

Interview with Gerrit Boiten (Age 93, perhaps 94) Taped July 21st, 1975

K-Ron Kuiper; B-Gerrit Boiten

NOTE: The Boiten interview was very difficult to transcribe. Mr. Boiten didn't speak very loudly or clearly, so I'm not sure just how accurate the transcription is.

B: (Noisy tape) from that there. John?

K: Yes.

B: Ya. John, and the other one, the younger one, he _____ and then he went to Oldberg. From there he went to...the next thing I knew, why he was mayor of Spring Lake or something like that.

K: You knew that family then, didn't you?

B: Oh, ya. John's wife...John's wife...John and his wife lived down by the lake...when you go down around the lake. She was a Fisher girl.

K: Mm-hmm.

B: Oh, ya, I know them.

K: Did you know Klaus Zeldenrust?

B: Ya.

K: Did you, really? Now Klaus Zeldenrust...uh...I guess is my step great grandfather.

B: Oh.

K: Because my grandmother's name was Vos and she came over from the Old Country with about five kids, some of whom you know. I think John was one of them. Uh...

B: Louie...

K: Yes. And then committed suicide, didn't he? Do you remember that?

B: No, I can't say that. Well, Louie...Louie _____. Louie Zeldenrust.

K: Oh, did he?

B: Ya. Ya, didn't you know that?

K: Ya, but I don't know the Zeldenrust family. I only know the Vos side of it a little bit.

B: Oh. Louie Zeldenrust, he's a... oh, he's with Kilbourne's mill. Kilbourne's Mill, they made, oh, pails and kegs and barrels and all that stuff over there. _____ Some of these old squares...you know where the _____ is there?

K: Mm-hmm.

B: Well, the mill used to be right on the end there by the river and that's where their logs...they had enough room that the logs came in there and that's where they went up in the mill and that's where they cut the logs and the headings (?) and all that stuff. And then they had a shed there to one side where they kept...where they kept the oil and stuff. You had to have a key...you couldn't get in or anything. But anyway, Louie went as soon as it was dark at night-it would get dark then too around 5 o'clock in them days. Of course, you worked 10 hours a day, and he went in there...it was dark, and he went in there with a lantern I think it was at that time, and how it happened, I don't know, but it must of caught fire. And Louie came out, he was all burned. You could tell, if you see him, you would know it because his skin was so...He lived, oh, he lived, when was it, about 15 years ago when he died. Ya. _____ Ed Loen (?) and John Balgooyen and, oh, John Balgooyen and Ed Loen...who were the others now? They all had a...they had his department in there. They made steel hoops, you know, that goes around the pails and barrels.

K: Oh.

B: That was his department.

K: So they made barrels, too.

B: Oh, ya. Ya, they made all that. John Balgooyen had the heading. Well, that's where Sam...Sam Van Zanten worked up there at that time, too. And James, Johnny James, worked up there. They had to cut those headings, you know, for pails...on a saw. The saw was round like this and they had a block of wood, of course, and that fit on there and it went back and forth. And many of them lost a finger or a hand down there in them days.

K: Did the company ever pay them for it?

B: Oh, no. They never did; they didn't in them days. Uh-uh. Unless they had good natures. No, they didn't; not in them days.

K: That took labor unions, didn't it?

B: Ya.

K: Labor unions made the company take a little better care of the workers.

B: Well, I don't know. I don't know if it was labor unions but then they done it after awhile. But the representatives that you voted for, they put them in. (Noise)

K: When...when were you born, Mr. Boiten?

B: 1881.

K: 1881. And you have lived here all your life?

B: Ya. I'll be 94 next November 26th.

K: It's remarkable that you can still get around and your memory is still so keen. That's wonderful.

B: Yes, that is.

K: Do you have any memories of the big fire of 1889?

B: Ya, I do have. I was only a kid then-you can figure that out.

K: Yes.

B: (Noise) My folks barely missed the _____ or something, I don't know. But I can remember when my dad went down afterwards to the fire and the shingles were flying with flames on them, coming over, people would put them out. All the way down to Jackson...we lived on Jackson Street then and they...

K: So even on Jackson Street, people were standing around with pails of water to extinguish fires.

B: I don't know if they were standing around but they were putting the shingles out as they come.

K: Yes.

B: And they come around, and they'd put it out. Things were different in them days.

K: Do...do you remember the...do you remember yourself seeing the burning shingles fly through the air?

B: Oh, ya. Ya, you could see them. The next day we...the next day or so, why when we walked down...in them days, we all walked. They had wooden sidewalks. And after the fire, you walked down Third Street, turned left by the First Church there, and you could see where the sidewalk was, the boards, the ashes showed it just like the sidewalk was there.

K: But it was ashes instead of wood.

B: Oh, ya. Ya. The kids-I don't know if I did it or not-they found pennies, you know, from the church in there at that time, too. Ya. I remember that. That's when we had the mineral springs in there, too.

K: Yes.

B: The mineral springs was where the old library was...that's where Security First Bank owns all that property now.

K: It's the parking lot of the bank now, isn't it? Where the building was?

B: Yup.

K: Did you ever buy any of that mineral water?

B: I don't know. We was just kids.

K: Yes.

B: I don't remember that, you know. I remember, of course, the Cutler House, you had to climb up steps going up there. You'd get up there just the same as the others...they had...oh, yes. And there was...oh...well, we had other...I know we had...we had...John McClure had a bakery there and I worked for him delivering...trying to sell bread and stuff. And that was up there, too. Ya, I... _____ ...some of that.

K: Well, there aren't many people around today who remember that fire.

B: No. Well, I was only a kid. Yes, I remember it. Ya, I do. I remember that fire.

K: Do you remember hearing anything about the Vanden Bosch Clothing Store and...

B: Yup. Yup.

K: ...And that fire at the time of the fire?

B: That never caught fire.

K: Did you ever hear any stories about that? I don't think they had insurance, did they?

B: No, not in them...no, I don't think they did. But they...uh...everybody else over there was burning...I don't know. Ya, that...I don't know how, but they did. But that's the way they were them days. As far as that's concerned, in them days, you mightn't even have...when people were so sick, you mightn't even have your picture taken. And _____ If you turned around and ain't got insurance, ho ho. Then you'd be out of bed.

K: Why was it wrong to have your picture taken?

B: Well, some of them had that idea, that's all, although they did. They did. You know, it's fanatic, you know.

K: Ya. But...

B: I know...I know the last...I can't think of his name, he owned a barber shop on Seventh Street, on Seventh Street where...he's from Ferrysburg. Chadwick, I guess was his name. I ain't sure. He was telling me that his dad wouldn't let him get any insurance. He was going to get insurance, you know. Well, he wanted to be...he had a barber shop. And his dad wouldn't let him. And, oh, he was strict. He went anyway. He left...I remember he left. I always went there. That's where the old Powell had a meat market there on Seventh Street. Ya. Oh, ya. That was nothing new.

K: There's a photograph of the Cutler House.

B: ya, that's it. Ya. That's it. And the fire started over there in that meat market. The fire started over in there.

K: I see.

B: That's where the fire started. The church was over there on this corner...on this corner. Ya, I remember...I remember that. _____ That man must be...that man must be...

K: Which?

B: There's Dewey Hill.

K: Yes.

B: And this is Washington Street, right here. And that's Third Street. _____ And there they had steps...you went about four steps there and then you got into the lobby, I remember that. And John McCoye was...he was a big shot there for buying meats and groceries and supplies over there. And he was buyer and then he got _____ afterwards when they reopened, and he opened a place over here about in here and that was quite a ways up...you came up quite a few steps up and the front was glass. He had a bakery and all that, and I worked for him trying to sell bread.

K: Oh, I see. When you were how old?

B: Oh, I don't know, probably 15, 16. Fifteen probably. And his brother John Geersema (?) had a bakery over on the corner there where Vander...Vander...Steiner's Drug Store now, Vander Veen's. Then next door, that's where...not next door...oh, yes, right next door from the corner, the first building. The corner building was the Odd Fellows building. That had two more stories on it a couple of years ago. Then they tore it down and made a one-story. But at that time, he had a...John McCoye had...not McCoye, but Geersema had a bakery in there. John McCoye, his daughter married...I don't know. I think he was...what was that now? No. I don't remember that. There's the mineral springs.

K: Were you ever in the Cutler House, the first one? Did you ever get inside it?

B: Ya, I was in there. Of course, I don't remember anything about it. When you were kids, you get in anywheres.

K: That's right. That's a long time ago. I...I...Did they have any Negroes, or blacks, working in the Cutler House? Mrs. Dubee remembered there was a black who pulled the rope to make the elevator go up and down.

B: Well, that could be. Ya, that could be. Ya, she would know because she's been in it.

K: Ya. And she was, you know, she was older than you, considerably.

B: Oh, ya. Sure. Ya, I knew her, too. Ya. But I don't know. You used to see blacks...uh...they used to have blacks around the house. When they'd be out driving, I'd see blacks in there. And they'd wait on them...when they come out of the...they'd go to the carriage and help them out of the carriage, I've seen them do that.

K: Carry the luggage?

B: Ya. I seen them do that. Ya. Oh, ya.

K: Do you remember black families in Grand Haven-the Graves or the Hicks or...?

B: Oh, yes.

K: Ned Smith.

B: Ya. Ed Smith, Blind Ed. My dad was right over in the 1100 block of Washington Street, an old house. And Harvey Blunt...this Graves went there and he'd come around the old part there, quite a high stone there, he lived right...We lived on Jackson Street where the Credit Union bought a house, I guess...where the Credit Union was on Jackson Street, the first old house. That house we moved from...we moved from Elliott Street in what they called the penthouse. We moved over to Jackson and that there house...we moved in that house. Then we...afterwards we...we...my sister worked for Addison...we bought the house over at 610 Fulton Street. That...Joe Ruiten lived on one side and we lived on the other. The house was a good deal like the Decatur's, John Decatur. And we lived there. And Millers lived next door afterwards, but...After we sold it, we sold it to John Lulof and he sold it afterwards...they sold it and they went and moved over on Pennoyer Street by the railroad track there. And then the union man bought it from them. Ya, that's the house where we lived.

K: What...what kind of work did you do most of your life, Mr. Boiten?

B: Well, first I went to work to the Challenge Machinery there. That's Oldberg now, on the corner. I worked in there. Jake Verhoeks, he was the foreman up in the Cabinet Room and that's where I worked. And, of course, in them days you worked 10 hours. You worked...you worked...sometimes you worked overtime.

K: And this was around the turn of the century? Around 1900?

B: That was around...let's see once...that was...I remember...What year was Cleveland...

K: Well, that must have been around 1898, or before that even.

B: Well, it was before that.

K: Ya. He was in the 1890's.

B: I worked there then and Gerrit Van Streng (?) he was a foreman, superintendent, in there. And Andy...Andy Van Loo. And they were old-timers. And they worked...the thing would shut down when it

come to May, the first of May, you could look for it. Then when the Fair and these big houses in Chicago, they bought their supply of refrigerators.

K: By that you mean ice boxes.

B: They were...well, they...ya, ice boxes.

K: Yes.

B: And all sizes, of course. And then we'd have to work overtime at night to get them out. They'd go out by the trainload, see, same as that one in Muskegon...I just can't...I just had that...well, it will come to me. They had a refrigerator works there, too. We was competing with them. And they'd go out by the trainload...

K: The Norge?

B: No.

K: No.

B: No, no.

K: Well, go ahead.

B: And they'd compete. And they'd have a train load on the side there, you know, for ice boxes going to Chicago, them big houses there. And then we was done for the summer. And this one year that I'm thinking about now was the time when old man Sheldon of the Challenge Refrigerator Works, he made the remark, he said that there was an election in November. We generally would get...we'd get laid off, sometimes we'd start to work again in the fall, see. But this year was election year. And he said that if the Republican's didn't get in, they weren't going to start up again until afterwards, see. Of course, that was they had to have a full dinner pail, that was the slogan, a full dinner pail, see. And he had that _____, a lot of them, and they had a lot...they had big parades then. There was parades and they had these on a stick, you know, they had these little cans with a torch on it and they'd fill them with oil and then we'd march with them. It was good. And then when they got through, we had to bring them back. They had them under the...under the warehouse there and us kids would find them, I know, and, well, we thought we'd use some of them. That was in Cleveland's...that was...I remember that was in Cleveland's time. We wasn't going to start up until after the election. If Cleveland won, well, then we was not going to start up.

K: He didn't like Cleveland.

B: No. But he's the guy that got...he was a brother-in-law...he was the president...or Sheldon...this Sheldon was...you know where Dr. DeVries is now down on...?

K: Yes, on Washington.

B: On Washington. That's the house that he built in there. Gerrit VanStreng did a lot on the carvings in there. They all were...well, Gerrit VanStreng was in charge of that in the shop. He had all that stuff made, see. And a lot of that was oak and some butternut in there. And those carvings and stuff were all made on the machine too, see. And they were doing it one, two, three, four. And you had one pattern there and you'd follow that, just like your router is today. If you got a router, you can do that. That's the way it was.

K: He made them in the refrigerator plant?

B: Sure. And they had to pay for it. (laughs) Oh, yes. Well, anyway, he had that. But later on, Cutler lived across the street. That was his brother-in-law. In them days, the Cutlers and Savidges might as well have owned everything. You know, they had all the sawmills and all that there, see.

K: You're talking about Sheldon, aren't you?

B: Sheldon, ya.

K: Is he related to Cutler, too?

B: Sure. His wife was his sister.

K: Oh, I see.

B: Ya, that's the way it was. But Henry...(laughs)...he got fired. They caught up to him. And he had his two sons in there, too. Dwight and...I forget their names now. They all worked in there. But when he got through, why then...they kicked him out and old Captain Harbeck...Captain Harbeck got in there and took his place, see, and he had to revamp that plant. What he had...the bank downtown, the National Bank,...and Steketee...Steketee lived on Washington Street across from the Second Reformed Church-it was on the corner at that time-in that big house that today, I guess...who was that...I guess somebody bought it, I guess, and had rooms in it or something. But anyway, he lived in the second house there and he was the president of the bank through the...well, the banks belonged to the Savidges and the Cutlers then anyway. But it was a National Bank and you couldn't get nothing...you couldn't get hardly any...hardly lend any money because I know John Hoffman, he had a grocery store where Did's is now on Jackson Street, that little store, a delicatessen now in there.

K: Mm-hmm.

B: They fixed it up. That little store went...well, I don't know how many times that changed hands. The last one I remember is John Hoffman. Of course, he was the father of the young John that afterwards got in the Peoples Bank. John was...he went over there and he made a deposit or got some money he had...they made a mistake of \$200 at the bank. And he told them about it. They never made any mistakes in the bank. They didn't believe him, nothing doing. He tried to tell them. He'd tell them but they wouldn't listen. Well, then it come to the next day and some way they come begging, come begging because they was short in the money. Nowadays, why they check you right away. They take care of it right away. That's the way things went at that time.

K: Now you worked then for the Challenge Refrigerator. Wasn't that called Challenge Corn Planter too at one time?

B: The Corn Planter, that was...it was the original Corn Planter. That was on Seventh Street where the skating rink is.

K: Yes.

B: That's where the Corn Planter was. They had a lot...oh, they even had repairs for the Corn Planter down to the old Challenge Refrigerator when they was there because they moved everything over there.

K: It was the same ownership.

B: Same Ownership. It was the same ownership went over there. They had a...had these...well, it was a long time...part of it was a long trough where the corn fell in and they made the line...when they plant it, they pulled it along and the corn would fall in through, and that's the way it was. So they had them on...their parts were about that long. I remember because I used to have...I went in there quite often to get other parts. And they used to supply that after they moved here.

K: Oh.

B: They used to supply the parts for the corn planter.

K: Even...they weren't making corn planters any more but they were still supplying parts.

B: No, they weren't making them but the parts they left here.

K: Someone told me a story about an incident that happened in the old Challenge Refrigerator. He said that Mr. Harbeck was acting as foreman at that time.

B: Ya, he was general manager.

K: Okay. Well, the story went something like this: There was an old...elderly man working and he was working as hard as he could. And he said that Mr. Harbeck used to come down there with a watch and he'd look at that old man and say, "You're not working fast enough. You're losing the company money." And finally...finally, Mr. Harbeck came down and fired the guy and this man said that he and all six or seven others got up and left with him, and they quit and went across the street and got other jobs.

B: Hmm.

K: You probably...that man is younger than you. That probably took place when you no longer were working there.

B: Ya, that could be.

K: You don't remember anything about a story like that? Okay.

B: If they were...I'll tell you they...they were...they were...in those days, things were different. I know you couldn't...we always did...we started work at 6:30 in the morning. Well, when it got to the middle of the forenoon, you began to get hungry, especially if you were a young kid. You, you had to work and hide behind something to eat, or take a bite and run or something like that, because if they'd catch you, boy oh boy, they'd bawl you out right. Jake Verhoeks was just as bad. And, of course, he was paid for it. Of course, in them days, if you got a two cent raise or a nickel raise, boy, you were a lucky guy. And you didn't get the money that you get now.

K: It was a 10-hour day and you didn't get any breaks in the morning or the afternoon?

B: No.

K: Just at noontime.

B: Just at noontime. If you took 'em, why you took 'em....if they'd catch you at it, why...(Laughs) I know they had a...had a...in them days, I remember Barney Klouw from Spring Lake. He's long gone. Well, John Tregy and Tom Zeldenrust and Joe Hoekzema and...oh, so many of them I can't think of now, _____ Kieft and...But anyway, I worked with Barney on the side...that's the highest step I could go up there...I worked on that side that they called...they finished the case and, of course, the...oh, I worked...I done that too. I worked in there with old man Nokom in the Charcoal Room. That was airtight. See, the insides they were all made...first they'd come through. And then the outside went...would come along and then the inside. Well, then when that got up close to the top, then they were shoved in this Charcoal Room and then you'd...Harm and I and the old man Nokom did the job. He pulled that string in there and there was charcoal in there and you know what dust that is. It's terrible. And I worked in there too for awhile, but boy oh boy, you'd come home and my mother used to get so disgusted because she'd have to wash them, you know. Of course, I was only a kid. And then they went around...they went and them things went around to the point one place there where they put on the outside case. You had to nail that on. And, you know, at that time, it was 50 cents a day. Dick _____ worked on that, too. And he done that and I thought...I done that too, once. But then I got married. My next was to go on the side where they finished it. And when we got through with it, why it went on to the varnishing... _____ Room. And the inspector came around and Barney had a big, strong voice anyway-he was an old man-and he wanted to know how much money you made. And Barney, he yelled out with his strong voice, "A hundred days, a hundred dollars." (laughs) I'll never forget that.

K: (laughs)

B: Ya. Ya, I _____ I was going to clean one of those big lamps, you see 'em once in a while, kerosene lamps they use them for ornaments now. You go around and see if there's oil in and clean the chimney. And they had one where I didn't know it. A piece on the bottom of the chimney (?) was broke out and I put my hand in it...and I put my hand in it with a cloth and I turned it and bingo! I cut this _____ and then I started hollering. Well, I don't know how I got there but they got me downtown to Dr. McAlpine. And so we had all kinds of rags that we had around it and oh, he was so disgusted. What kind of an outfit that was to take care of anything like that! But anyway, then I...I didn't get paid for being off that time, to go down to the doctor even.

K: And they didn't pay the doctor bill either?

B: Oh, no. No. Just like the sawmill days. My dad used to have eight or ten cows and he used to sell milk when he lived here. In the sawmill days...in those days, he got cut. He really got cut up. I don't remember that but that was when Frans...he was a _____ but Frans, I don't know what company he worked for, whether it...it wasn't Baker, it might have been Boyden. I don't know, it might have been Boyden's Mill. But anyway, in them days, they had these...these ripsaws and you mentioned your _____, I worked on them already. That was before they had the new ones, the improved ones. But then there, you know, you had to do everything by hand. If you wanted to take the saw off, you had two wrenches to pull one nut one way and then hold it with the other and you'd take it off and then have it sharpened. But anyway, how it happened I don't know. He went under...under that table where the saw was, whether the saw started itself or what but it went right through like that. Ya. Ya. Then they used to get hurt a lot.

K: You...you mean he just split it?

B: Ya. He went over and put his head up to the saw.

K: And it killed him.

B: Ya. And they used to come to our place and they wanted fresh cow manure. Fellows would turn around and cut themselves. Oh, man! That was the _____ but that's the way that was in them days. It wasn't no different. No. It's hard to believe but it's true. Ya. Oh, lots of them...

K: Well, my father lost his arm at the Capon-Burch Leather Tannery in Holland. Just cut it off right in here somewhere and he never got a penny out of it.

B: No. No, no. Well, fellows at the tannery used to get hurt there, too, years ago. Ya.

K: Well you...so you started working there; that is, your first fulltime job was at Challenge Refrigerator.

B: Ya.

K: Then you worked...

B: I worked there about six years, I guess.

K: And then what did you do?

B: Well, then I went to work, I think after that...after that, why, Bill Kieft was working...done some carpenter work on our house and he wanted somebody to work for him and I offered...I thought that was a good chance to get something. So I worked for him about six years. And then it was 1909 and Ed...and Challenge Machine Company that's here now, they wanted...their pattern maker up there, he left...he was leaving...

K: That was Keller Tool?

B: Challenge Machinery.

K: Okay.

B: That's where he is now. They came from Chicago, see, and had all Chicago men but they was gradually leaving, so I...John Welch was the marshal in Grand Haven at that time. He lived across the street and he was...of course, we lived there and he worked there and he worked over at the Challenge. An old man _____ I guess. Anyway, they asked for a recommendation, see. Well, anyway, I handed it in. I guess...Martin Boon...it was between Martin Boon and me.

K: He's still alive, isn't he?

B: Ya.

K: He...he's at Baker Lumber?

B: Ya. Between him and me. Martin Boon he went to Baker's and I got the job over there and I worked there since 1909. I worked there 47 years. I quit in 1956.

K: I see.

B: I worked until I was 74.

K: Now Challenge Machinery is right by the tannery, isn't it?

B: Ya.

K: Didn't that used to be called Keller Tool? Didn't you make pneumatic power tools?

B: Ya, but that wasn't Keller's. Keller wasn't there on the corner. Keller's was the other block.

K: That's right. That's right. Okay.

B: What we did have on the corner there...

K: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Keller Tool turned into Gardner-Denver.

B: That turned into Gardner-Denver. And then Heap's used to be on that corner there in that building. Challenge finally bought that for \$20,000, and Heap's went out of business. They used to make seats, toilet seats and all that. They used to have quite...Pardon me. I had a little onion for my dinner and...Well, anyway, ya, Heap's they was there for a number of years. When they quit, that building was vacant for quite awhile. And that building was put up by...I worked there when Heap's moved from Muskegon to Grand Haven and all that had to be changed in there. I worked on it. Put the elevator up in there cut the opening in it. And that was the time I hurt myself, too. I cut the hole down there and I jumped down in there for something and when I did, I jumped in it and a big spike went right through my foot. And then I got that out of there and I had to go to Dr. McAlpine again. But anyway, I...I worked...that's how it happened. I worked at Heap's at that time, not for Heap but for Charlie _____

who had the contract. He was a Muskegon man and he built that kiln, that dry kiln there, too, when I worked there.

(End of Side One, Tape One)

B: Sure. For 40 cents an hour and I got about a week's worth out of that. That all helped. Of course, my sister, she worked over to Addison's. Of course, that's Steketee's now. She always worked there. _____ she worked there, too. I had two sisters home. They helped me out. I got a bag of groceries from them every week. That's the way we got along. And if there was any jobs around that you could get, why they always had friends around that got the job ahead of you anyhow so you didn't get a chance. Like when they tore down Akeley Hall that time, etc.,... ya, those that worked there in the city...I guess they had more influence to help you get a job. There wasn't much. WPA, I never did work on that though. Of course, you didn't have to, all you had to do was lean on a shovel. (laughs)

K: Huh. Ya. So the Depression was hard on you. Were you making...a lot of people at that time were making house payments, etc. And they lost their homes, etc.

B: Oh, ya.

K: But you weren't affected that way.

B: No. No, I...of course, taxes weren't what they are today either. No, then you could get by pretty easy. Well, we had to. You couldn't borrow money as easy as you can now either.

K: Did you go fishing to catch some fish for food once in awhile?

B: Oh, yes. Ya. Ya. Well, my sisters were awful good to me. My wife's folks, too. They were good to me, too. Ya, we didn't ask anybody for help. I think you'd go around and people would know that you want to work and want to do something, why they help you out if they can.

K: Here are some pictures of Grand Haven schools. Which...which...what school did you go to when you first went to school? Maybe it's not on there, but do you remember what school you went to?

B: Ya, I went to the one that...this here one burnt down.

K: Ya, the Central High School.

B: Ya. That others...the other...the other one is Columbus Street.

K: Did you go to the Columbus Street?

B: No. No, I didn't. No, I...on Jackson Street, right next door to us, was a grade school. On Jackson Street.

K: What was it called, the Jackson Street School?

B: And that's on the 600 block. That's where...that's where the union house is there...used to be on Jackson. And there was another school in the next block on the north side of the street. There was two

schools on that there street. The one on the north side that was further back, sat further back, than the one by us. And the one by...by, I think, John Bolt's, Ted Bolt's father, I think, taught in that school next to us during the summertime.

K: Oh, he normally taught in the Beechtree Street School, didn't he, up further east there?

B: Ya. Ya. Down on the corner of Pennoyer and...

K: Beechtree.

B: Beechtree, ya. Bolt Park, I think, it is.

K: Yes. But he taught in the summertime in the Jackson Street school there?

B: Ya. Ya. I don't know just how that was all there, but he did help in there, I know that. But they had a lady teacher in there, too. They had a board fence...uh...uh...a 5 ½ foot board fence all the way around between our house and the school yard. That's where Ritsema, Claus Ritsema and Hermie Poel were great hunters and fishers. Oh, man. And Claus Ritsema, his folks...well, just as you go over the tracks on Seventh Street to Spring Lake-of course that's all changed, that's wider now, etc. But it was the last house, a little house. That's where his folks lived. It's swampy in there, you know. I guess the Country Road Commission owns all that property in there. Then from there on, coming to town across the track, then we run into the Dake shop. Dake's was over there on that corner, but north of Dake's was a house too, and...what was his name? Hmm. I can't remember everything.

K: You're doing awfully well.

B: Dake's...ya, that's right. Then Archie Wall was a pattern maker there. That was the second building, a little white house, but next to it was the last house on Seventh Street before you come to the tracks. And that was...I'm trying to think...I was trying to think of it before but I can't think of the name. But anyway, they lived there. I can't...darn it. Well, the Growleys lived in there. John _____ was one that lived there, the father of one of the Scherneys (?) that worked for the city electricians. He was courting that girl, see. Well, Archie, Archie Wolff had a lot of fun about that. They had kind of a grape vine in the back where...anyway, they used to be smooching around there when he'd come and call on her. And they couldn't see everything they wanted to so they bored a hole in the wall. (both laugh) I heard that, see when you're a kid you hear all that. Ya. Ya. And finally they was married.

K: So it all came out alright after all.

B: He died sudden there, later on, too. Ya, he was one of the Streng boys around here. There's some Strengs living here yet.

K: The school that you went to, was that a two-room school?

B: No. One.

K: A one-room school. And...

B: The other one was, too.

K: And there were kids from the kindergarten through eighth grade.

B: Mmm...I wouldn't say kindergarten, no. No, they were more than kindergarten. They was more than kindergarten.

K: Kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth, fifth...?

B: Well, kindergarten...there was no five or six year old kids that went there.

K: They were all older?

B: Oh, yes. Ya, all older.

K: You don't know where you went to kindergarten?

B: They didn't have any.

K: I see.

B: We didn't go to school right away.

K: So you started probably in the first grade?

B: Oh, ya. Ya, we didn't have no kindergartens.

K: Uh...then that school had first grade through eight?

B: No, I don't...no...no, because I went up to the other school. I went from there...I used to go to this school up there. That's the school, that's the one that burned down.

K: Oh, yes. Yes.

B: Then I went there.

K: Okay.

B: I probably only went there for a couple years and went up here.

K: Do you have any memories of that first school you went to? For example, how did teachers discipline students if students did something wrong?

B: Hmm. Well, they tried to discipline them, but...huh...we had Tom McCloud...oh, we had a few bad ones. But we had them where they turned around, the teacher would try to reprimand them _____, of course, in them days if you were small enough, they could slap you on the hands or something. But when we got older, there was one of them there-I don't know what her name was either-they were all nice teachers, I don't know. But these fellas, they didn't _____, they'd beat

up the teachers. They wouldn't take anything. I'll tell you a funny story. (laughs) It's not for publication. In the Columbus Street School they had a...there was all outhouses, you know, in these schools.

K: Yes.

B: They all had outhouses. Well, down at the Columbus Street School, they had one back there. Of course, I always heard all that stuff. And then back _____ when they'd clean it out in the spring, you know. Well, this one teacher was in there _____ went into the toilet there and Tom McCloud had a little switch off from a tree, and he went down behind there and he tickled her, you know. (laughs) I heard all about that. I wasn't there when he done it. Ya. So they had those kind of stories, too. Ya. Just like years ago, you'd stand on the corner nights, you know, gathering around. Some were barber shop singers, I guess. I know down by Steiner's Drug Store-that was Vander Veen's...uh...uh...ya...-there was two more stories on there one time. The telephone company was on one and for years and years the third floor was for lodges. That was the Odd Fellows.

K: On top of Steiner's?

B: The third floor. That's just like the Ball Store across the street. The _____ always had that upstairs. But the fellows would hang around there and Dan Paggelton (?) -you wouldn't know him-well, he was an attorney, you know, and he was a city attorney and he was always with the fellas, and he was there too on the corner. He's the attorney that was in jail and they had to elect a city attorney. (laughs) Oh, he was a corker. The fellas was all there...in them days, I don't know, of course, a lot of this stuff I wasn't right there direct but then I know about it. They made remarks about women or so, girls, that were going by, you know, and that was alright. Dan, too, when girls went by, he'd make a snippy remark about her or something. And here come Dan's sister. They didn't know who she was; I guess she come from Detroit, and she was a wobbling her hinder a little bit coming around the corner, boy, one of the fellas started marking a remark and "Here, here," he says, "that's my sister." Ya, the other fellows spoke up and said, "The other ones was somebody's sister too, wasn't they?" That was right, wasn't it?

K: Yes.

B: Ya. That's the way it is sometimes. We make remarks, and that's good yet today.

K: That story about McCloud and the outhouses. Did that have to do with the big Central School or the elementary, the small school?

B: Columbus Street.

K: Columbus Street School. I see. You only...you heard about that one.

B: Oh, yes.

K: Ya. (laughs)

B: Ya. Let's see. I'm trying to see which school was next to our house. This is it. It was on Jackson Street next to our house.

K: Was that yours?

B: Ya. That was next to our...

K: Oh, ya.

B: Then on the other side of the street, I don't know where that is. That was set back quite aways.

K: Oh, ya. It's right here. That's called the Jackson Street School.

B: Ya. That's the Jackson Street School. Yup.

K: Ya, that's the same thing as down here.

B: The same as up there, ya.

K: Ya.

B: But the one that's over on Jackson Street, that was over in the 600 block. And now there's one over in the 500 block, and that was set back aways. And I don't know...

K: Do you know who your teacher was in the Jackson Street School?

B: No. No. Uh-uh. No, I don't. I don't remember that either.

K: But you do have good memories of the Jackson Street School? I mean, you enjoyed going to school there.

B: Oh, well. Like every chick in them days, they didn't want to go to school.

K: Ya, I supposed. Ya. Mr. Tysman, Henry Tysman, you know him.

B: Ya.

K: He was a painter.

B: Ya.

K: He remembers back in the 1920's when a guy by the name of Vander Meiden invited him upstairs in Steiner's Drug Store for a Ku Klux Klan meeting.

B: Oh, ya, I remember that.

K: Do you remember that at all? Did you go to any such meetings?

B: Oh, ya. I went. Three of us went one time. And _____, he's dead, and Givock, he's dead. Three of us went. Ya, we went up there to a Ku Klux Klan meeting. It was alright, but we never went again.

K: Did they try to get you to join?

B: Oh, ya. That was part of the game. That's part of their deal, of course.

K: But you didn't join?

B: No.

K: What...what...what was the purpose of the Klan in Grand Haven? What were they after, or against, or...?

B: Well, in other words, they wanted 100% Americans. That's what they wanted. And at that time too, I don't know that...I can't remember what that...Ya, they had rallies and there was always the American flag. I don't remember what, who that...what that meeting was at that time.

K: Well, the Klan in the 1920's was either against negroes, Catholics or Jews.

B: Well, it was mostly Catholics.

K: In Grand Haven, it would have to be, wouldn't it, because there just weren't many negroes or Jews around.

B: Oh, ya, they were against the Catholics. They originally, you know, organized in the South.

K: Ya, after the Civil War.

B: Ya. That's where they originally come from. That's where the vigilantes come from, too.

K: I wonder...you know, after the Civil War, there were Catholics and Jews in the Klan. That Klan was against negroes. But in the 1920's here, it was different. And I read in the old 1920 papers about crosses burning on Dewey Hill, etc.

B: Yes, yes.

K: Did you ever see any of that going on?

B: Ya. Ya. They had one of these _____-I think his first name was Harvey Wake, he worked for the Grand Trunk. He was here and we had our engineer at that time...at that time, we was developing our own power at the Challenge Machinery. We had a big engine there and we had...everything was all belts in them days when I was there. But the engineer was John...oh, he was a radical, _____. He was good in a lot of ways and in other ways he was not too radical. He was a pretty good guy, but he was the one there that was speaking for the Klan down there in the shop. That's how I went. We went just to see what it was about. You know, when you go to them Klan things, you know, you don't know what they're going to do. They didn't want us to leave either when we left, but we didn't stay there. Ya. That was the whole story of it back of it then was they wanted 100% Americans. _____.

K: That was the expression they used, 100% Americans?

B: Yup. But in order to get that, they'd have to be all Indians.

K: I guess so, ya.

B: Ya.

K: It's kind of interesting,...I...the few people that I know of who were in that Klan who are still around really don't want to talk about it today.

B: Why not? It wasn't _____ was it? I'll tell you who didn't want to talk about it was the politicians. I'll tell you a little more. At that time, we had a sheriff and County Treasurer, Register of Deeds I don't know. We got them fellows...they got them fellows nailed. If they would join the Klan, they'd get support of the Klan, see, for election. You know, politicians are just a crooked bunch that they...I know what they are-I've been in it. It's all just for...everything for you _____. But you got to watch out; the devil's right around the corner. And they promised...all they had to do was to join. Whether they joined and went to work, they contributed. They got their names some way or another, they got them in it anyway. And anyway, they got them to pay money at that time, I remember that. And I...I think that it wasn't Steketee that was sheriff but his brother-in-law that was sheriff before him. And there was several of them out of the court house that time.

K: Did it help them to get elected?

B: No.

K: The Klan wasn't that big, was it, really, in Grand Haven?

B: No. Oh, what the heck. We wasn't...we didn't give a hoop about the Klan or what they aid or anything. We...some of them...of course, you could scare them fellows because they wanted to be reelected, to join. Ya, when you went to their meeting, they had big flags, etc. Oh, ya. If we'd went, we could have been a big shot in the Klan. But we didn't want to.

K: When you went to that meeting, did they have robes on? That...that...white things?

B: Well, I think...I think just the grand...

K: The Grand Dragon, or something?

B: Ya. That was the only one, I guess. They all owned their...had their seats. The Grand Dragon had the front seat there and a seat on the side...on that side...They had a man at the door, one of them. You had to give a...a...

K: A password?

B: Ya. All that stuff, ya. Everything was all secret.

K: Henry Tysman told me that, the same thing you suggested...that they almost tried to scare you into joining. They...they...they really didn't want you to get out of there without joining, and they had somebody at the door.

B: No, they didn't want you to leave. That's right. They wanted you to join. That's right. That's right. They were there. No, they didn't scare us; we was going to go. They knew about us.

K: I...I heard that a...a Reverend Skippers from the First Church was involved with the Klan. Was that true?

B: Ya. Ya, but how much, I don't know.

K: But you heard something about that, too?

B: Could have been. I don't know, I never knew. But he could have been. He had a son that was bad, you know. He had a son that...he had a son that went to Kalamazoo, I guess, and it cost him about \$5,000 to keep him from prison, I guess. That was something...just what it was, I don't know. They really kept those sentences...any of the facts...I was interested to know but anyway he put old man Skippers on the bum.

K: Hmm.

B: Ya. You know, his son run a...a...run a saloon or a bar over in Holland at the time of the speakeasies and the 10% beer and all that stuff. I knew him, too. Knew his wife, too. His wife worked at Addison's where my sisters did. No, I couldn't prove that, and I can't say that I ever heard that either.

K: No. That's good. I'm glad you can't. Another thing I wanted to ask you about had to do...also had to do with the 1920's and prohibition.

B: Ya.

K: Do you have any prohibition stories? I know a lot of stuff was made in Robinson Township and brought in here. Some came off the boats. Did you ever hear any stories...?

B: It came from the boats at first, ya. People would go to Chicago on the boat and they could get it there. But they didn't have to; you could get all you wanted around here. I...I...Bill, no...not Melcher...Bill...

K: Metzler?

B: Bill Metzler, he served time for that.

K: Ya.

B: And...huh...I don't know his...Bill was a good guy as far as that's concerned. Bill was married to a Wiebenga girl. He lived out there. And I know parties that went and got some moonshine from him. It was easy to get. And this...this Tysman, his uncle, _____ of course, them old-timers always did like their liquor. That's something that never bothered me much. I was an addict on it _____. Anyway, his uncle, I know, got it because he offered me some to drink. I've tasted it; it's no good. But you could get all you wanted. Orrie...uh...let's see, now what's his name? Orrie and his brother. I can't think what his name was. My memory isn't as good as it was. Orrie and...hmmm...well, anyway, Orrie lived above the

store of Van Zanten's. Van Zanten and Fisher was on the corner there across...on the east side of Seventh Street across from the skating rink now. Orrie lived upstairs there and Orrie was drunk every time he could get drunk. I used to feel sorry for him. He'd call me up and I told him I'd come to see him. He always had plenty, all he wanted to get.

K: was that Orrie Focken?

B: No.

K: He was the one that got washed off the fishing tug.

B: Oh, no. No. It was before that.

K: Oh, okay.

B: Oh, Orrie...that's...that was before this.

K: Okay.

B: That was before prohibition. Ya. Ya, I remember that. I can't think of it...there was two brothers and I can't think of their last name. They lived over on Sixth Street in there, right next to where Dornbos used to be. I can't think...oh, ya, there was plenty of that going on. And then that's...I was in Bolt's Meat Market too one time and he was telling about one of the fellas that just came out. He had six months in there and he served five of them just for bootlegging, or making it, I don't know. Oh, they made just as much of it down there _____...got more receipts now than when I went. That's the way that was. Ya.

K: I...I've heard some of the older people telling me that...that Grand Haven before prohibition, had a lot of taverns. There was as many taverns as churches. But one of the interesting things, they said that you could go in those taverns and you could eat all you wanted. They offered...they had big sandwiches laid out there and as long as you drank a little beer, you could eat all you wanted.

B: Ya. Ya, well they weren't called taverns then. They were called saloons.

K: Saloons.

B: Well, I never went in them. I went in a few times but then I took a soft drink or buttermilk or something.

K: Yes.

B: I could tell you one big story on that but I...but they used to have them. And then...they didn't have many. We had saloons down on the corner of Fourth and Jackson there by the railroad depot. And they had Thieleman's and we had John...on, what is...

K: Well, they had Kammeraad's.

B: Oh, ya. That was on this side of Seventh Street. Kammeraad had bears in there too at one time.

K: Ya.

B: Ya. Kammeraad. But there wasn't nothing...they was supposed to be closed at 10 o'clock. Of course, the back door was always open. But them days they weren't supposed to be open on Sundays. Thieleman's, too, they had a back room. Of course, I never was there but then I knew that. In the back room, they had a tub of ice and whatever they had was in there. And, well, they'd go in Thieleman's, too. He was caught a good many times; they could have caught him many more times. But then they'd bring out the judge in the morning, and they'd plead guilty and get a \$25.00 fine. He'd leave-goodbye. Then the next time he'd come back again...well, they could do that, see.

K: Mm-hmm.

B: Ya, they had a lot of that. Well...I'll tell you, them saloon days were 100% better than what you got today. A woman didn't go in a saloon, of course. When you see them go in the back door, why they were a chippie from Muskegon. And that's about what they were.

K: A chippie from the what?

B: Muskegon.

K: I see.

B: Ya. They'd come down here. Yup.

K: Well, what...what does the term mean, a chippie?

B: Well, she might have come from the low lands in there, the warehouses and stuff, I guess. That's the only thing I can know. Ya. She's no good.

K: Oh, okay. Okay. I...that's just a term that's 50 years old and I wasn't...really didn't know what you meant.

B: Ya. That's just...ya. You didn't see them. No, you didn't have them go in. Today there's more women in there-at least, there have been. I don't get around but...no one tells me much but I know what's going on. Ya. But you know, they had quite a time then, too, that prohibition stuff. Well, Roosevelt was all wrong...the first time he was wrong and the second time. We had a Republican governor. He was _____ . Well, that was the time-Dickinson was his name. He got to be Governor and he was a wonderful guy, a nice fellow, but he was a politician, see. And him and his wife-she was crippled, I believe, or something similar to it. She never could go with him, but his niece always went with him whenever there was anything doing, on a convention or something. He had to go to Chicago I think it was, or New York, I don't know, I think it was Chicago-it could have been New York. But anyway, he took his niece with him. Well, of course, when you get them politicians all together _____ there was a lot of liquor and beer going on in there and he wasn't used to that, of course. Well, anyway, he come back and was telling about how they carried on. Well, he didn't have to tell about it; we all knew what

they did when they had those conventions and he was going to...he got to be governor again right after _____. And he resigned and he listened to Frank McKay and he was going to have a man run that there out of Lansing and McKay he was a politician. He was like...like _____ and these other fellas. Well, in the other cities that run the...they was the head of the party and regardless of who they are, and he was...McKay was really from Grand Rapids. McKay owned some buildings there in Grand Rapids, too. He _____ against the politicians but anyway, Dickinson thought he was going to change things so they put him in and changed over the liquor _____. Of course, that was just his good name. (laughs) Then they agreed to go to work and have bar maids instead of...instead of men, they had bar maids. And he went with that. And that was just the thing for bringing the old stuff back as soon as they could. They had bar maids. And then we used to have it here, we had a fight here to keep them closed at 10 o'clock. Finally, they agreed, the City agreed and made it eleven that the saloons could be closed...uh, open. But then they put in bar maids and they could be open until 2 o'clock in the morning. Why, that busted the whole thing open again. Anyone could figure that out. So he lost out on that deal. He was going to change everything but he didn't. I was disappointed in that. Of course, he had such big ideas and he meant well enough. He meant it well, but he couldn't make it. And ever since that, we have had...we've had it spread. I don't know if you're a drinking man or not, it don't make any difference. But anyway, he made it spread. Then we got...we didn't call them saloons then; they were...oh, what do they call them now? Ya...

K: Taverns, bars...

B: Ya, taverns, not no...taverns, that's right. No saloons. Well, we got the taverns and then we got them out in the country, we got them all over. We got clubs organized and what didn't we have? That's what we got today.

K: You mentioned that the bars, or the saloons, used to stay open until 10 o'clock and it got changed to 11:00.

B: Ya, some places they did.

K: I read that there was a big controversy in town about that. I think I read about that in the City Hall minutes.

B: Ya.

K: And one of the reasons they wanted to keep them open was because the boats came in after 10:00 and they wanted the saloons still open. The saloons wanted to stay open so they could pick up some of that business.

B: Sure. It was the liquor business that wanted it. The people didn't want that.

K: And...and there were articles in the paper about it. I remember Dwight Cutler must have been a prohibitionist. He must have been against drinking because...because he led...he wrote something up in the paper and signed his name, and had about 50 or 60 signatures underneath it opposing that change.

And then somebody...other people, including all the saloon keepers, their name were in the paper favoring the change.

B: Ya.

K: So you hit upon something that I remember reading about. That's kind of interesting.

B: Ya. That was...

K: Do you remember when they sank that big shaft in the sand on top of Five Mile Hill looking for treasure?

B: Ya.

K: What were they actually looking for? What was the story behind that?

B: I don't know. Somebody had...I don't know. I heard that since I was a kid that there was kegs of whiskey buried over there on Dewey Hill. Ya. I never heard of anybody finding any though.

K: Well, maybe Construction Aggregates will find it.

B: Ya. (laughs) If there around, I don't know.

K: But do you remember that story? They sank a big shaft and shored it up with wood on each side?

B: They didn't go too far though.

K: The newspaper reported the progress day by day.

B: Ya. They didn't go too far with that.

K: But that was money, wasn't it, that they were looking for?

B: I don't remember what...sure, they thought there would be Indian relics down there and stuff. That's what they were looking for. Ya. Somebody starts that and you get a following.

K: When did you have your first automobile?

B: Hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm.

K: Do you have any idea? Do you remember what kind of a car it was?

B: Oh, ya. It was a Chevy, four-door.

K: A new one?

B: Uh, I got a new one, ya. That wasn't a new one; the first one I had was an Essex.

(End of Tape One)

B: ...She turned it in. At that time, they was on a disc, you know. And them discs would wear out and they you'd have no grip, you see. And...well, just what year that would be, I don't know. Let's see...18...

K: Do you remember when you saw your first automobile?

B: Ya, that was a Cobb...Cobb car come from...had a 4-wheel, or 4-seater, I think it was. It took some people back and forth from Spring Lake to Grand Haven. Ya, that was...ya, I remember that. Sure.

K: Did people get quite excited about it?

B: Ya, at first. At first, ya. Well, one thing...Henry Dornbos and Jim Locke, they were good Christian Reformers, they went to the old church up there.

K: Mm-hmm.

B: And he was...there was...they was good friends alright, them and Ver Duins were there, the old Ver Duins. They were in politics too, especially Bill. And, well, Locke wasn't. Henry wasn't much either. But anyway, Henry Dornbos got a car and he drove it to church. No, he didn't drive it to church; he could walk because he was close enough. But Jim Locke, he lived over there on the corner of Washington and Griffin, I guess, no not Griffin, Albee, I guess. Well, he got a car then too, and he goes all the way...he drives his car in. Oh, then the church people went up against him. Some agreed with him that it was okay and then they had...that started something. And they had _____ it was, too. And that's when I remember the cars really come into town, the cars.

K: But Henry Dornbos didn't take his to church. He walked.

B: No. He walked. He was close enough to the church.

K: I didn't think the Lockes were Christian Reformed. I got a picture of...

B: After Locke went...afterwards, Locke left the Christian Reformed and went to the Presbyterian.

K: Oh, I see. He was Christian Reformed to begin with?

B: Ya, in the beginning.

K: Was that one of the reasons why he left?

B: I couldn't tell you if that was it, but anyway, he left.

K: I knew he was Presbyterian.

B: He was...ya...he left the church and he went to the Presbyterian Church.

K: He has...he's an uncle of my neighbor, Harry Locke.

B: Oh, Harry.

K: But I got a picture here of...somewhere here...I've got a picture of Henry Dornbos's Model T Ford.

B: Yup.

K: I wanted to show that to you if I can find it. Mr. Tysman used to tell me too that...you know, he was a member of the Christian Reformed church also but he said that sometimes they'd go to the big Dutch church, the First Reformed Church, because they sang...they sang...the services were in English before the Christian Reformed services were and they sang livelier stuff. They sang those old Dutch songs in the Christian Reformed Church.

B: Ya. Ya. That was the trouble here with the churches, the Reformed Churches and the Christian Reformed. It was over that English speaking.

K: Ya. There was a big controversy when they changed, wasn't there?

B: Oh, first they...then they...one time they...

K: There's Dornbos's Model T. There's his car.

B: Yup. Yup. That's...that was taken on Washington Street, wasn't it? Mm-hmm. Ya, and then they had a...they could take the top and shove it over at that time. Ya.

K: What were you saying...we were talking about the church going from Dutch to English and you said, "That was the trouble." What were you saying then? What were you going to say?

B: That was the trouble...that was the trouble with all...with most of the churches.

K: That's okay.

B: I didn't know any at that time. I know...I can remember the time when my folks, when they had a division with the _____ in our church. Let's see...my mother went to the First Reformed...left and went to the First Reformed, but my dad stayed at the Second. That was over _____. When I went...they had English in the morning-some of those churches, you know, they had three sermons a day. And then, of course, one would have English and then they wanted to in the afternoon, change that. And then the evening, they wanted more English. And that didn't work out. And then they had a division. That's the way it is. It's just too many different opinions. But they all are, I guess. But anyway, that's what he's got. Ya. The Second Reformed Church was...was...was springing out from the First Reformed Church. And that's when Reverend Vander Veen-I never remember him, hardly, a long whiskered guy.

K: Christian Vander Veen.

B: Ya.

K: You have vague memories of him?

B: Ya. Ya.

K: Did he start...was he there? Did he help start the Second Reformed Church?

B: No, I don't know much about that part.

K: Because he was the minister of both, the First Reformed and the Second Reformed.

B: He went to one and then he went to the other, ya.

K: He came back some years later and was at the Second Reformed, I think.

B: Ya.

K: That's the way that went.

B: Ya, that's right. That's the way it went.

K: And his brother, the doctor, was, oh, kind of half Episcopalian by the time he died, I think. His wife was anyhow.

B: Ya, well, ya, she had something to do with it. Ya.

K: Although I think he was...I think his funeral was in the First Reformed Church. There's the dummy line. Remember that?

B: Ya. I rode that...I rode that many times. Many times. I remember when that was first put in.

K: Do you?

B: Oh, yes.

K: Do you remember the steam engine? Before it was electric?

B: Well...

K: That's the little steam engine on there.

B: Ya. I guess that's right. Ya, I remember all of that. Ya. Yup. Ya, that later on got to be electric.

K: Do you remember Steve Munroe?

B: I knew of him, ya. Yup.

K: He's the guy who owned that.

B: Ya, Steve Munroe. There was Wyman...

K: Parks.

B: Ya, there was a Parks in it. Parks, too. Well, they were also...also in the...ones that built the first electric light plant here, too.

K: Are they? Munroe, did he do that?

B: No, he wasn't. But them fellas was all together at that time. Yes. Ya...

K: Do you remember Nelson R. Howlett?

B: Ya, I know...I remember him. That's all I do, I remember them.

K: See, that's Steve Munroe.

B: Ya. Mm-hmm. Yup.

K: A great big mustache.

B: Ya.

K: I often wondered how he...I've often thought of the difficulty he'd have eating pizza pie today, with that one. That was a long one.

B: Ya, ya. Yes. And the Wymans, and all them old-timers. I remember the names well, but...Yes.

K: Ya. Uh...do you remember the Naomi when it came in, burning?

B: Yup. I was on the dock.

K: Were you?

B: Yup.

K: There it is. There's the Naomi.

B: Yup. Ya, ya, that was when they had some _____ fire. That was a nice boat.

K: That's the dining room in the Naomi.

B: Ya, that was a nice boat.

K: Did you ever go for a ride in it?

B: No. She carried freight, you know.

K: Passengers, too.

B: Ya, she carried passengers.

K: The Naomi and the Nyak.

B: Ya, both of them. My dad worked on the docks there unloading and loading at that time, too. Yes. Ya.

K: Did you ever hear of a man by the name of H.Y. Potts?

B: Potts. I heard the name Potts. I heard the name.

K: Somebody wrote a poem about Grand Haven and the H.Y. Potts. I'd like to figure...I'd like to know who he was.

B: Hmm.

K: Oh, well.

B: He was just...just...just one of them unknown ones around Grand Haven. We had others around town that were pretty nifty guys but they weren't into anything.

K: I have one more question I wanted to ask you. When did you get married? About what year, that is.

B: I don't know. This is my second marriage.

K: Well, about how old were you?

B: That was 45 years ago, I was married, my second marriage. I was around 28, something like that, 26, in that neighborhood.

K: Okay. What did...in those days, where would you take your girlfriend on a date?

B: Hmm. Well, huh, I guess it was on the front porch. (laughs) Ya. If you was interested, in them days we'd have a speaker or a show on in the school, why that made a difference. I was going to get married...the first time I was going to get married, why she was a school teacher and she died. She died from a goiter. That was about three years after that...ya. It was around in that neighborhood, I guess it was.

K: Ya, well, I don't want to tire you. You've been talking for quite awhile. I really appreciate it.

B: Well, I...

K: I really do.

B: You can come again if you want to.

K: Well, I'll do that. The next time we'll go through the picture books. I'd like to show you these pictures.

B: Who are you doing this for, just for yourself?

K: Yes. Yes, I'm just...

B: (noise on tape) he comes and then we talk about the old times, too. And, well, I got...I can remember...well, I could remember a lot he'd tell me and he would too, you know. We had a good time talking about the old times.

(?) He got to be 96, wasn't it? Ya.

B: Ya.

K: What...oh, Cornie Shears (?). You talked to him, too?

(?) They lived in the other...he lived in the other apartment here so then he would come over here quite often.

B: You didn't know him, did you?

K: Yes. In fact...

(End of Interview)