That's right. I had a restaurant. I didn't know anything about it.

L: But that was a long time ago, right?

I: Yeah, but I mean, I could go in it tomorrow. I'm not a gourmet cook but I know good food when I eat it. What

people like and that's all you have to know. What is the public going to buy? Whether you like or not, it's the same thing in hiring a salesman. Some people that I have hired, I don't like personally. I don't like them at all. But they knew their job and what they do after hours is their own business. As long as they're not crooked. In other words if a guy could sell, I'd hire him. We disagreed on politics or religion. I don't care if he's a Catholic or Holy Roller or what he is, but if he does a good job selling, that's his business. If he was black I'd hire him. I've hired blacks. Mexicans. It don't make any difference. If they're good at their job, you keep them. But you know, you talk about--I've got kids in the warehouse and kids they have hair over their shoulder, I don't like it. I personally think it's silly the summer to have all that odor around you 'cause you get sweating and all that hair smells and it's abrasive. It does. I'm not going to make salesmen out of them. 'Cause there's not enough long haired buyers. You know, business is business. It's not charity. You've got your likes and dislikes. When you go out to the beach and if a guy's got a ten foot beard, you don't care. He might be a brilliant professor but he's not going out and sell for me. He's not going to be your officer manager.

L: It's not necessarily so. You could have a bearded office manager.

I: Yeah, but it depends on what you like. They have them. I'm not saying that. I personally don't think it fits into the decor of the area. It did when Brigham Young was around but he's not around now. You know. The rabbis all had beards that I met. In the old days they all had beards and I'd like to know why. You couldn't be a rabbi without a beard. Rabbi Gordon didn't have one but most of them that came out here had a beard.

L: The rabbis in other areas had a beard?

I: Yeah, I think so.

L: Right. I don't remember that from pictures.

I: And the Auerbachs had beards. I swear the Auerbachs did. They all had beards. Of course, that was part of the-- that was the style of the culture in those days. But things change.

L: Styles change. And then come back.

I: Sure they change.

L: Once again.

I: And the hippie element. To me that was disgusting. Ten guys living in a basement altogether. Hair and no shoes. No sanitation to speak of. We rented one up there on the avenue.

L: Real estate wise, what else did you go into that after that. When you sold out. After you sold out, did you get into real estate?

I: Well, I was already in real estate because I'd bought the 300 acres where Wagner Park is. Put the building down

there. 140,000 square foot wide for the Wagner Bag Company which is now St. Regis.

L: The 300 acres, you were going to describe it.

I: Well, we just bought that because you were putting 140,000 square foot building up. All the property around you immediately--put a million dollar building up and all the property around you has to go up in value. Just Triad out there. They put a half a dozen warehouses and put some streets in and all the rest of the property's got to be worth more money. So that's all you do.

L: What were the things, what did you intend to do with those things?

I: Sell off some of it to other people who warehouse. Once you put yours in there, everything else has got to be worth more.

L: Did you have any ideas to what would move in before you bought it? Did you check out anything.

I: Well, I knew Safeway had bought the, they bought 40 acres just to the north of us. They bought it years before. Planning to put up a warehouse there. Which they finally did.

L: Right.

I: So we just developed it. Put a road in and wait for somebody to ask you how much you want for a piece. We never advertised. We did put a big billboard up on the entrance. Wagner Industrial Park. That's all there was to it. As they came like an auction sale, you ask $10,000 an acre

and somebody said I'll take five. So now you've got five so the next one you ask $12,000. You get $12,000, you ask $14,000. If you get $14,000, you ask $15,000. You get $15,000, you ask $17,000. You get $17,000, you ask $20,000. You get $20,000, you ask $25,000. Then you get to thirty, then you go to forty. Then you go to fifty. So that's simple too.

L: How long did you own the property out there? How long did you remain...

I: Well, till I merged it with another company. We merged Wagner Building Company into Keystone Insurance. Took stock in Keystone. Keystone owned Lockhart Company. Then Zion's Bank, merged Keystone into the bank and Lockhart. So then I wound up with Zion stock. Nothing to it. Just got some stock.

L: Right. That seems like that was outside your own intentions and outside your own control.

I: No, I'd already merged the company.

L: Pardon?

I: I'd already merged the Wagner and St. Regis.

L: You'd already merged that? Well, when you say you merged it, what do you mean? You gave it up entirely, didn't you?

I: Yes, but I took stock in, I took stock in St. Regis so I became part of St. Regis. Still an owner of St. Regis as a stockholder.

L: Right, right.

L: Yeah, I forget about that stock holding.

I: It's simple, you know. Then you wind up in Zion's as a stockholder and they ask you to go on the board. I went on the board of Keystone Insurance first. Then I merged Wagner Building into it. And then I went on the board of Zion's Utah Bank Corporation. It's a simple way, you know. You know the people and evidently they like you and they ask you to be on the board.

L: What did they expect of you on the board? Did they expect you to actually to regulate the bank? Is it...

I: Well, you don't have the operation but you set the policy. And they don't buy anything without approval. They don't make any major investments without your approval. The board. I'm on the compensation committee. They don't raise anybody without asking you. Without your vote or your opinion.

L: You mean nobody gets a raise in their earnings?

I: Not just the major people, not your top officers, no.

L: Right.

I: Down below that's the operations end of it.

L: You don't deal with that?

I: It's just like any other board. The board runs the company.

L: Yeah. What properties do you deal with now? What properties connected up to now?

I: Well, I'm one of the owners, see, then, I went into Trolley Square and started that one.

L: Right. That was--was that the next largest thing you did?

After Wagner Park?

I: Yeah.

L: Would you say that?

I: No, I wouldn't say that. No, I'd bought other properties. And sold them. You say large, that's a matter of degree.

L: Okay.

I: A fellow loses his dime down in the grates and I used to get a stick and a piece of gum and in fifteen minutes I can get the dime out of there.

L: I know what you're telling me.

I: So I don't do that anymore. If I lose a time I won't buy, well, I can't now, you know why, if you lose a dime? A pack of gum is 25¢. You lose money on the operation. But you buy pieces. You buy Trolley Square. You sold it. You bought property out. We bought National Lead property. And sold it and then we had various little partnerships. Three or four of us. Larry Simmons and I had bought the gun club out on North Temple which we sold to, part of it to Vagabond for their hotel on the way to the airport and we sold it. It was a thirty acre piece. We bought the American Auto, which is a ten building. We bought Main Street property. Turn it and sold it. This, you know, nothing big. Well, we bought the Darling Building. Which is now the J.C. Penney Building on 3rd South and Main. We bought that.

L: 3rd South and Main?

I: That was the old Walker Drygoods Building. We bought that. My mother used to shop there. I remember that

building well. I told you the major one is the Midtown Trolley. Do you know where that is? The theatre on Main Street. Midtown Trolley.

L: Yeah.

I: 3rd South and Main. The first theater I ever went to, my mother must have carried me in her arms. I must have been four or five months old. Silent movies. It was called the Mahesy Theater. It was owned by a Jewish man who was a Jewish furrier. I never knew what happened to him. Mahesy. And he owned the building there. He had the theater. I've got a picture of it. Mahesy Theater.

L: Do you remember it at the age of five months?

I: I don't remember it.

L: Your mother told you?

I: I knew I'd been there because then they built in 1927, I guess, around that time, I think it was around that time. They built the 10 Broadway Building. It's American Oil but it's the Cliff Building now. And then they put the theater in there. There was a Kinemall. We used to go in there all the time. Kinemall Theater. Then they changed the name to Rialto.

L: Rialto?

I: Rialto Theater. Been there for years and years. Then I sold the Rialto and we bought that building and we didn't renew the lease for the Rialto and we sold it to Midtown, leased it to Midtown Trolley which is Trolley Square Theaters. In fact I signed the first, the first

time I ever got in the theater business was the Trolley Theaters. We signed the lease there.

L: Do you still own that then?

I: No, we sold that. We sold that a few years ago.

L: How was it running that? I mean, how did they do there? At the Rialto?

I: We didn't run the theater.

L: You had no contact with that then whatsoever?

I: No, we just leased it.

L: Just leased the building.

I: Then we hired a building manager and we didn't bother with the building either except you've got to spend over a thousand dollars he has to tell us and tell us what for. Wanted a thousand dollars, just get it fixed.

L: Right. Okay. You go ahead.

SIDE 1

L: It's okay. Don't worry about calling David Orr because I can call him. Oh, you want to call him about something else. Okay. Tell me, if you can, not in an abbreviated fashion, but tell me about Trolley Square. How did Trolley Square begin? How did that come about?

I: Oh, Trolley Square began, I was on the planning and zoning committee commission, which I'm still on and talking to Brack Lee and his mayor and I said, what are they going to do with that bus deal? You know. The bus station, the Salt Lake City lines. They're going to shut down the lines, just vacate. And he said, well, the city may have to buy that. And I said, well, they've got to buy it because what are you going to do with the old depot. You know, Blind and so forth. How are people going to get along. They can't give up the bus station.

L: What do you mean bus station?

I: Well, the bus business. You know, the street cars. You call them street cars. Buses or transportation.

L: You call them buses but they were street cars?

I: They are buses. They used to be streetcars. When I had them they were street cars with trolleys.

L: Right.

I: So anyway, we just talked about it and I said, there's got to be some way we can save that mode of transportaion. Salt Lake City can't...

L: Street cars or buses?

I: Well, buses. The same things they're using today. Buses.

L: Yeah.

I: But we called them streetcars, what they were originally. So, we called them Salt Lake City lines. Alright, the bus system. So anyway, we talked about it and I said, we've got to something about that because my mother used to take the bus. When we were too busy to pick her up, you know, she liked to get on the bus and ride downtown. My wife used to take it and when I needed the car, she'd take the bus. Downtown. So, I said, the city just can't afford to give up the transportation system. Somebody's got to run it. So anyway, I was up to the University Club right after that and see, we had a big round table up in the corner. If you were in a hurry and you're alone, why, just sit with the other guys and shoot the breeze and I was talking to an attorney there. We just started talking about the bus system, the transportation.

L: What are you talking about, there was no UTA then?

I: Oh, no. It was Salt Lake City lines. Privately owned.

L: Privately owned buses were the only means of transportation?

I: Oh, except cabs, of course. Yeah.

L: Except cabs. Now the trolleys were off, completely off?

I: Oh, yeah, they were gone then. They just replaced the trolleys with buses. So they started out with a horse and, they started out the old system was, they had the rails and they had a horse pull the little old trolley like the Toonerville Trolley, a little narrow gauge railroad. Went all the way out to Warm Springs.

L: Did you ride on that? Yourself?

I: No. I may have, but no, I don't think I did. No, later, we, all I can remember is the streetcars with the electtric system. Then they become naturally the streetcars with the electrical system and then they went to the electric buses.

L: I never saw those around here.

I: The buses, they were just like the buses only had a trolley on them. Electrical and then they went to the gas driven buses. So anyway, I was talking to this attorney and he was sitting there and we discussed it and I said, that's going to be awful, you know, if they have to give that up. The city's got to buy it. I said, if they go out of business what are you going to do with that big depot, the bus depot there. Terminal. He says, oh, they'll sell it. I said, what makes you think they'll sell it? Because he said, I'm their attorney. I said, Salt Lake City lines? He says, no, National City lines own it and they lease it to Salt Lake City lines. Which is a subsidiary. He said, in fact I think they'd sell it now. I said, why don't you give me a price? So he got me a price and I met a fellow up there and I said, look I think we can buy this and he says, I'll take half of it. I said okay. So, about a week later I called him and I said, I bought it. He said, oh, I wish you had told me that earlier, I've already gotten in stock market. I said, you know, so I felt like, at that time, I felt like Gary Cooper in High Noon. I was out

there all alone. You know. So I was walking down the street after lunch there and when this fellow turned me down and I bumped into Taylor Burton, Burton Lumber Company. What's going on? He said, where's our good deal? I said, well, how would you like to own half of Salt Lake City lines property? He said, great. So he became my partner and then we were deciding what to do with it. Our original plan was to put, we'd repair boats and store boats in the winter and sell boats and then get in the used car business and sell campers and take boats in on trade for the campers and so we got thinking and said, well, that's going to be too much work. In the meantime Wally Wright who I'd never met only through Zoning and Planning. He represented the real estate people about once every two weeks or so in the morning he'd come down to listen in what we were doing. He said, I understand you bought Trolley Square. I'm Wally Wright. And I said, yeah, it wasn't Trolley Square, it was Salt Lake City lines. I said, yeah, if you ever want to sell it, he said, I'd like to get in there with you. And I said I don't want to sell mine but maybe my partner would. So I turned him over to Taylor and he bought Taylor's half interest. So I became a partner with Wally Wright. Then we started going in a different direction about putting a service station in and some shops like Gurdelly's Square and so forth and that's how it happened. So then I sold out a little later. After that.

L: You have a kind of a controversial reputation in terms of being on the planning board.

I: No, no, none at all. No. Never had. No conflict. Never.

L: Let me get on my question, okay? Forget it. You have no conflict, no controversial. What I'm wondering is is when you see Salt Lake, you've seen Salt Lake develop. What do you think of the changes? Do you sometimes reflect on the changes in Salt Lake?

I: Yeah, they're fantastic. And it's going to grow more but I have no conflict for the simple reason. I have never asked for any property I owned to be rezoned.

L: No, no, no. I don't mean that.

I: I just wanted to tell you this. And I have never bought any property that has ever been rezoned in my seventeen years on the zoning commission. Never. If I were on the zoning commission and I rezoned something, ten years ago and it was for sale today I wouldn't buy it. Are you following me?

L: Yes, I am. But I didn't mean that. I wasn't referring to that.

I: Well, we're on the planning board. Naturally, you plan things. We planned for the Northwest Quadrant.

L: Are you talking about Triad now?

I: Yeah, and north of that. And west, northwest, all the way out to International Center, west and north of that. For housing. They're talking about a new city there.

Called Bonneville, city of, Bonneville City. The church owns most of the property and they sold some of it to Triad.

L: And so they're thinking of having a city out there?

I: Oh, yes. We need housing out there. So there will be housing eventually. Might be two years, five years or ten years. But eventually there will be another city out there.

L: Going straight out to the airport, you mean?

I: Uh huh. Past the airport. North. In fact they're planning a golf course there now. So, you know, they want to build two of them. They want to build one on the approach to the airport, which I don't agree on. I think it all to be out there, I don't think the city ought to build it. I think private enterprise should build it. The church may decide to build it out there and give it to the city. So I'm thinking of the houses around the golf course. So, no, it's gotta go. And then we're advocating in our meeting annexing all that property to the city. It's now in the county.

L: Which property is that?

I: The Northwest area.

L: That as opposed to the other one.

I: Part of that's in the county.

L: Annexing it to Salt Lake?

I: Uh huh.

L: Now it's what, the county.

I: Part of it is. Part of it's in the city, part of it's

in the county. Anybody can go down and listen to that. That's public information.

L: Yeah.

I: So, anything we do, like yesterday, we had a meeting and just public information. I want to restrict how many newsstands we can put on a corner. And what color are their cabinets would be. Charcoal black instead of red and white and blue. We spend all this money to beautification and then we allow all this junk to go in there. So we're changing that.

L: The beautification idea. Do you feel in part responsible for helping that come about?

I: Uh huh. Yeah. I was on the committee for years. At its inception.

L: What's the idea behind the beautification? Why did it begin to begin?

I: Well, we had broken sidewalks. Deteriorating streets. You got to put them in sometime and you need new sewer lines. You've got Utah Power & Light Company and the gas company. You're getting all these buildings in there. Their lines weren't large enough to carry it so you might as well plan for fifty years and put some cable in that's large enough to handle the growth. Why tear up the streets every week.

L: Was that basically the idea then to accommodate the growth?

I: Plus we'd seen the beautification in Minneapolis.

Nicollette Street. You see some of the other cities that are a viable place to shop, come downtown. Look at our trees now. They're practically full grown. We have fountains. We've got good looking sidewalks. You've got a few benches for people to sit on. Otherwise, it was just barren. Why come downtown? The malls are giving competition and downtown, all the vacancies will be filled. It's going to take time because it will no longer be a shopping area. I've always said that. Schubach and Sam Weller and those people disagree with me. I say it's all going to be financial. We only have three blocks of Main Street. When you get past Third South, then you get to the Post Office and then it becomes hotels and used car lots and so forth. But you only have three blocks.

L: So what do you envision going in there? Besides businesses? In the downtown area?

I: Oh, you'll have a few restaurants. You'll have some restaurants. You'll have some financial, savings and loans and banks. And offices. They're already doing it. You got First Interstate moving in there.

L: Okay. Look, do you much reflecting sometimes about Salt Lake and what it's been like when you think about the past?

I: Oh, certainly. You think about the past, you think about the future. You think about both.

L: Let me ask you, when you think about, when you run your

mind, when you think about the past of Salt Lake, what images come to mind for you? What do you see, when you look back?

I: Good images and most of them good.

L: What do you see now? How would you describe it?

I: You mean personally?

L: Yeah. When you look back at what you've seen in Salt Lake.

I: You look over the city and all of a sudden, I don't but I keep saying, every day, look how the city's growing. The people around it don't even know it. They don't see it. All you have to do is leave this town for five years and come back and you don't recognize it. The hotel, you know, we leased the ground for the Marriott. Our little group there, just the three of us. To the Marriott Hotel. I remember my dad, we used to go there every Saturday and we had the Japanese people had the Sage Market on 1st South, where the Marriott Hotel is. 1st South and West Temple. There were a lot of little markets, fruit markets and I remember Mr. Moscowitz, a Jewish fellow had a fruit market. We used to buy strawberries and reaspberries from him and I look back now and remember my gosh, who ever thought we'd ever own that. We used to come here and buy fruit from Mr. Moscowitz. He used to come up in his old Lincoln car and we'd go home and we'd have, we weren't on diets in those days. And we'd have whipped cream and strawberries and raspberries

andcantelope and it was just great for kids to go up there and shop. And I remember that and I remember just East of that which is now the, let's see, what is it? Part of the Crossroads Mall. Vogler Seed Company. My dad was in partners with Gus Vogler. He had one of the bag companies with them. It didn't work out. At that time we had a crooked bookkeeper so my dad went back to his own business but that was across the street from Pioneer Park which is now the Stock Box and now it's been remodeled into an office. So, no, I remember all of it. Every inch of it. The kids used to roam down the alleys 'cause we lived right downtown. See, we lived right there a block and a half from Main Street on 3rd South, Broadway. So we were uptown every day. You'd go to the theater, the Gem Theater. They had a big platform, the Empire Theater. They had a big platform on the righthand side of the screen and you could get in there for a nickel and you'd see the old movies. Tarzan of the Apes with Elmo Lincoln. Birth of a Nation. We'd see all these old movies. Buster Keaton, Larry Seeman, Hoot Gibson, Tom Mix, Ken Maynard, Buck Jones. The old cowboy pictures. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. in the Three Muskateers. Robin Hood and Mary Pickford and all those. We'd see all the old silent movies. A nickel. Sometimes you'd see them over again and then the Gem Theater.

L: What was the atmosphere like downtown then?

I: It was busy. Everybody was downtown. A place to go. It was busy. That's the only place you could shop. Walker

Drygoods where the J.C. Penney building is, 3rd South. That was Walker Bros. Drygoods.

L: A lot of people walking on the streets?

I: Oh, yes.

L: More than today?

I: Oh, yes. The streets were full. Not as much because you have more population. After all, you probably empty these office buildings at noon and you have more people than you ever had downtown but the rest of the time you had more people then.

L: More people walking up and down the streets.

I: And they were all walking. They'd take the streetcar. You'd go to Auerbach's, you'd go to the Paris Company. They'd go to, I don't think we had a Sears then. Sears came in later. Sears Roebuck took the old Hungerford Hotel which is now the Centre Theater. That was a hotel. The Hungerford Hotel. Sears moved in there and then it became, they tore it down and then it became the Centre Theater and Sears then moved over to Walker Bros. Drygoods, which is the J.C. Penney building. On 3rd South. And then from there they moved to where they are now. And Lucas Field which was our ballpark. That's where we all played baseball and softball, as kids.

L: When you think about the atmosphere of the town in those days, was it more open? Was it more closed than it is today?

I: It was more open. They had bookies. Oh, they had bookies.

They had houses of prostitution, dozens of them all over town.

L: What's happened, though? What made them more open in those days?

I: I think they're more mobile now. What made them mobile? They were all graft. Not all of them because in the early thirties we indicted the mayor, the chief of police, a couple of lawyers. They went to jail.

L: Yeah. I heard about that.

I: It's like any other town.

L: It's just strange, you know, usually people associate the past with puritanism. More morality.

I: No. Nothing's changed.

L: But it sounds like, you know, a lot more open.

I: No, it was open in that respect but now it's more open because now you never had the liveins. The way you have now. Living together and never getting married. Young people.

L: You didn't have that then?

I: No, not at all. In high school, never heard of it. I don't ever recall any of the girls getting pregnant in high school at seventeen years old.

L: It would have been a scandal of some sort?

I: Oh, yes. And you had prohibition too. But we did have the bootleg joints.

L: Everybody seemed to get around that though.

I: Oh,yes.

L: Prohibition was only a name.

I: Yeah, but there were payoffs too. They'd call you up and tell you they were going to raid them. The house of prostitutions were called and say, look you better have a couple of girls there, get the rest of them out. We're going to raid you. Make you an example. The next day they were open again. The same as New York or anywhere else. That's the way that works.

L: Yeah.

I: But today I don't think, today I think it's changed. I don't think there's any payoff on the police department. And I know there isn't any in the city council. The mayor. It just doesn't happen. So the girls are all on their own. They get caught, they put them in jail. They book them, they release them on bond. They forfeit the bond but the houses in those days had, the girls had to go to the board of health once a week or once every two weeks.

L: Once every now and then they were checked out. Yeah. But that's come to an end. They're no longer checked.

I: No, they don't have any now. But now they're mobile, you know. They pick you up in cars. They were on 2nd South for a long time. They were over there at the Greyhound Bus Depot. So they're mobile. They pick them up. But we only have so many policemen and there are more important things than picking up people for prostitution. We've got robbers. We've got burglars. We've got murders. We've got all kinds of things that have a higher priority.

L: Yes, yes.

I: So...

L: Let met ask you this. I know you're very favorable towards the church and your attitude seems very positive. Has the church's influence in town, from the time you grew up to now, changed? In your opinion?

I: No, they've always been an influence. Morally, yes. Very good Mormons.

L: Has it gotten more powerful, or less powerful over the years?

I: Well, if I go back far enough, I guess it was more powerful. No, I think it's probably the same. But as far as I'm concerned, I don't see where they get involved in anything except moral issues.

L: You mean except issues of pure morality? I mean, but, of course, they own property. They simplify...

I: That's right. But they, but I guess they don't own as much property as the Catholic Church does.

L: You mean they don't own as much property in Italy?

I: No.

L: Here as the Catholic Church in Italy? Compared to...

I: I remember I stayed at the Hilton in Rome. It was owned by the Catholic Church in Rome. So, you know, the unions own properties. Churches own properties, foundations own properties. Universities own properties and for some reason they come here and some people want to, they don't have anything to read about so they want to pick on the

Mormon Church. They are powerful. The Quakers are powerful somewhere else.

L: It's not the power that, you know, is my issue, I'm just curious.

I: No, but I'm saying, you know, I think they're great. I think they've been a great influence on the city. They've done more, I think, for the city than anybody. Look across the street over there. Look at the church office building. Look at their beautiful gardens. Look at their beautiful hotel.

L: Do you admire it often?

I: Yes. You can't help it. I've never seen that, I've been in Trivolry Gardens. I don't think anyplace in the United States or the world is any more beautiful. Or better kept. You take all of it. Every block has a good church. Every block a ward.

L: Every area has a ward, you mean?

I: Uh huh. All over the state. THey're building that deseret farms out there by the This is the Place Monument. They've been influential on that. I'm on the board with Wendell Ashton's on that. And some other people. Not all Mormons. And we've started a replica of the old Social Hall and the Bowry. See what else we've got. Brigham Young's farmhouse has been moved up there.

L: Yeah, I've seen that.

I: So they're building that Pioneer Village up there. That's a tourist attraction.

L: You know we talked one day about you getting together with the church leaders, quote, unquote. Are there some things you have to be careful about that you don't want to, that it's their domain and you don't want to trample on it.

I: Oh, no, no. If I see something wrong and I feel we should do something about it, I don't care if it's church or who's backing it. If I think it's wrong in my opinion, I fight it. It wouldn't make any difference because, you know, they're not always right and I'm not always right. So, if I think we need a park here I'll go for a park. But they've been supporting parks and supporting, anything with family life they support.

L: Right. But you were saying to me when you go to eat lunch with them you don't order coffee.

I: Well, naturally. Naturally, if I want to eat with the Rabbi, I wouldn't order ham. I wouldn't take him to a place that wasn't kosher or if I did take him there we'd have a salad. You know, after all, you have to respect their views and certainly if I was a smoker and I was having lunch with someone that didn't smoke I wouldn't smoke. It's just a courtesy. After all, and I certainly wouldn't take a glass of champagne at the Hotel Utah lunch. But I do have a glass of champagne at the Hotel Utah when they have--Western Airlines puts something on. They serve champagne.

L: Right.

I: And Bishop Brown, presiding bishop is a board member of the

Western Airlines. After all, that's a separate company. That's not the church. They don't tell them you can't have champagne because I'm on the board. Tom Perry, I just got a letter from him now where we're having a board meeting for American Stores. He's chairman of the audit committee. He's the chairman of the audit committee. If I sit next to Tom I don't order coffee. Of course, I don't drink coffee anymore anyway. I drink decaffeinated if I drink any at all but when I was drinking coffee I didn't order any. After all, it's against his religion. He doesn't believe in it, why should I sit and drink a cup of coffee. I can have it later with somebody else.

L: Why should you offend him?

I: Yeah, what for. And I don't smoke and I don't want anybody smoking. I won't allow anybody smoke a cigar in my office. Because it bothers me. The smoke gets in the drapes. See, you don't realize. I used to smoke cigars and I didn't understand why my wife didn't want me to smoke one home. But it does. You get the odor. Do you ever go to a hotel room and smell that?

L: Oh, yeah, I know what you're talking about.

I: You know you can't get that smoke out of that room for the rest of your life. It's just a matter of courtesy. No. No, I see nothing, any different with the Mormon Church or the Jewish Church. They all have their ways. One of them you have little cookie that you eat. A little cracker and the Jews have their prayer shawls that they put on and they believe in them. And the Catholics have their little

holy water and to each their own. I can't say any of them are right and I can't say any of them are wrong. If they think they're right and it doesn't bother me they're right.

L: Basically, let them be religious as long as they let you be.

I: Yeah. They don't impose any restrictions on me.

L: But you know a lot of people don't have your opportunity to sit back in your chair and look back on Salt Lake with some sense of having lived here and seen the changes in it.

I: Yeah. Well, the changes have been for the good. We have some nice parks. We have seven or eight golf courses. Mt. Dell, Wasatch Park. Beautiful golf courses. You have Mickey Riley golf course. You have nibley Park. You have Forest Dale. You have Bonneville.

L: Do you take some sense of personal pride in this?

I: Well, certainly, if you're on the zoning commission. Right now I'm working on the news racks. Had a meeting yetserday. If you looked out across the street you see them in any color. After all, this U.S.A. has put some of them right in the street. You take these blind people with the white cane. I saw one the other day and he bumped right into it. It's right in the street where he was walking. They just stuck them in there with no license. We don't have licenses. Now we're changing that. Now we're telling them what color they can put on that and how many on a block. And what position, where they can be. Which I think is right. Otherwise, you're going to have a clutter of the Inquirer and Wallstreet Journal and The Tribune and Barron's and Enterprise and every other magazine. There's no reason

why Newsweek or Time couldn't put one on. You could have a half a block of selling magazines on the corner and newspapers. We get no revenue out of it at all. Now we're talking about permits fee. Why shouldn't there be a permit. I can't sell anything on the street. So why should the newspapers do it. They say well, it's news. I say fine, let them put, why can't we put a speaker of KSL on the corner. Give them news every--we have a news station. 1280, KDYL. Why can't we have that blasting on every corner giving the people the news. They have just as much right to sell their voice as they have their reading material.

L: If somebody else does.

I: I mean, it's just a matter of opinion. We spent all that money on beautification, now why do we have all these newsstands.

L: I know what you're talking about. It's okay.

I: They've got one on every corner. Take here, for example. You go in the Hotel Utah. I'm talking about zoning now. Well, you've got the Tribune, the Deseret News, Wallstreet Journal on the corner. You go over to the North entrance of the hotel, there you'll find the two papers again. About thirty-three feet away. You go downstairs and in the coffee shop and you'll find another newstand. You go, then they have a newstand that sells the papers. How many do we need?

L: That's a good question.

I: You can go to any supermarket. You can get a newspaper there. People are not out of them.

L: I'd like to steal back. Does someone there want you?

I: Go ahead.

L: Okay. When you look back on Salt Lake and some of these changes...

I: See, what we want to do is see...

L: Okay. You got to turn it on. The question I want to ask you is that when you look down on the changes in Salt Lake, Salt Lake downtown, do you think there's anything to regret?

I: No, no. I think the planning has been, we should have had planning earlier but that's with every city. It's orderly. We still keep our wide streets. We still have our good sidewalks. Some of the buildings should come down and they will. Block 53 over here, where you have the deal. Old Keith Warshaw's. That block should come down. So it's had its day, you know. There might be one or two historical places there but if you go on the history, and you keep everything historical then you have to build a new town somewhere else. This one will just wither and die.

L: What do you mean if we keep everything historical. You mean you could preserve too much?

I: Yes, then what have you got downtown. You can't build. If you kept the old building where First Interstate is now, Walker Bank, where would you put the bank, somewhere else? You've only got one Main Street. Three blocks.

So everything's got to go except a few. Even the Z.C.M.I. had to go. I'm glad it's gone. They put a little facade on there to remind you of the old Z.C.M.I. But you can't keep an old broken down building and keep your clients. Economically it doesn't work. Your city and county building won't work.

L: You mean that's going to come down one of these days?

I: Well, I think it should. Sure it should. It's got to. They can't preserve it. Structurally it won't work. You could spend thirty or forty million dollars in there and in thirty-five years from now it's no good anyway. So what do you want to save it for? You could turn around and build a new one cheaper than you can preserve that. Build one with the same style, the same architecture. Build a replica. What is so great about saving a fire trap. I'm up there on the fourth floor and any day I know I'm risking my life everytime I go to a meeting. The fire department will tell you that. It's unsafe.

L: It's hard to get out of the building?

I: You can't get out of it. If you had a fire sweep up those hallways, staircases. They're not enclosed. It just doesn't meet the fire code. The fire department will tell you it's a fire trap. One day some people are going to burn to death in there.

L: If you were going to put it in kind of anutshell fashion, where did Salt Lake come from and where is it gone to in your lifetime? How would you describe it?

I: Well, if you have large families here you have to have more homes, more schools. It's just a matter of, you know, you lay so many eggs and you get so many new chickens, you've got to have a place for them.

L: So, it was just trying to find accommodations for people?

I: That's all there is to it.

L: But I mean, like, if you talk about the feeling of Salt Lake. I'm trying to get at the, what it felt like to live here before and what it is now.

L: Okay.

I: Yeah, it felt good. I mean, we had no problems. We had no real problems, any more than you have a few people that are racists and you'll always have them. You'lll have a few people that hate Catholics. You have them right here, they hate Mormons. They hate Jews. They hate blacks, they hate Mexicans. But those are minorities. You don't have that much feeling. But you can create it. In fact, I have people coming in here and they talk about the damn Mormons. What did the Mormons do wrong? They don't believe in drinking. And rightfully so. I mean, I happen to like my champagne and my wine. Nobody tells me I can't have any. It might be harder to get but I can't walk in a bar and order a glass of champagne but I can belong to a private club. So there are all kinds of private clubs for $5 or $10 a year membership so you can go into a bar.

L: Well, it sounds like you got to compromise if you live here.

I: You have to compromise anywhere. You have to compromise anywhere you live. For one thing or another. You live in Beverly Hills you must compromise. By gad, you better keep those lawns mowed or you get cited. You can't have dandelions out there. You can't leave garbage out in the street. Only so many hours. Cans or they pick them up. You get cited and they enforce it. That's why Beverly Hills is beautiful. So you have to have rules ro live by. I don't care where you live. You know, people say well, I can do what I want. Well, that's great but you really can't. That Singler didn't want to sell hi, send his kids to school and it's too bad he got shot. He shouldn't have been shot.

L: Yes, that was sad.

I: I think that was sad. I didn't know that Sam Weller that owned the bookstore was trying to evict him. I didn't know he owned the property. I didn't realize that. But anyway, people own stuff and say I'm going to do with I want with it. Well, Houston has no zoning. I don't think they've ever changed. If you want to put a service station next to somebody's house, you go ahead and do it. I don't believe in that.

L: Yeah. Are you, as far as being a member of the planning and zoning board, when you look forward to making changes like Bonneville, are you also trying to keep some image of Salt Lake intact? Something intact about what Salt Lake is, to you?

I: Oh, Salt Lake is just another, it's really just another city. What's the difference between Salt Lake and Beverly Hills? They're all people, aren't they, living in a home? They all have an office building and a park and a golf course and a lake. They all eat the same food. The same grocery stores.

L: So basically what you're saying is...

I: It's all in your mind if you think it's any different. I could move to Beverly Hills tomorrow and I wouldn't notice any difference than living in Salt Lake except that it's cleaner than most areas. They don't have slums in Beverly Hills. That's a little different. Los Angeles, they do. We have them right here. We have junk here. Go down to the West side. I can show you all kinds of real junk. I mean, people live in poverty.

L: Oh, yeah, I've been down there.

I: They don't have to. Central City, these people complain. But you can see the same people come in and complain about the area. They're out there drinking beer and their kids are out there dirty and you see, I don't say all of Central City but certain parts of the city. On the West side, you see dandelions. They won't mow the lawn. Weeds. They don't care. But they've got their money for their beer but they don't have money to buy a lawn mower. That's their priorty. That's their life. If I had my way I'd had a law and enforce it, I'd have a law you can't live in a home unless you take care of your lawn.

L: That's to take care of your...

I: Lawn. Your front. I hate, I think it's disgraceful for, to live next door to a fellow that's got weeds in his whole front lawn is full of weeds and I keep mine mowed. And in dozens of homes you could find that in.

L: You mean, up around where you live?

I: There's one or two up there, yes. They ruin the whole block. In my opinion. On the outside. I don't care what a fellow does on the inside of his home. If he doesn't have one stick of furniture. That's his business but the outside ought to be painted. Just by being a good neighbor. Would you like to live next to a fellow that's got no paint on his house at all? Weeds in his front lawn. Would you enjoy living next to him.

L: No, I don't.

I: You don't have to go on his outside of his home. You don't care what he cooks or, but that's the way I feel. We have one up in our neighborhood. His front door wasn't painted. Only just peeled off and he didn't do anything. And his garage door, for ayear. Me and the neighbors, we just told him about it. Finally, and his lawn's full of weeds. If it weren't for the rain it would be all brown. And he drives a Mercedes. Got a good job. Told him, a coupld of neighbors and we'll give you fifty dollars a month rather than degrading, it's worth that to us not to have our property go downhill.

L: Right.

I: But it all reverts back to people. Areas don't mean a damn. You can go down to Rose Park and find, that's the

West side. Find some of the nicest lawns, nicest homes in the city. Then you can go down there and find a couple that aren't. There's nothing wrong with the WEst side. What's wrong with living by a river.

L: Though there's nothing wrong with the West side physically, there are a lot of transient people going in and out of there and it feels different down there. Do you know that?

I: Oh, I lived on the West side.

L: It feels different down there. You go down there and you feel depressed and sad.

I: Well, because the people there, they go to church, they know better. But you know, they just, I think before anybody can buy government home, FHA or whatever? I think they ought to have a week's, a week of schooling, how to take care of a water heater. How to take care of a lawn. What a dandelion is.

L: Those people on the West side though will not get a FHA loan. Because you got to qualify.

I: That's what I'm telling you. Any government subsidy. Any subsidy, they ought to have a class where they have to go for a week. Take their kids.

L: But you got to qualify for an FHA.

I: Yes. Any government subsidy. For homes. Repairs, or whatever. You go along and say loo, this is one thing we insist on, you can't have any dandelions. You got to water your lawn. They've got time. People got time.

One thing you got, especially the Mormons, they have their wards.

L: Oh, yeah.

I: People, a little widow doesn't have to go without her lawn cut. People in the ward will do it for them. They have their welfare program. Nobody goes hungry that belongs to the Mormon Church. And I'm sure they don't, if they belong to the Catholic Church. I don't know of anybody that really goes hungry. Unless it's winos.

L: Did the Jewish Community here have a formal welfare program that you knew about?

I: Oh, I told you yes. They always took care of people.

L: Did they have some system?

I: Yeah, we had the little Hand to Hand Association and Dave Allred, by the way, was the secretary of the one that replaced them. He can tell you all about it. That's the one to talk to.

L: Right.

I: You ought to go back and talk to Dave about that.

L: I will do that.

I: He was secretary and he handled the funds for this, that would finance people coming through here that were broke and helped them get a horse and wagon or a little truck or whatever.

L: Get them on their feet, at least, temporarily.

I: Yeah, none of the Jewish people went hungry. None of the Mormon people that I know of did.

L: So, Mr. Wagner, you don't believe in history, huh?

I: Well, I mean, history is history, but I mean to read about it, I lived it.

L: From our conversation at the beginning of our conversation, you don't believe in history.

I: No, well, I didn't say it that way. I'm saying that I think it has a priority. In other words we need money. I believe in progress, yes. But today, you see, in the old days, we didn't have any movies. Sound. Today you can take movies of the interior of the old City and County Building. You can take pictures of it. The old Newhouse Hotel is gone. There are pictures of what it looked like. In the old days unless you had an artist rendering, you didn't know what it was about. In other words I've been back to Schonberg Palace in Vienna. Okay, there was a picture, an oil painting of Schonberg a hundred years ago. And very few changes. You look at that picture you know what it looked like. I've seen it. If I saw a movie that is showing Schonberg and it was gone today I'd be just as enthusiastic. I've got a picture of what Main Street was like. We can't keep it forever. So I've got the pictures of it. We don't have movies now but we have the oldtime movies. You knew what New York looked like. You've seen the old movies of New York. We couldn't keep those old buildings. What would New York be like today? That's what I'm saying about history. I believe in progress. One or two old buildings around SAlt Lake here, yes, should be saved. McEwans Building, the Aviation Club,

The Governor's home, the Keith home. Maybe a handfull. But to take every old building that's over fifty years old and try to preserve it, I think is ridiculous. I wouldn't want to live in a sixty year old home with a narrow staircase going straight up without airconditioning, you know. I don't want like to live like the pioneers lived. I did that. I lived in a house without running water. An adobe house. I lived in a house without a bathtub. And if we had our old home today I wouldn't want it preserved. What good is it? Give me what I've got. Give me the modern home with the air conditioning, not modern, you can put in any decor you want, you can put Chinese, you can put early american, you can decorate a home any way you want but to have the actualy early american stuff wouldn't be for me. We've improved on everything.

L: Yeah.

I: I wouldn't go back to the history of the old medical deal. That's why I say, I'm in favor of taking priorities. If we need twenty five million dollars for the City and County Building, I'd rather see you spend twenty five million on cancer research. And move them into another building. What good is that old building? It's nice for the people that collect, historical buffs. You know. You love to look at it, just like my brother-in-law's an artist. He looks at the clouds. Oh, he looked at them today, that is really something. In his mind it is. He just loves to

see those white clouds. I happen to be a guy that likes to see the white clouds too but I'd rather see the clear blue sky. In other words I'd rather see a blue sky every day than a gray sky.

L: Right.

I: It's just a matter of opinion but to keep...How much money do we have?

L: How much money do we have?

I: Yeah, we have so much money and what can we use it for? Betterment of the people? For the living or should we worry about the dead?

L: Well, sometimes it's connected. Sometimes it's connected.

I: Yeah, but if we need money for research for cancer and heart and arthritis. I happen to be on the Arthritis Foundation, I'd rather see twenty five million dollars go to the Arthritis research to benefit millions of people all over the world than I would one City and County Building. But if we had money for everything, fine go and ahead and use it.

L: Sometimes, in order to see the value of history, you've got to step out of the stream of progress to see it. When you're sort of in the fast lane of progress, history is just an inconvenience but it's in the way and it doesn't seem to really have a value for what is happening now and what you're envisioning for the future. But when you're talking to young people and you're talking, for instance, to children, and you're talking to kids growing up, who

have no sense of waht life has been like and no sense of where things have come from, where they've moved to.

I: I agree, but they don't care, really. You talk about, you know, there's nothing worse than having, talking to young people about how you didn't have any water in the house. How you didn't have TV and didn't have a TV in every room. You didn't have two dars and you walked up to the University and you walked home or you got a ride, or you jumped on the back of the cowcatcher on the street-car when it stopped. If the conductor, he'd come back once in awhile and pull the trolley and stop it and then get out and chase you. So you'd take a ride. You did a lot of things, you know, but you had to get somewhere the best way you could. With a little horse and buggy, we were tickled to death to have that 'cause we didn't know any better. If you told me today that I could go back and have the old horse and buggy or do you want your Rolls Royce, I'll ake the Rolls Royce anytime. And I'll take a plane trip to New York rather than take the City of Los Angeles. The first time I went to Chicago, twenty four hours.

L: But, the only thing is, is you're hitting the past and the present. They're not in competition. Not always.

I: Well, there are, certain things are but very little.

L: Sometimes they are, but not always.

I: Oh, we've always done it this way, let's keep doing it that way. We have to be aware of opportunity. We have

to be subject to change.

L: But just imagine if you knew nothing about the past. If your whole life consisted of what you know now.

I: Well, I would know the past because I know what I did five years ago.

L: Right. You know what is past from experience. But let's say...

I: That's, that's my definition of experience.

SIDE 2

I: If you didn't know about those things you wouldn't know how to kill people, would you?

L: But the point of it is...

I: We'd be better off if we didn't have any guns. That was progress and it wasn't.

L: But you know something funny, you know the past doesn't go away, you carry it in you.

I: Oh, you always carry it the past.

L: It's inside you.

I: Sure, you carry the past.

L: It's in your head.

I: That's why you have high school reunions. College reunions. You go back and you have one and you say, oh, boy, I'm glad I didn't marry her. I'm sure glad I didn't go in partners with Joe when he wanted me to go in a little printing business. You know, you like to recall the past but you're not going to recall certain part of it, aspects, of it, you wouldn't want to relive. Certain parts you

would. Yeah, I would not. The only thing, I told you, I miss youth. Yeah, I'd like to be back in Pioneer park playing softball all summer, swimming, have no cares, no responsibilities. That was great, when you were a kid. You had no responsibilities. You came home and there was something to eat. If you wanted some money, you went to work. You were tickled to death getting a job shining shoes. Boy, it was like being elected president of the United States today. I got a job shining shoes on State Street. Didn't keep it too long. I didn't happen to be a good shoe shiner. The Greek man who owned it fired me. I guess I shouldn't have put the black polish on the brown shoes. You know, I was only eleven years or so.

L: Is that what you did?

I: Yeah. I'd have fired me too. I decided shining shoes wasn't a good job for me anyway. Then I got a job in a grocery store. That was great. You know, that was great.

L: When you look back on not wanting to relive something, do you think of World War ii? And what happened there?

I: Yeah.

L: Is that the worst thing that has happened to you?

I: No, I think it was the best thing that happened to me. In one sense, you know. Seeing people get killed and getting malaria fever and so forth. No, that wasn't good, but they taught me discipline. I mean, I'm better by being in the Marine Corps than I was not being in it. It would have been great to go into the Marine Corps in peacetime instead of war times. Maybe that's good for you.

Learn to take orders, you know. I think it's good. Learn to take care of yourself. Learn to iron your own shirts. You leanr to wash your own shirts in a bucket and you learn cleanliness which we had anyway but you'd take a shower every day. See, we didn't take a shower every day. We took a bath every SAturday. A bath 'cause we didn't have a shower. Once a week was good. Of course, in summer, we didn't need them 'cause we went swimming every day at Pioneer Park all day long. When the pool woul open we'd be there until it closed. And then we'd go play ball. When you'd come home you'd have something to eat and you go play run sheepy run or kick the can. You know, we'd stay up late, ten o'clock, you'd go to bed, eleven. We had a curfew for kids at ten o'clock. You couldn't be on the streets.

L: What happened to you if you were?

I: It's still here. The law is. I think it's still on the books but they don't enforce it.

L: Did you ever get picked up? Do kids get picked up for staying out later?

I: No. Your folks would give you hell.

L: Kids got picked up by the cops?

I: Yeah, sure. A couple of kids got picked up for smoking. The police scared the hell out of them. Thirteen year old kids smoking. Now, they smoke at twelve and no one picks them up. The law says you can't do it. They get cigarettes. They have plenty of money for this. They

have money for marijuana. We never heard of it in our day. Never heard of cocaine. So, yes, I guess certain parts were a little better.

L: Certain parts were simpler.

I: Yeah, they were simpler. Weren't as complicated.

L: Business was simple.

I: Yeah, business was done on a handshake. nobody ever heard of a writing, I mean, I didn't. I never signed a contract in my life until probably 1940. After the war. The only thing I'd do. Alright, Joe, you just bought two cars of bags. Thank you very much. This is the price. Tell him, thank you for your order. Never send a--or if they'd come in and the market had dropped, you'd take them. The market would go up, I'd deliver them. You don't have that anymore. Everything needs a lawyer. It was a paradise, compared to today.

L: It is, it really is. So you guys weren't passing as much paper around, as many bills, not everything was written down.

I: No. In fact, of course, we have been robbed blind but we never even took an inventory. Go look at the pile out there and say, I'd better order another 10,000, we're getting low. Didn't count them. You got enough twine for the bags? Well, you'd better order another ton. We didn't say we had so many bags. Everything is broken down. We need so many pounds for so many thousand bags. So you'd buy some. See, today, it's all computerized.

L: It's all measured.

I: You don't over order, you don't under order. Even the restaurants used to have hotcakes. Everything today is weighed. Every sandwich is weighed. If you get a corn-beef sandwich, they weigh it. So you know the cost. We didn't know about costs, we guessed. Used our head.

L: Right.

I: Today you don't have do anything but set a policy and just follow it. Don't need brains.

L: Go to it.

I: It's a different world. It's going to be different ten years from now and twenty years. Computers. I feel sorry for the kids today. You get a dead battery and you can't add two and two. And I'm surprised that kids come out of college and can't spell. I'm really amazed. I never thought of it until--he can't spell a four letter word. Believe, b-e-l-i-e-v-e. I learned that in school. Basic, you know, i before e except after c. You learn those little things in school. Evidently they don't care what they teach them. And they always want to go out for more money. Maybe they're entitled to it but maybe the kids don't pay any attention to them. Maybe they're too interested in sports. Football. That was the big thing. Going in for football. You know, we never had pro foot-ball or anything. We never had a TV to watch it. We had a radio. We had the World Series. The street used to be lined over in front of the Tribune. They had this big

board. You've probably seen them. Maybe you haven't. Maybe they still have that old baseball board. I wonder where it is. Then you'd have it on the speaker and the traffic would stop on Main Street. From the Utah Theater. They'd be lined up all day long standing watching that board. You know, Babe Ruth is up to bat and when a ball was hit, this little bat would, the light would run the first base, second base. A little light would be the runner.

L: To show how far the runner had advanced?

I: Uh huh. Then you'd stay there all day and watch the World Series.

L: Did they announce what was going on too?

I: Uh huh.

L: With the loudspeaker?

I: Uh huh. Babe Ruth is at bat. Strike one. Strike two. And that was all done by radio. Then they'd say, it looks like a home run, then the light would go around the bases. So we had, but that was interesting. Then the prize fights. I used to sell newspapers about the Dempsey, Turney fight. The Dempsey, Carpenia fight. Dempsey, Firper fight. WE'd wait there until the fight was over and then we'd run down and get our papers and run down to the West side, Extra, Extra. Fight results. Extra. Championship fight. Dempsey--who won? Read the paper. We wouldn't tell them. They'd buy the paper just to see who won. They could read it the next day. We sold a lot of Extras.

L: And they would just print it just for the purpose of the fight.

I: Just for the fight.

L: The fights weren't held in town here? There were some fights held here.

I: Oh, we had some fights here too.

L: But these weren't, obviously.

I: I boxed here.

L: You boxed in there?

I: Where Grand Central is. Not Grand Central now. About where Grand Central is, on 9th South and State. Held in McCullough's Arena.

L: There is no Grand Central on 9th South and State.

I: Sure there is.

L: 9th South? That's Sears.

I: No, they're 8th South. Right in the middle of that block, you had McCullough's Arena. And before that it was the Salt Lake Bees baseball field. Salt Lake Bees. Pacific Coast League. We had Tony Lazarey, Oscar Vitt. They all went to the big leagues.

L: I remember Lazarey, yeah.

I: He played second base. Played for the Bees here, second base.

L: So he wound up with the Yankees, right?

I: Lefty Gomez.

L: Wound up with the Yankees too.

I: Uh huh. That was the Salt Lake Bees. We used to go to

the baseball games all the time. My brother is a baseball bug.

L: What were you doing in boxing?

I: I was going to be a professional boxer. Mother made me quit. Hank Milana and myself, we used to go down to the gym and take boxing lessons.

L: How many fights did you have?

I: Two. It was the same thing, what was it, Golden Boy? Mother wanted me to play the violin and I wanted to box. You'd take the two dollars for a violin lesson and you'd go to the gym and then go buy a two bit piece of hseet music and tell mother that was your lesson. You'd call them up and say I'm not feeling good, I won't be in today. Cancel my lesson. I remember some sheetmusic I brought home. "Moonlight and Roses." Still got the sheetmusic on it. That was my lesson. Instead of Deboursh, Humoresque. Anyway, that was the way--no, the life was different. It was slower but they had murderers. There was a penitentiary. Now, we have more people, so you had more murders and more people. I'm sure there's less, very few murders down in Panguitch, Parowan, Milford. How many murders do you have down there?

L: I don't know.

I: Cedar City. You know, there's only two ways out of Cedar City, a couple of roads out. But that's...I wonder if that's...hello...listen, you ought to talk to O'Keefe about it. He'd be good at it...

We were talking about history, We're talking about the

old...

L: You were talking about some specific things about your boyhood. In particular, boxing.

I: Yeah, that's where we left off. Yeah, I boxed a couple of times there. But Mother didn't want me to box. She didn't know it. We used to go down there--it was fun. We were tough. Hell, you used to high dive off a building. If I were seventeen today, you know, you watch them In mexico, dive off the cliff? I'd do it.

L: Used to high dive off a building?

I: No, I said I would do it.

L: Oh, you would do it.

I: Uh huh. Dive off the high dives at Lagoon. We'd dive off the dressing room at the swimming pool. We'd climb up on the roof and dive off. So, you know, sixteen, seventeen years old, like I told you I took movies over the city out on the plane on the struts, wrapped my feet around, no belt, no nothing, took a movie over City Creek Canyon.

L: No?

L:
I: Yeah./ Took a movie camera with you?

I: Uh huh. Took a movie camera. That was 1937 I guess. Eastman Kodak, 16mm. Still works.

L: You sat in the plane?

I: No, out. Out far on the wing and wrapped my feet around the struts.

L: And you pointed the camera down?

I: Uh huh.

L: Did you ever develop the film?

I: Oh, yeah. It's still around here. Over City Creek Canyon. But see, you had no fear. Weren't afraid of anything. You had your fists and you were fast on your feet. A guy, you didn't care how big they were in those days. You know. Like a guy six foot tall with them. He was real fast and you weren't afraid of getting hurt. At Pioneer Park, we used to play checkers down there. We used to have a silent movie one night a week, Sunday nights. And we had the band. A band used to come down there and play. All the Mexican people lived on the West side, the Italians. That was a great deal. You talk about, even once in awhile now I still go to Liberty Park when they have a band.

L: You still go out there?

I: Yeah, once in awhile. Go listen to a few numbers and the old people sit there. That's great.

L: Do you do anymore boxing?

I: No, I haven't boxed for--I got a punching bag down in the basement. I got a room down there.

L: Yeah, you told me you put together an exercise room.

I: But when you get older, you get colder. After all, I'll be 69 next March so you wouldn't want to fight anybody anymore unless you got a club in your hand. You don't get that upset. I get upset at little things. Got a call from the telephone company, $45 for a call because it wasn't their equipment. I said, I notice they're shutting

off my phones.

L: Tit for tat there, huh?

I: Huh?

L: I said it's tit for tat there.

I: I called them I was going to sue them. For loss of business and so forth. I've paid my bills for all these years and the man came up there and didn't tell me it was going to be $45, all they do, is get a letter. All he had to do was tell me I'm sorry, but that's caused by your non-company phone and you'll have to get someone else to fix it. I said, fine, goodbye. And now I want them to pay me for all the time my phone was out of order. They charge me so much a month. Have an electrical storm, my phone was out for a whole weekend and I still paid for them for a daily charge. Monthly charge so anyway, the head of the telephone company the other day, he's a good friend of mine and I told him, I'm going to sue you. You shut my phone off. So he said, okay, I can take care of that, he said. Well, it was a misunderstanding. I said, yeah. It was only $45. I won't sue them.

L: You don't want this on now?

I: Hell, no.

L: This I wouldn't mind getting on.

I: Well, I lived through that whole era. Now, you're talking about history. I read more books and all the versions of Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was a great man and then he was the worst thing that ever happened to this country.

L: You mean he's either a great man or the worst thing.

I: Yeah, in those days, the bankers and I won't say which ones, the ones I bank with, they would criticize Franklin Roosevelt. He closed the banks. He di this, he did that. And they've got the Repositary, they always complained. It was the worst thing that ever happened to this country. F.D.R. Look what he's done to the country. Look, he's run us in debt. And so forth. Now you look back and look how much we're running in debt now. Frankline Roosevelt was a scrooge compared to Reagan. I mean, but you read all the history and they were so mad that they had to pay so much out of their, so much overhead for the federal deposit system. They had to contribute to that. See, in those days you could lend your brother-in-law $50,000 and went broke, the bank went broke, that was too bad for the investors. And now they do have some protection. I see nothing wrong with it. I don't want to pay taxes anymore than the next guy but sometimes for certain things you have to pay for. If you're going to have waste in government no matter what. You have waste in private industry.

L: So youre sense of Roosevelt was different? You thought he was alright at that time?

I: Oh, yeah, he was God at the time. But other people didn't think so. I mean, time, after all, he started the WPA, Work Projects Administration. The kids got out of high school, went to work up in, making fire trails up in the

mountains. There were all kinds of projects. They had the transits in.

L: Were you involved in any of the projects?

I: No, I had a job. I went to work.

L: Transient camps. You know, they'd get off and they had, right across the street from Pioneer Park, the building is still there, it's something else now. They had bunks there, beds. They had heat. They had a food kitchen. They would get off the freight train and go get something to eat and a place to sleep. You could get a shower.

L: What was it called?

I: Transient camp.

L: Just transient camp.

I: Uh huh. And it was free. The government sponsored it. But today we try to get a transient camp here and nobody wants them anywhere in the city.

L: I heard about it, yeah. What's going to happen to that?

I: Well, what do you do with these people? I mean, really. You got alcoholics down at Pioneer Park. The Indians, the Mexicans, the white. And they're alcoholics. And they steal from each other. They beat each other up. For a bottle of wine. So that was the first time they started worrying about the people. You know, people were starting to starve. It was tough. We had all this wheat. Millions of bushels of wheat the farmers were dumping and they were dumping it and they couldn't give it away. Corn, wheat. And you just couldn't get any. They'd burn

it before they'd give it away to the poor. The farmers couldn't make it. They couldn't make any money. So then they started these programs. We still have them today. Now, probably what's happening today, we're overdoing it because people know they don't have to work. They don't starve here. They can get food stamps, they can get this and that. So if you're lazy you just live off food stamps. I think it's gone too far the other way.

L: But in those days it was the first time the government showed any real interest, you're saying.

I: Uh huh. Yeah, you know, the hour wage laws are changed. You work twelve hours. A kid thirteen years old, twelve years, you know all that stuff.

L: What made Roosevelt God? I mean, you say...

I: Because we had a depression and he pulled us out of it. And made it through the war. But he was a very clever speaker. A hell of a voice. Very convincing but he did start things going. Which they could have had in three years. They didn't need him. Then when you read the other history, the other side of it now you talk about history. Roosevelt wouldn't let the Jews in here from the concentration camps. Canada took them. So then, and then of course, I don't like Roosevelt and I didn't realize it at the time, but during the war, I happen to be close to the Japanese people. I'm a life member of the Japanese, American Civic League. In fact, the only life member in Utah.

L: How did this happen?

I: Oh, I just, after we had them up on 1st South and had to move them out for the Salt Palace. So anyway, do you want to conclude this another time.

L: You have to go right now?

I: Yeah, I've got to leave. But anyway, what happened on the Japanese. They put them in a concntration camp. Not the same thing. They didn't beat them but they moved them out of their homes in 24 hours with all they could carry.

L: Were you involved with Japanese people who were getting moved out?

I: Oh, yeah.

L: Did you know any?

I: After they got moved out. Because I was in the service then.

L: You were involved with them after they got moved out?

I: Yeah, flew down there in Topaz, the concentration camp. Because I hired a lot of them.

L: Okay. Do you want to go now?

I: Yeah, I've got to go.

L: Let me call you up again.

I: Alright. Fine.