

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center  
for  
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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**Arkansas Memories Project**

John Marinoni  
Interviewed by Scott Lunsford  
August 02, 2017  
Fayetteville, Arkansas

## Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio and video files, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at <https://pryorcenter.uark.edu/>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

## Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
  - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing; and annotations for clarification and identification.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

### **Citation Information**

See the Citation Guide at <https://pryorcenter.uark.edu/about.php>.

**Scott Lunsford interviewed John Marinoni on August 02, 2017,  
in Fayetteville, Arkansas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Well—um—John Marinoni, welcome to the Pryor Center.

John Marinoni: Well, thank you.

SL: Um—we're gonna be recording—uh—uh—an interview with you today, and—uh—I just wanted to establish that today's date is August the second, 2017. My name is Scott Lunsford. I'm with the Pryor Center, and you're John Marinoni, and you've graciously—uh—agreed to donate—uh—your interview and your time—uh—to the Pryor Center. And—um—I just wanted to let you know that we appreciate that.

JM: Okay.

SL: Um—you'll get a copy of this interview—um—and we will preserve the interview forever. Uh—if you need copies of this interview for family members, we'll be glad to provide that.

JM: Mm. Okay.

SL: Um—and—um—once we process this interview, we'll post it on the Pryor Center website. You'll be a part of our Arkansas Memories Project, and you'll be in really good company. [*JM laughs*] And we'll be good stewards of the material. Uh—if

there's anybody that wants to use the material, we'll let you know about it.

JM: Mh-hmm.

SL: And—um—we'll—we'll—we'll take care of it.

JM: Oh, okay.

[00:01:17] SM: So—um—I guess what we usually start with is where and when you were born and your full name.

JM: Yeah, I was born here in Fayetteville. Uh—February 8, 1942, and my full name is John Patrick Marinoni. Um—of course, the Marinoni part is Italian, and the O'Connor part is Irish. Uh—my mother's maiden name was O'Conner, of course. Her—her father was Francis Patrick O'Conner, and—uh—he was very proud of his Irish heritage, although he was also a lot of English, German blood. Anyway, so—uh—but the O'Connor name on that side of the family has been a strong—uh—heritage part of—uh—that—uh—that side of the family.

SL: So—uh . . .

JM: As the Marinonis . . .

SL: Wi . . .

JM: . . . part has been a strong part of—uh—of our family.

[00:02:25] SL: So your mother's name was—again?

JM: Mary Margaret O'Connor.

SL: Mary Margaret O'Connor.

JM: Mh-hmm.

SL: And your father's name?

JM: Paul Albert Marinoni.

SL: Paul Albert Marinoni.

JM: Mh-hmm.

[00:02:38] SL: And do you know how they met?

JM: Uh—they met at the—uh—Newman Center . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: . . . both being Catholic—uh—the Newman Center was—um—uh—active in those days. Uh—must've been 1938, if I recall, when they would've met.

SL: And that . . .

JM: Uh—she was, incidentally, living in Carnall Hall as a freshman, and—uh—Daddy lived at 617 West Lafayette—uh—the house is still in the family. My sister Paula lives there now. And—uh—so—uh—Daddy being at the university and—uh—probably was dating girls from—from that—uh—dormitory and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: . . . we've got pictures of various friends over there [*laughs*] and—around Carnall Hall. But anyway, his story was that he had met her at the—uh—Newman Center.

[00:03:46] SL: And the—the Newman Center was—um—a part of  
the Catholic Church that was on—or it was on . . .

JM: Leverett.

SL: . . . Maple Avenue, wasn't it?

JM: No—uh—Leverett Street.

SL: Leverett. It was on Leverett.

JM: Well, it was when I was in the university . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JM: . . . as part of St. Thomas Aquinas . . .

SL: That's right. That's right.

JM: . . . Catholic Church on . . .

SL: That's right.

JM: . . . on Leverett.

SL: That's right.

JM: Uh—I don't know where it was located . . .

SL: Later.

JM: . . . in 1938.

[00:04:14] SL: Okay. Um—well, so—um—what is your earliest  
memory of your mom, let's say?

JM: Oh [*laughs*]*—uh—let's see. Um—um—Daddy was—Daddy had  
taken ROTC at the university and—uh—um—had made—uh—was  
made an officer, a second lieutenant—um—before the war broke*

out.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: Second World War. Uh—and he was—uh—called up and—uh—uh—sent off to—uh—various forts getting ready for deployment and so forth. He was eventually deployed to the Aleutian Islands. And—um—so the—uh—the first four years, four or five years of my life—four years, I guess, Daddy was—um—gone for months at a time, and then back for a visit and back in the army again and back and forth. So it was mostly—um—uh—uh—we were living with my—uh—of course, my mother and grandmother over on Lafayette, 617 West Lafayette. Um—my older brother and I—um—were inclined to get into various mischief [*laughter*]*—uh—episodes over there.*

SL: Yeah.

[00:05:49] JM: And so—um—there was a vacant lot behind us there that was grown up in weeds, which was an ideal place for a couple of kids to go back there and play around, and—and so on this one occasion, we—Paul and I decided to make a little camp back there among the weeds. These weeds were probably four or five feet tall.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: It was our hideout. And—uh—we built ourselves a little campfire

back there, and—uh—pretty soon it was getting out of control, and [*laughs*] my brother always delegated things like this to me. He sent me back to the house with a bucket to get some water. So I go in the house in the back door. "Mama can I—I need some water." Okay. She fills up this bucket, and I leave and go back there, and my brother sloshes this bucket of water on the fire, which is really out of control by now. "Oh, go get more!" So he—I go back in. "Mama, I need some more water!" She said, "What are you doin' with all that water?" and she looks out the back. "Oh my God!" [*Laughter*] She calls the fire department. And whole b—that whole jungle back there was on fire. And—uh—it wasn't close to any structures or anything. And so the—uh—I remember my mother on that occasion goin', "Oh my God!" you know, and gettin' water for us and callin' the fire department. So I remember standin' back there, you know, very innocent, you know, and the fire department, fire guy said, "Why"—lookin' at us, he says, "It sure looks like there's been a couple of kids playin' back here." Our toys were layin' around within the . . .

[00:07:32] SL: Well, sure.

JM: . . . ashes.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Uh—little trucks we'd been movin' around through the little pathways. "Oh, no, no. It wasn't us." [*Laughs*]

SL: How old were you then?

JM: Oh, about four.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:07:46] JM: Uh—Mama—um—bein' close to the university and here's—here Mama—uh—uh—by then also had Mary Sue, so here she is with three kids and—um—livin' with her—uh—her mother-in-law—uh—Rosa. Uh—she took every opportunity to farm us out to—uh—preschool and that sort of thing, you know, at the university. So I don't know how many years of preschool and nursery school I had before actually bein' in the first grade. But on this—uh—one occasion—uh—we saw a video, a picture, a moving picture there of 16mm film that they used back then—very interesting to us—about the production of—uh—maple syrup in Vermont and how they put these cans on the trees and collect the syrup . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: . . . and oh, it's so good, and oh, so sweet. And course, that would appeal to us kids, you know.

SL: Sure.

JM: So Paul and I decided [*SL laughs*] that—uh—we oughta try to

[*laughs*] get some of that syrup and—uh—it must be really good. And so we went around on the—uh—Old Main campus there in front of the Old Main, which has huge trees—uh—nailin' up cans on the trees. And [*laughter*]*—and so—I don't know, we had eight or ten cans nailed up to these trees on the front lawn of the Old Main. And—uh—somebody came along and, "What're you boys doin'?" "Oh, oh, we're tryin' to get some maple syrup!" Of course, we didn't know if these were maple trees or—we didn't quite understand, well, how does maple—how does the syrup get into these cans? We come back after a day or two and check the cans. Of course, nothing was in 'em. And [*laughter*] so we got run off from that. [00:09:46] On—uh—another occasion, if—we're probably four and five years old, or I was, anyway. My brother was twenty months older than me.*

SL: Okay.

JM: He's the oldest. And—um . . .

SL: So this is 19—uh . . .

JM: About . . .

SL: . . . 50 . . .

JM: . . . about [19]45.

SL: [Nineteen] forty-five.

JM: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Okay.

JM: Yeah, I was born in 1942.

SL: Okay.

JM: Um—uh—[19]44, maybe, because . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . um—well, Daddy came back after the war was over. Came back in October of [19]45, and—um—uh—and then we all lived there with—um—my grandmother—uh—for about another year before we bought—Daddy bought the farm, and then we moved out on—uh—Highway 16, to the farm. And—uh—so—um—my brother and I were always—uh—lookin' for ways to make a few extra nickels or dimes to go and get candy bars and Cokes and whatever. Uh—all soft drinks were called Cokes . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . as far as we were concerned. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

[00:10:56] JM: And so—um—back in those days, you could smoke—uh—students could smoke. Professors, everybody could smoke . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . at the university. And they had these ash cans around in the hallways and so forth. And so—um—we decided to—uh—go

around and collect up cigarette butts—there were no filters back then. We collected up all these cigarette butts and would take 'em apart, take the paper off of 'em and collect all this tobacco, and then we'd pack it into Prince Albert tobacco cans and [laughs]—and we had [SL laughs] four or five of those cans, we went around to apartments peddling those cans of tobacco.

[Laughs]

SL: Oh my gosh.

JM: And I don't remember how much we were tryin' to sell 'em for, but fifty cents would be big money to us. And—uh—I member one guy lookin' at the can—[SL laughs] opened it up and smell it, said, "Where'd you boys get this tobacco?" "Oh—uh—we found it?" [Laughter] And we did sell some of it, but that must have been really rank tobacco. Recycled cigarette butts, basically. But . . .

SL: Oh—early entrepreneurial—uh—efforts.

JM: Yeah.

[00:12:12] SL: From the family. So—um—early on it was your older brother, you, and a younger sister, is that . . .

JM: Yeah, Mary Sue.

SL: Mary Sue.

JM: Uh-huh.

SL: Um—so while we're just talking about siblings, how many brothers and sisters did you have? How—how big was the . . .

JM: There were—uh—Mom and Daddy had eight kids.

SL: Eight children.

JM: Yeah. We used to take up the whole pew in—at the church.

SL: Uh-huh.

JM: And start with Daddy, Mama, dah, dah, dah, and go on down and—uh—as long as the last child was not in Mama's arms, it would just go stair-stepping down like that in the whole pew.

Uh—so there was an older brother, Paul, and I'm the second.

Uh—then it went for four girls. Daddy was—it was—Paul, John—

Daddy was joking about working on the twelve apostles [*SL laughs*], then he had a streak of . . .

SL: Of—of girls.

JM: . . . four girls.

SL: And tha . . .

JM: And . . .

[00:13:07] SL: And what were their names?

JM: Uh—there's Mary Sue and then Rosa Linda and Paula and then Annie. Uh—let's see, and then Jame—let's see. Yeah, James, and Amy was the youngest. So it went from the first child in 1940 to the last child in 1957.

SL: Oh boy.

JM: So they're pretty well spread out, but—uh—pretty large family.

[Laughs]

SL: Really.

JM: By any standards.

SL: So—um . . .

JM: But they call it a—a big, Catholic family.

[00:13:44] SL: Yeah. Uh—so you started out on a—in a house on Lafayette.

JM: Mh-hmm.

SL: And then when your dad got back from the war ya—y'all moved out to the farm out on Highway 16, I guess?

JM: Yes.

SL: And did your grandmother go with you to that farm? Did sh . . .

JM: No, no, no, she—she stayed there in the house . . .

SL: Okay.

JM: . . . at—on Lafayette.

[00:14:05] SL: Okay. Um—and so but you didn't have—uh—your grandfather wasn't living with y'all. He was—he . . .

JM: Uh—he was at first. Uh—unfortunately—uh—all the pictures we have of him, he's carryin' a cigarette or—he didn't smoke a pipe, but he . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JM: . . . might have a cigar or a cigarette.

SL: Uh-huh.

JM: And—uh—he died—um—uh—let's see. He died in—uh—1945 [JM edit: 1944], August. Uh—I would've been about three and a half [JM edit: two and a half] years old.

SL: Probably don't remember any . . .

JM: And so I just barely remember him.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:14:43] JM: And—uh—it's really unfortunate. If he had lived another year or two years more, I would've had more re—uh—recollection . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JM: . . . of something about him. [*Clears throat*] My brother—um—course, he was nearly two years older than me, and he remembers—uh—a lot of things about—uh—about Pappy, we called him.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: Uh—most people called him Signor. Uh—so as to avoid the difficulty of having to pronounce the name Marinoni. [*Laughs*] In his book, he comments that—uh—it's—it's—something about the Anglo-Saxons not being able to pronounce simple names like

Marinoni. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

JM: A simple name.

SL: Yeah.

JM: But at any rate—um—uh—he died in [19]45, and I think in my timeline there that—uh—according to our records, we moved out to the farm there in—uh—the spring or summer of [19]47, so—uh—he was not living with us . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . in the last little bit of the time where we were livin' in the—uh—in town. Uh—when we moved out to the farm, Paul and I were used to—we were all used to city life and just occasionally hearin' a car pass on the street, no—uh—no noises of owls hooting or—um—uh—other animal noises and what you would hear out in the woods. Uh—at the time—uh—West 16 was not even paved.

[00:16:28] SL: I was gonna say.

JM: From Garland out—uh—any—from Garland—that's where the—you got off on the gravel road.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: And—uh—went around the curve there goin' west and then down on the flat where it straightens on out, on down there a ways

there, that's where our farm was. Um—and I remember Paul and I layin' in bed and hearin' a hoot owl. And [*gasps*] "Gah. What was that? [*SL laughs*] What was that?" [*Laughs*] And—and tryin' to make an adjustment there of livin' out on the farm. Out in the boondocks, really. It was—uh—you could look out to the north there and see the lights of maybe two houses.

SL: Right. It was the country.

JM: We were—uh—uh—it was the summer of that year, and—uh—in the summertime around here, the prevailing wind is usually out of the south. And we were on the south side of the road, which meant that the people on the north side got the dust from—uh—the highwa—from the gravel road [*laughs*], the gravel highway there—uh—whenever a car went by. And so we were thankful. And course, there's no air conditioning, so the windows were open. So those people—uh—I remember thinking, "Oh, we're sure lucky that we can open our windows and not have to worry about dust comin' in" . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . "from the road." Plus, those houses were a lot closer. We were nearly a quarter of a mile back form the road.

SL: I remember that.

[00:18:02] JM: Um—oh, oh, there was something else I was

gonna—uh—mention about Highway 16. Uh—even today, the road makes a curve around the contour of the mountain, there.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: And—um—uh—one time Herb Hatfield . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . uh—was talkin about the early days of Fayetteville there, and he told us that—said, "You know, that road used to go right straight up over the hill."

SL: Hmm.

JM: Where it straight—that got—big straight stretch there . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . on 16. Uh—and—uh—it used to be you could see more of a trace of where the old road was that went right straight up over the hill. He said—uh—um—mah—when they put that in, horses, horse-drawn vehicles could go up over that gravel road there, up over that hill without much problem. Uh—which happens to be on a section line or quarter-section line or something. And—um—but he said when cars came out—uh—the Model T—uh—couldn't climb that road, except they had a lower gear ratio in reverse. So Model Ts would have to get around there and put it in reverse and back up the hill. So—uh—that being the problem—uh—the county judge, whoever's responsible for that

road layout, re—uh—they rearranged the road there to go around the contour so that cars, Model Ts, could pull that grade. So [*laughs*] . . .

SL: I understand that. That . . .

JM: Anyway, that's kinda cute—I was drivin' over there the other day, and I thought, "Boy, there's hardly any—uh—any evidence that there was ever a road up through here." There's a powerline—uh—telephone line or something going along that, and you can see it's the side yards of—uh—people's homes up through there. But . . .

[00:20:03] SL: So maybe that was the—maybe that was it.

JM: It's funny that that's why there's a—there's a bend . . .

SL: Power . . .

JM: . . . in the road there is because Model Ts couldn't pull the road back the way it used to be.

SL: That's great.

JM: Unless they were in reverse.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:15] SL: So your grandfather and grandmother that we're talking about now is on your father's side of the family.

JM: Yes.

SL: What about your mom's side of the family? Did you know your

grandparents on that side?

JM: Yes. They were livin' in Tulsa, and when Mom and Daddy—I mean, when Mama came over here to the university, she said it was a gravel road all the way from Tulsa. And [*laughs*] so anyway, they—she came from a family—she had seven siblings, so another big Catholic family. And so anyway, there would be a Thanksgiving or different times when we would go over there for the weekend for a visit. Several days at Thanksgiving or other occasions where we'd go over to have kind of a family reunion over there. Or sometimes they'd come over and visit us.

[00:21:21] SL: And how do you accommodate that many bodies, that many children?

JM: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: And then I guess there's probably aunts and uncles involved, too, right?

JM: Yeah, especially when the aunts and uncles all started having big families.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Three or four kids each. And I remember Grandma O'Connor sendin' us down in the basement to play and—just to get the kids out of her hair for a little bit. They had a piano. She could play the piano, and she could play a rinky-dink piano and take

her false teeth out and just entertain the kids, you know, with her funny facial expressions with her—with no teeth, you know, [*laughs*] in, and then there were other times when about three or four kids would be bling, bling, bling, bling, bling, like this on the piano drivin' poor Grandma and Grandpa crazy, or everybody else. The adults, anyway. I remember my aunts, my mother and some of her sisters sitting down to play bridge and, wrt, playing cards, you know. And I said, "Where did you learn how to play?" And she said, "Oh, college, you know. College is good for something." [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

JM: And . . .

SL: Actually, that's not uncommon, that . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Knowin' how to play hearts or bridge or . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . whatever it was.

SL: Right.

[00:22:48] JM: And oh, we would go on walks and go downtown and look at the big buildings.

SL: In Tulsa.

JM: Go up in the—my grandfather worked for a pipeline company in the oil business, and I remember, before he retired, goin' up in the whatever building that was and seein' his desk. And his desk was a fairly large wooden desk. And it was totally clean on the—no papers, no inbox or anything. And I said, "Well, Grandpa, is this the way—where's your work? Is this the way your desk looks all the time?" "Yes, Yes. Ah, it's right here," and he pulled out his drawer, and here there was stuff. He said, "I always had a clean, organized desk." I thought, "Man, that's never the way my desk was." Later . . .

SL: Or mine, either.

JM: . . . on in life with the . . .

SL: Yeah, or mine, either. Yeah.

[00:23:52] JM: Grandma and Grandpa O'Connor, at some point in their life, they—and he has written up a story about early days and tryin' to take care of such a large family and buildin' a little chicken house in the back yard there and settin' a timer on the lights so the lights would come on early so the chickens would wake up and start eating and . . .

SL: That's pretty sophisticated.

JM: . . . getting—yeah. This is back in the [19]30s . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . or so. And raisin' these chickens for the eggs and the—  
butcherin' chickens and so forth. And the—pullets, I think they  
called 'em. Anyway, the young chickens. And they had six or  
seven acres in this subdivision where they moved to and they—  
he said he gradually would sell off a lot here to pay for  
somebody's college education and sell off another lot—that sort  
of thing, and it's all built up and an old, established  
neighborhood now. [00:25:06] Like I said about the basement,  
though, they'd send us down to play in the basement. They had  
a laundry chute from the . . .

SL: Oh, no.

JM: . . . the main [*SL laughs*] bedroom, master bedroom there,  
Grandpa and Grandma—from their closet, there was a laundry  
chute about so big that dropped straight down into the laundry  
basket. And of course, we could take Grandpa's shoes and drop  
'em down there and try to hit some other kid [*laughter*] that was  
down below. And the—just throwing clothes down through there  
was not all that much fun, but something more heavy, you  
know, that come down . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . with a bang, you know . . .

SL: Right, right. No one ever actually crawled into the thing and . . .

JM: No, no, it wasn't that big.

SL: Yeah.

JM: It was, I don't know, maybe a foot square or so or sixteen inches or so.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Well, not even that big.

SL: Yeah, our old—my old house on Washington Avenue had one of those.

JM: Yeah.

[00:26:06] SL: Too. So your earliest memories, then, really start at the farm, pretty much. Is that right or—I mean, how long were you at—on the Lafayette Street house?

JM: Well, let's see, we would've moved over there when I was five.

SL: Right.

JM: But even so I've got a lot of little adventures when we were still livin' in town. One other little adventure. Paul and I—or maybe it's just only—don't remember. Paul and I—I guess Paul and I had wandered off a couple of blocks north of there. I think we were north of Maple Street, there, playin' like we were in the army and . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . walnuts were hand grenades, you know.

SL: Yeah.

JM: We'd throw those.

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

JM: And we were small enough we could crawl in the curb inlets, the drop inlets.

SL: Right.

JM: And as cars would go by, we'd [*makes popping noise*]*—*we'd be shootin' at 'em, theoretically, with our fingers or whatever, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . or a stick like it was a gun, like that was our pillbox. And Paul has a story that's—must surely be a stretch that one of our friends had crawled into one of those curb inlets, you know, along the side of the curb there where . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . the water drains off into the storm drainage.

SL: Yeah.

[00:27:46] JM: And that they decided to crawl down through the pipe. One of those . . .

SL: Oh.

JM: . . . twenty-four inch concrete pipes.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And got lost. And crawled and crawled and crawled and ended up down at Harmon Play Field.

SL: Wow.

JM: Now, that would be impossible because there are hills and valleys and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . you know, so [*laughs*]*—*and I think it probably got started as a story that, you know, "Oh, I bet you could go from here to"*—* wherever, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: Name someplace. And no tellin' how far that would go*—*those storm drainage things. Probably went down towards . . .

SL: Wilson Park.

JM: . . . the tho*—*nah, probably went down*—*downhill would be down towards Walton Arts Center parkin' lot.

SL: Oh, I see. Yeah. Okay.

JM: Underneath that parking lot, there's a big flume, drainage, that goes back up Dickson Street and various places that all used to be a*—*quite a valley down in there, apparently.

[00:28:41] SL: Seems like someone's told me when they were young and*—*young kids playing on the university campus that there was an underground system underneath*—*I don't know if it

was the heating system or if it was the sewer system, but they used to play all underneath the university . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . campus. You—did you ever . . .

[00:29:06] JM: Yeah, I've got a story about that. And I'll finish this other one there that about wandering off a little bit too far. And so our dog—Daddy had a bird dog, which we called Brock 'cause that's the way he sounded like. "Brock, brock, brock."

[*Laughter*] And anyway, we got a little too far away and got disoriented as to which way—we felt like, "Oh my gosh, we're lost, we're lost." And it was gettin' dark. And back then, kids could go play—we'd play—well, let me finish this story. So we decided, "Well, maybe Brock can lead us back to the house." And sure enough, you know, we kept just sittin' back and watching which way Brock would go, and we'd follow the dog and follow the dog. Finally we got within a couple of blocks of the house and recognized things and—"Oh, gosh, we got back." Got back in the house, Mama says, "Well, where have you boys been?" "Oh, well, we been out playin'." We didn't wanna admit that we been lost.

SL: Right.

JM: Didn't know the way back except our dog . . .

SL: Dog.

JM: . . . had saved us. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's fun.

[00:30:16] JM: About those tunnels. Years later I was workin' for my father-in-law, Byron Boyd in the Brennan-Boyd days.

SL: Okay.

JM: Brennan-Boyd were brother-in-laws, and so we added onto the north end athletic—we built the north end athletic facility, which has since been remolded and has since been completely dug out and is being—in the process now of being replaced. But at any rate, at the time that we started, it was nothing but a grass slope, and people would get on a cardboard—piece of cardboard and slide down that grass slope or sit there during football games.

SL: Sure. I did that.

[00:31:04] JM: And part of our job was to extend the heating tunnel, heating-air-conditioning tunnel on down there. And so at the corner of—oh, let's see here. What is on the street that's on the east side of the stadium is the—Stadium Drive, I believe.

SL: Stadium Drive, yeah.

JM: Yeah, Stadium Drive at the corner where it hits Maple Street . . .

SL: Okay.

JM: . . . we started our tunnel, and brought that tunnel on out down the hill there to a point where we could go straight west and tag into the building that we were building there at the north end athletic facility. And so anyway, it's a fairly good-sized tunnel. It's like six or seven feet tall and five feet wide. And room enough for a service person to walk around there and check and see if anything's leaking and so forth, but the pipes were coming from the heating facility somewhere back over . . .

SL: On Dickson.

JM: . . . on Dickson Street, I think is . . .

SL: Yeah.

[00:32:19] JM: And I guess air conditioning's the same way. The chilled water's being piped all over campus in those tunnels. And I think some of the senior sidewalks are on top of those tunnels. And but anyway, that's—I had not really realized so many tunnels are running around, but the university has that system going all over the place to their various buildings.

SL: That's just b—that'd be kind of a neat thing just to explore that even now. I . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: That's pretty remarkable that there's that maze of tunnels and it's all driven by heat and air.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[00:33:07] JM: Let's see, back to early days movin' out on the farm there. It was quite an adjustment for us growin' up. And we quickly got into camping out and doin' all kinds of outdoors kind of things. Back in those days, shredded wheat came in those big blocks.

SL: Sure.

JM: Of shredded wheat, and in between would be little pieces of cardboard with something about how the Indians used to build fires or how the Indians used to set traps or how the Indians used to do this or that, anyway.

SL: Was that Nabisco shredded wheat, maybe?

JM: I think so, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And we got very interested in how to do all those kinds of things. And we would practice building little traps, a box with a stick under it, you know.

SL: Sure.

JM: It might fall down and trap . . .

SL: A rabbit . . .

JM: . . . an animal or . . .

SL: Yeah, sure.

JM: . . . something. Course the animal would quickly . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . find a way to get out of it. [*Laughs*] And we'd wrap up a—Daddy brought back a—some army blankets and various things when the war was over. They were just dumping stuff back there in the Aleutian Islands. It wasn't worth the freight to try to ship it back down and then sell it to a army surplus store, so . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . he said they were takin' shiploads of guns and supplies, various things, out in the ocean and sinkin' it. Anyway, so he brought back a supply of down sleeping bags and . . .

[00:35:03] SL: Wow.

JM: . . . army blankets and so forth. Anyway, we could wrap up a couple of cans of pork and beans and a few supplies and matches, of course. We weren't into tryin' to rub sticks together to make a fire. And go back out on in the woods there and camp out.

SL: So would you tie—would you take the blanket and tie it up and then put it on a stick and . . .

JM: No, not on a stick. We'd just roll it up and kinda . . .

SL: Okay.

JM: . . . carry it under our arm.

SL: All right.

JM: Maybe get our kerosene lantern and [*SL laughs*] go along sometimes with a lantern to have some light. We were still into mischief, though. [*Laughs*] Daddy brought back a lot of ammunition from—he said he brought back a whole suitcase of ammunition, some of which I don't know why he did because he didn't have a .45 caliber pistol. I thought—he might have thought about buyin' one. He did have a—before the war he had started a kind of a gun collection. Had a shotgun, this and that.

SL: Right.

[00:36:18] JM: You know, he and his dad had gone out hunting various things. That was before they had deer in this area. And so sometimes for kicks, we'd take a few extra rounds of ammo to throw in the fire.

SL: Oh my gosh.

JM: And to explode. [*Laughs*] And but we tended to—we didn't wanna throw any ammo in there like a shotgun shell. Well, Daddy didn't have any shotgun shells. He had other rifle ammunition . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . for his deer rifle and that sort of thing. And it's amazing, too, that he was able to bring that back, you know, but that—that was before—it wasn't like today where you go through a metal detector . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . or anything. Just come on board with—on the train. He didn't fly back from his assignment there in the Aleutians. Came back on the train. Just load up, here's this and that and the other.

SL: If he could carry it.

JM: Footlocker . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . full of stuff. And but we'd throw a couple of forty—maybe a .45 round in the fire there, go back and dive for cover, you know, and wait, wait, wait. Think . . .

SL: Oh, man.

JM: . . . "When's that gonna go off?" "I don't know. Keep your head down." [*Laughter*]

SL: No kidding.

JM: Then it'd go off. Blow sparks all over the place. And it's a wonder none of us got hurt.

[00:37:52] SL: So I wanna talk a little bit about the routine around

the home. First off, it was—was the farmhouse an existing farmhouse when y'all—when the family bought the farm, or did y'all build the farmhouse out there?

JM: No, it was built, already built. I don't know when, exactly.

SL: You member the family name that you bought the farm from?

[00:38:22] JM: Yeah, that's another story. I've got an album on the PAM Angus farm, and I've got kind of a write-up about that. My brother says that the contractor who was building—or maybe adding on. I don't know if he was building the rock wall there at Arkansas Avenue at the university—it might have been adding onto it or making an entrance or changing it or something. His name was Swaggerty, and he owned 150 acres out on 16, which we—anyway, Mama and Daddy got to talkin' to him there, and anyway, he was—he wanted to sell it. And the story goes is that he told Daddy that he couldn't take anything less than what he had paid for it back twenty years ago. And Daddy said, "Well, what was that?" And he said, "Hundred dollars an acre." And well, so anyway, that's [*laughs*] what they bought the farm for in 1946.

SL: Wow.

[00:39:41] JM: And—not that it would take a hundred dollars an acre for it now but . . .

SL: Right.

JM: But so the story goes on. I don—not sure how Paul got this. Oh, no, so when Daddy went to the bank to see about borrowin' money to buy the farm, Buck Lewis at the First National Bank over here on the Square at that time, said, "Well, boy"—you know, here's a city boy wantin' to go out and start farming and raising cattle, and "What do you know about raising cattle?" And although Daddy had had—gone—started in the cattle kind of operation there before the war. And he's supposed to have told Daddy that, "Nobody'll—there's not a man alive that can make a living raisin' cattle on \$100 land." That you've got too much money tied up in the land. But anyway. [*SL laughs*] So his name was Swaggerty. Now the house might've been there before him. It didn't have a front porch or—Daddy set in to add the front porch and the back porch. It had a little bit of a stoop there at the front on the west side of the house. Had well water. The well goes—the well's in the back yard there, and it went—goes down about, oh, fifteen, eighteen feet or so.

[00:41:19] SL: Is that all?

JM: And down through a shale strata. And the shale around here has a mineral, a sulfur kind of a taste.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And also it builds up a kind of a deposit on—makes your clothes kind of brownish . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . and so forth.

SL: Right.

[00:41:44] JM: Years later—I—leave the story just a second there, but years later, I had rigged up a pump system there to irrigate the garden at the farm after I was married and was gone from the farm and everything, but Mama and Daddy were still there. And so I rigged up this pump to pump water out of the well and irrigate the garden.

SL: Right.

JM: Vegetable garden. And so I brought a glass of that water in from the well. I said, "Mama," I said, "does this remind you of anything?" "Yeah. The well water." [*Laughter*] Anyway, so . . .

SL: It has kind of a rotten-egg smell.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[00:42:31] JM: So Daddy—when they—when we moved out there—six months or so later—my brother remind—remembers this guy showin up at the door sayin', "Well, I own a big tract of land back here behind your land," on an offset kind of a—like a

checkerboard. You got a square here and a square here.

SL: Right.

JM: And he owned a big piece of land back there, which was basically the mountain on the west side of the bypass, where the bypass goes between two hills here on the west side . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . of town. And so he said he was ready to retire and he was gettin' older and everything and wanted to check and see, since Daddy had just recently bought this land there on Highway 16 and—anyway, that he was interested in sellin' that land there and would be willing to sell it for \$25 an acre. And [*laughs*] but it was mostly woods.

SL: Right.

[00:43:48] JM: Not too much economic potential there. But there're areas where the fields could be enlarged and—to support cattle and a lot of—there wasn't—it'd already been logged out. There weren't any—there wasn't a lot of . . .

SL: Timber.

JM: . . . timber potential. But there was a lot of firewood potential, which [*laughs*] we'll get into later. It's basically—with two growing boys, able bodied . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . kids, you know, would put up firewood. So he went on and bought it. And according to my brother, a few weeks later or soon after that, another guy shows up at the door and says, "Well, I guess I'll be movin'. Been nice livin' back there, but I guess I'll be movin' on." And Daddy says, "What are you talkin' about? What do you mean, movin'? Where are you livin'?" "Well, I'm living back there on your land." I can't imagine that Paul's story is right about that, that Daddy would've bought the land without at least walkin' around and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . seein' what it was and . . .

SL: Walkin' the line, yeah.

JM: . . . realized, "Well somebody's livin back here. Who is this?" And well, it was Jim Harrison, who Daddy ended up hirin' as the farmhand there and—which was really a good thing because Jim knew an awful lot about all sorts of pioneer kind of knowledge and cattle . . .

SL: Farm skills.

JM: . . . raising and . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . farming skills and . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . backwoods kind of skills and how to do all sorts of things. And so Daddy said, "Well, what've you been doin'?" "Well, I been the farmhand for"—I don't remember the name of the guy that Daddy had bought the back end—we always called that the back end of the farm. And so he said, "Well"—so anyway, he went on and hired him. And he helped put up firewood and put up hay and taught Daddy a lot about raisin' cattle and helping on all sorts of projects around the farm. My brother remind—remembers **Jim** showin' up through—well, I'll get into his milk cow story here in a minute. Showin' up for his weekly paycheck, and Mama sayin', "Oh my God, how are we gonna pay him this week? We have—where are we gonna find the twenty-eight dollars that we owe him for the week's work?" You know. Whatever it was, you know. [*Laughter*] It was fifty cents an hour or something.

SL: Right.

[00:46:56] JM: Back in those days. Jim's house, anyway, is right in the area where—on Persimmon where there are a bunch of apartments now, a complex of, gosh, I guess eight-story or so apartments back there. And we had a barn back there also, which we all called Jim's barn, but of course it was, of course, ours. And he had a—he kept about, oh, twelve or fifteen milk

cows back there.

SL: Kay.

JM: Some of 'em would be fresh at all times there, so he would get up in the morning—this is a primitive house with just well water and a bucket, no pump or anything. He did have electricity, but he ordinarily just used to maybe run his radio or something.

SL: Right.

JM: And maybe a little bit of an electric light bulb. Coal-oil lamp, you know, that sort of thing's usually what he used.

SL: Right.

[00:48:08] JM: See, his wife cooked on a woodstove and so forth.

So it was a primitive house. And he would get up in the morning early enough to go out and milk about ten of those cows by hand, bring each one of 'em into the barn. He'd milk 'em and turn 'em back out. Bring in now Betsy, now here's Boots, now there's some—each one of 'em had a name. And then he would carry his milk across country over to—oh, gosh, what's the name of that—Dinsmore Trail.

SL: Kay.

JM: And leave his milk there at this drop-off point there, and the milk company had a route goin' around. They'd pick up milk from farmers like that. And they'd just leave their milk in a three-

gallon can that had a metal lid that . . .

SL: Yeah, sure.

JM: . . . just push on there and it was tight, wouldn't spill. Nothin' could get into it. And then he would get paid, I guess monthly, for whatever milk they had picked up. And so with us, a big growing family, he'd also bring about two gallons or so over. He'd walk from there, you know, all the way back over where I'm talkin' about there with—where Persimmon and these apartments are, all the way back over to the farm, which is before 49 went in, of course.

SL: Right.

JM: 540 [*laughs*] back—first. He'd walk all the way over there, and he'd open the door. "Here you go." Boom. And set that inside the door and step out in the yard to roll a cigarette. Always carried a can of PA, Prince Albert tobacco in his . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . coveralls there. And wait for us, for Daddy to come out and say, "Okay, we're goin' down here to build fence," or something. And then anyway, so that was all before we left for school in the morning. So he'd already been up and at 'em for hours before even startin' his eight-hour—eight- or nine-hour day with Daddy.

[00:50:22] Let's see, that—what else can I say about that?

Eventually—not eventually, but after, oh, maybe five years or so of that, lightning hit his house and burned it down.

SL: Oh my God.

JM: And so one morning we woke up and—or we looked out, and here's Jim and his wife, Florence, in their wagon and their team, team of horses out there pullin' up into the yard. "Oh my gosh, what's goin' on?" And the wagon was loaded up with stuff. "Well, our house burned down. Got hit by lightning." And said it hit a tree and from there jumped over onto his house, got his roof on fire. Said it knocked him out of bed. [SL laughs] 'Cause they had a brass bed. It came in and like, you know, energized his bed. And he said he jumped out and got up on the roof with his axe tryin' to chop the—tryin' to get the fire put out, but wasn't able to. So then they frantically got stuff . . .

SL: Got their stuff.

JM: . . . out of the house. So after that we bought some of his milk cows, and so then that's where our milking experience started with us kids.

SL: So thi . . .

JM: And so . . .

[00:51:56] SL: Was this the really the first entry of chores that you had to do around the farm?

JM: No—well, outside of baling hay and rounding up cattle, feedin' the cattle in the wintertime and those kinds of things. Course, feedin' the chickens, gathering the eggs, that sort of thing.

[00:52:19] SL: I was looking at some of the photographs you brought in for us to scan, and there was a mobile feeding trough that your dad had designed that he would drag from different parts of the pasture. In other words, he kinda brought the feeding—the trough to where the cattle were instead of just having a central location where one trough was and all the cattle came to that. And the argument was that he would preserve the grass in the—and that they're eating all the time anyway, and if you had one place, it would just, you know, trample all the grass down, and you'd lose dollars, I guess, on the hay.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Is that—he . . .

[00:53:11] JM: Yeah, Daddy, having been in the army, he qualified for the GI Bill. He already had a degree from the university, but he signed up for some classes at the university in agriculture. He always—well, he never said anything real positive about his professors. [*SL laughs*] He always said, "Oh, they'd starve to death out there tryin' to be farmers." However, there were some ideas that he obviously picked up there. And that was, I

think, one of 'em because he could hook onto that—one of those feeding troughs and pull it up into the—into an area where we had recently cleaned trees out or thinned out the trees, and the cattle would eat that. And course, they'd pull out a hand—a mouthful of hay and eat on it, you know, and seeds would shake out on the ground, then they'd get trompled down. And then there was the manure. They liked to do their thing wherever they'd been eating.

SL: Right.

JM: And so if you've got the feed and their hay in here in those feeding troughs, you could improve the land, which was otherwise just a clay bank . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . or a slate bank . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . that had no potential for growing any kind of grass that the cattle'd be interested in eating. [00:54:48] And he had another one that he called the calf creep. That was a similar thing except that it had a roof over it and big doors on each end you could open up and shovel grain in there to fatten up calves. And so—and that also could be pushed around to different parts on the farm. We didn't usually push it around on areas where there

was good topsoil and already grass growin'. We'd push it around where the gra—where the soil was real thin or no soil at all.

SL: So you propagated hay that way.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Spread it . . .

JM: Pro—yeah, tryin' to get grass to grow in these different areas.

SL: That's pretty smart stuff.

[00:55:41] JM: There were a lot of—several other ideas there that I think Daddy got in his experience there of takin' a couple of courses. Then aks—they also—I don't know what the arrangement was there, but there was a little bit of money to be—the government would pay you a little bit of money besides givin' you free tuition. The government would pay returning soldiers like that to supplement their livin' expenses or something. So . . .

SL: That was a great GI Bill.

JM: . . . Daddy was able to get in on that. [00:56:23] There—maybe another thing that he got out of it was becoming aware of a program where the government was encouraging the digging of a lot of ponds for flood control, probably, and also for ecology and whatever. And so several places around on the farm there, he'd decide, "Well, there's a little confluence of streams comin' in

here," wet weather streams.

SL: Right.

JM: "Let's just dig a pond right here. Oh, well, over there's a low spot, let's dig a pond over there." [*Laughs*] You know.

SL: Right.

JM: And so we've got several ponds out there on the farm.

SL: Yeah, I member s . . .

JM: That were dug like that.

SL: I member seeing one called the slate pond. Was that a particularly larger pond or . . .

[00:57:19] JM: No, no. There was a kind of a swampy area there, and it was real close to a slate outcropping, and so when they—when Daddy decided to dig a pond there, he thought, "Well, this would be a real good swimming hole kind of a pond because there's no stream comin' into it. It'd just be—it'd just stay full of water from the grou—from the water table." And that became our swimming hold for a number of years. I also nearly drowned in that [*laughs*] pond. I think all of us kids have a nearly drowned kind of a story where, "Oh my gosh, good thing somebody was there to pull me out."

SL: So is it like more than six feet deep or . . .

JM: Yeah. Yeah, it w—yeah, it was six or eight feet deep. And so

this was before we learned how to swim, of course.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Obviously. And so Mama was with us there with several of us kids. And she saw me thrashin' around in the water, and I can remember lookin' up at the water. That's—wasn't as far as from here to the ceiling, but it was several feet above me. Lookin' up at the surface of the water tryin' to get back up there, and boom, all of a sudden, there's a—somebody grabs my hand and pulls me out. And as I got up to the surface, I can see Paul screamin' and kickin' around on the boat that I had just fallen off of. And [*laughs*] so wasn't—in a day or two, we were signed up for swimming . . .

SL: Swimming lessons . . .

JM: . . . lessons down at the . . .

SL: . . . at Wilson Park.

JM: . . . down at the Wilson Park.

SL: Right. Right. [*Laughs*]

JM: And Mama had—I don't know if Mama had taught swimming, but she had some badges on her swimming suit there for lifesaving. She'd take a lifesaving courses. And so it wasn't long before we were taking swimming lessons down at the—Wilson Park.

So . . .

[00:59:42] SL: Let's talk a little bit about your mom. I would assume that her efforts were housewife, homemaker kind of stuff. She would cook and do laundry and clean house and—is it—was that kind of her domain?

JM: Yeah. You're talkin' about some earlier memories over on Lafayette. There was a—the house has a basement, and they had a washing machine there that went froop, froop, froop.

SL: Sure.

JM: Like this back and forth. And I don't know what caused Mama to do this. Maybe she just spilled the soap into the washing machine, but she had us come down and look at the little disaster that she had goin' on down in the basement there of—the washing machine was goin' back and forth like this with that big . . .

SL: Agitator.

JM: . . . agitator, yeah. And it had a column like this way up high out of the water comin' up of soap suds with a round part. She held us up there so that we could look down inside and . . .

SL: Like it . . .

JM: . . . see that agitator goin' like this. And [*laughter*] . . .

SL: Soap tornado kind of thing.

[01:01:04] JM: Yeah. And then you'd—they'd run it through this

wringer, you know, and . . .

SL: And then take . . .

JM: . . . got a picture of . . .

SL: . . . take it out to the line.

JM: Yeah. Of me and Paul helpin' Mama, handin' her the clothes, and she was hangin' 'em up on the line back there. Clothesline, incidentally, was the run for the dog.

SL: As well.

JM: The dog would—the line would be, oh, sixty or seventy feet long from one thing to the other, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: Fairly high, about clothesline height there.

SL: Yeah.

[01:01:38] JM: And there a little pulley on there you could hook the dog, chain the dog onto. Dog would have all kinds of running space there and run up and down that clothesline, long as you didn't have clothes on it. [*Laughs*] Anyway, that was one thing I remember. But I remember out on the farm when Daddy bought a used washin' machine, and it had a glass front, and you could watch the clothes going along in there. And we'd sit there very entertained, watchin'. [*SL laughs*] "What's it gonna do next? Oh gosh, it stopped. Now what's it—oh! It's goin' into

the spin cycle," or whatever.

SL: Sure.

JM: And we'd sit there and watch that washing machine go. "Boy, this is about like havin' a television." [*Laughter*] [01:02:31]  
And Mama was always workin' hard keeping all these kids fed and everything . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . and puttin' up—we had a freezer, a chest freezer. And I remember one time we had a bumper crop of broccoli. And we were bringing it in, and we had—we were pilin' it on the floor for further processing, basically, and there was a pile over by the back door there, in the corner of the room there, that was about four feet high and kinda comin' on out into the room there. But [*SL laughs*] we had a huge crop of broccoli.

SL: That's a lot of broccoli.

[01:03:20] JM: And we would always—we had about a two-acre garden. And . . .

SL: Big garden.

JM: . . . somewhere there's a picture of—well, I'm gettin' ahead of myself here—a picture of Daddy plowin' the garden with a Jenny, a female donkey, and he's walkin' behind that. And I'm walkin' behind Daddy, barefoot, walkin' in the nice, freshly plowed,

fluffed-up dirt. And lookin' at the picture years later, I thought, "Oh, I know what I was doin'." My job was if the plow got a little too close to the corn and kicked a piece of dirt clod over against that corn, which is like this tall, and the corn was knocked over, my job was to straighten . . .

SL: Straighten it back up.

JM: . . . it back up. 'Cause Daddy had—was busy. Had the reins around his neck, you know. . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . and everything, and he's goin' along plowin' that two-acre garden. But canning and freezing. We had a basement in the house there, and Mama was canning tomatoes and makin' tomato juice and makin' pickles and all kinds of other things there that we were raisin' in the garden.

[01:04:50] SL: Was anyone helpin' her do that?

JM: Yeah. Yeah. Sisters were helpin' with the inside jobs. Paul and I were usually helpin' on the outside kinda jobs. [*Laughs*]

[01:05:02] SL: What about a smokehouse? Did y'all have a smokehouse?

JM: No.

SL: Didn't . . .

JM: No.

SL: . . . smoke any of the meat or . . .

JM: Huh-uh. No, we didn't have a smokehouse. There was one period of time there where we had this one pond kinda up in the woods there, and Daddy put a fence around it there and made a pigpen out of that whole area there. We always called it the pigpen or the pig pond or whatever, and there was a shed there. And so he was raisin' pigs to butcher for ourself. We didn't sell—raise 'em and sell 'em. And got some pictures of us butcherin' hogs and . . .

SL: Scalding them?

JM: Yeah, I don't member how he scalded them. But . . .

SL: Usually a pot of boiling water.

JM: Pot of [*laughs*] boiling water, yeah.

SL: Yeah, I mean, were they big hogs or were they . . .

JM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[01:06:02] JM: Full, big ol', big hogs. So at one point the—let's see, where was that? Where the Walton Arts Center parking lot is, just south of there, there are some apartments. That used to be a chicken processing plant down in there, Gurpee's, I think it was called.

SL: Gurpees.

JM: And they would pros—they'd butcher chickens, and I guess they'd make TV dinners or something, but I think that's where Daddy was getting this tomato skins and cores and rotten tomatoes and culls, whatever. Anyway, he was . . .

SL: Lead through it . . .

JM: . . . he was gettin' all this stuff to feed—which he was feedin' the pigs. And so anyway, with all those tomato seeds in this garbage, anyway, that he was getting to feed the pigs, the tomato seeds got trompled down into the dirt, and that spring we had jillions of tomatoes comin' up, little plants like that. And so Daddy figured out—he's always trying to think of somethin' for us boys to do to make a little extra money for—*[laughs]* support the family.

SL: Yeah.

[01:07:27] JM: So he had us organize—pull up these tomato plants into twenty-five plants per little glob, and we could sell 'em for twenty-five cents at the sale barn where the—which is out on North College. What's there now? It's about where Schlotzsky's is now.

SL: Okay.

JM: On North College was the—was one sale barn. The other sale barn was . . .

SL: It—south.

JM: The other one was south of town where the—about where the—  
or just next door to the east of the National Cemetery.

SL: Is it—I—is it still there? I . . .

JM: No, it—they . . .

SL: I mean, I remember being in there.

JM: . . . sold that, and it's apartments now.

SL: Okay.

JM: The sale-barn people . . .

SL: That's right. I remember . . .

JM: . . . sold out.

SL: . . . that going down.

[01:08:13] JM: But anyway, many years ago there was another sale  
barn on North College. And so we'd go down there on the  
tailgate of the truck, sit there with our little bundles of tomatoes,  
and people'd come up. "Boy, howdy, whatcha go there?" "Well,  
tomatoes, tomato sets." "What kind are they?" We were ready  
for that. We didn't know what in the world they was.

[*Laughter*] "Uh, Rutgers," or something tell 'em. And we sold a  
bunch of tomato plants . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . that way.

SL: Well.

JM: They were little—you know, they weren't individually set in a pot or anything, they were just—you know, you could pull 'em out and transplant 'em pretty handily.

SL: Sure.

JM: And but I remember Daddy salt curing or sugar curing some hams and having some cured bacon on the back porch hanging up and—the back porch wasn't heated.

SL: Right.

JM: And so usually the butchering was done in the fall when the weather was cool.

SL: Right.

JM: Cool or cold.

SL: I wanna talk . . .

[01:09:28] JM: Back to Mama on—Mama was really good at sewing and could make clothes and had a nice sewing machine and so forth, and so she made a lot of the clothes for the kids and was real handy at that and was a really good cook. And there—we did a lot of—besides hogs, we also would butcher a steer every once in a while. And that kinda gets me back to the milking operation there. When Jim Harrison's house burned down, or the house, our house that he was living in as a hired hand, then

we bought several of his milk cows. Well, we took over milking the cows. And we would take turns being the milker of the month. [*SL laughs*] It would be your month, you know and— morning and night. And without, absolutely, absolutely without fail. There could be no excuse because the cows would just keep getting more and more full.

SL: Right.

JM: And so if it was your month, you'd get up early enough in the morning to get out there, and milk a couple of cows, and feed 'em, and take care of 'em, and get back, have breakfast, change clothes in time to be taken to school. And so course, they would have a calf—we would get 'em around a bull and get 'em bred so once a year they'd have a calf. And our deal was, for our pay, was that every other calf would be sold, and we would get the money.

SL: Ah.

[01:11:28] JM: And we would split that up between the milkers as our own dating money, our own spending money. But the other calf that drew the wrong card [*laughs*], drew the short straw, every other calf we would just fatten up and butcher. And so this one calf, being fairly tame around, you know, would get a name. And so we had this one that's named Fred. [*Laughter*]

Well, eventually it came time to butcher Fred, and I remember—oh, our sisters. It's like—it's gotta—you know, lookin' at the table at the meat on the table there. And, "Is this Fred?" "Oh, yeah, yeah." And [*laughter*] so anyway, we've always—we'd butcher these steers and hang 'em up and let 'em cool down out in the cool weather, and Daddy would let us sell the hide, too, which is another story. [*Laughs*] But anyway. Anyway, so anyway, then we'd cut 'em down the backbone there to get 'em in half and then in quarters, and then [*grunts*] a couple of us guys would bring these quarters in and put it on the dining room table, and Daddy would proceed to start cuttin' him up and wrappin' him up in freezer packaging and so forth, freezer paper.

SL: Right.

[01:13:17] JM: And so we always had a lot of roasts that were called leg roasts, which would be mostly the knee bone [*laughs*] or something, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: Didn't make any hamburgers. Too much work to cut all that meat and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . run it . . .

SL: Right.

JM: We didn't have a grinder anyway. And so but there were a lot of bigger roasts that Mama could poke garlic and parsley into.

SL: Mmm.

JM: And we had a woodstove in the livin' ro—in the dining room, and she could bake that roast for a while and get it basically cooked that way. And then let the coal—let the fire burn down in that woodstove and—down to where it was a lot of coals in there and put that pan in there and shut the door on it for a couple of hours, and man, it would be the best roast. Course, Mama was a very good cook. But we'd have these huge brontosaurus roasts, we called it [*laughter*] that Mama had cooked. And I think my wife has figured out, too, that the secret is sticking garlic and parsley . . .

SL: Garlic into it.

JM: . . . into the—cut a—stick a knife in there, into the meat, you know, and then fill it full of garlic and parsley. So . . .

[01:14:52] SL: When it—let's talk about the dining table. Actually the meals. Were there set hours that the meals would be—you know, start. and you had to be at the table at that hour, like particularly dinner. I would assume breakfast was probably catch as catch can, depending on what the chores and . . .

JM: We'd all sit down to the meal. But it wasn't like it had to be at

six o'clock or it always had to be at seven o'clock. We . . .

SL: Or whenever it was . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . ready you were expected to be ready there for it.

JM: Yeah. Unless someone was upstairs sick or something, which that's another story. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, so, I mean . . .

JM: But we always—we were always all seated at the table. Everyone . . .

SL: And is this all the children?

JM: Yeah. And we always—each one had their own particular place and—where—that was always where you sat. Just no one was assigned a place, that's just where you been sitting, and so that's where you're gonna sit the next time. [*Laughs*]

SL: It's where everybody expected to sit.

JM: Yeah.

[01:16:19] SL: So what about grace? Was grace ever said at the table?

JM: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: And was that always done by your . . .

JM: Was always the . . .

SL: . . . mom or dad, or did y'all take turns doing that?

JM: Hmm. Hmm. I don't know. I think we kinda rotated.

SL: Really? Seems like you'd remember if it was your turn.

JM: Yeah. You know, it was always the stock Catholic thing. "Bless us, O Lord, for these our guests our"—you know, "About to receive," you know, that one. And we always thought it was a little bit amusing or funny that our Protestant friends would have off the top of their head kind of grace. "We thank you for this or that" or "We pray for this or that." Just going on . . .

SL: Right. Right.

JM: . . . and . . .

SL: Impromptu . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . blessing.

JM: Yeah. Spontaneous or acapella kind of [*laughs*], I guess you could say.

[01:17:23] SL: And so . . .

JM: But . . .

SL: . . . when the meal was over, did all the kids help clear the table?

JM: Yeah.

SL: And some washed, some dried.

JM: All the girls did. [*Laughs*]

SL: All the girls. All the girls washed, or . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . did they dry the dishes, too?

JM: Yeah. Yeah, usually—yeah. Yeah. Didn't have . . .

SL: And so what'd the guys do?

JM: . . . didn't have—oh, we'd kinda get out of the way, and we might help move some of the bigger things into the—back into the refrigerator, whatever. The talkin' about the first washing machine, and we thought that watchin' the clothes and the water sloshin' around was like a television. Daddy went to a lot of farm sales to see if he could pick up something real cheap or whatever.

SL: Sure.

[01:18:25] JM: So he picked up a television for little or nothing, probably [*laughs*], but anyway, black and white television.

SL: Sure.

JM: And managed to get an aerial, and we had this aerial up on the roof. And it was basically a pipe with a little structure here to mount it on and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . some wire, some cables, and we were all up on the roof tryin' to get this thing all . . .

SL: Pointed the right . . .

JM: . . . guy wired up . . .

SL: Yeah, yeah.

JM: . . . vertical and . . .

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

[01:18:53] JM: And then he put a pipe wrench on that pipe and krch-krch-krch-krch, turn it like this so that it would face towards Tulsa. You had to aim it just exactly right. And somebody downstairs would be sayin', "Yeah, yeah, no, no, no good."

SL: Right.

JM: And he'd turn it back. "Yeah, now it's good. That—nope, too far." [*Laughs*] And so and then back in those days, the television had this vertical hold problem where the picture—boop. . .

SL: Start to roll, sure.

JM: . . . boop. It'd go up, and you'd adjust it just the tiniest bit . . .

SL: Yes.

JM: . . . it'd start going . . .

SL: Goin' the other . . .

JM: . . . down.

SL: Yeah. Yes.

JM: "Oh, dadgum." And then you'd adjust it just a little bit the other way and it—now it's goin' up. It was real hard to get it just exactly right, so that it didn't—you'd be watchin' it and pretty soon, you'd think, "Oh. Here it [*laughs*] goes again."

SL: Right.

[01:19:46] JM: And so we—then later we got the—another antenna so that we could pick up Muscogee. So we had these two antennas, you know, fairly far apart there. And seems like we got a third eventually to pick up Fort Smith or . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

JM: . . . Joplin or something.

SL: Yeah, north and south, yeah.

JM: And so while we had two, I think it was Muscogee and Tulsa—and by the way, that was back when they didn't go twenty-four hours a day.

SL: That's right.

JM: At midnight or so, the . . .

SL: Or ten.

JM: If you were a feek . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: Asleep, you would be awakened with the Star-Spangled Banner.

[*Hums*]

SL: That's right.

JM: You'd wake up, and you'd see jets flyin' by or . . .

SL: Yup.

JM: . . . something on the screen there and . . .

SL: Or the test pattern.

JM: Test pattern, yeah. Wake up . . .

SL: With the Indian.

JM: Yeah.

SL: There used to be the—in the Tulsa channel . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . there would be an Indian . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . motif.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[01:20:52] JM: And so you had to have a—some kind of a switch to  
switch between one channel—between one antenna . . .

SL: Antenna.

JM: . . . so that you're receiving off this antenna and not the other  
one.

SL: Right.

JM: And so Daddy had this metal switch thing here. It was like two

bars.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Electrical, high-voltage things are like that still. Had that over on the wall, on the little casing there around the window right at the edge of his couch. So on this one occasion, Daddy was laying on the couch watching television with a big chaw of tobacco in his mouth, and [*laughs*] a storm started developing, and lightning hit that antenna.

SL: Oh.

JM: And the power came in and blew up that switch right there about this far from his feet. Boom! I wasn't there to hear the story, but they said that a—you hear about ball lightning.

SL: Yeah.

[01:22:00] JM: They say that a big ball of spark went rollin' around on the floor, and Daddy swallowed his tobacco juice that he was chewin' on . . .

SL: Oh...

JM: . . . [*choking sounds*] his—came . . .

SL: Oh, boy.

JM: . . . boiling out of that chair and tryin' to spit in the fireplace [*laughs*] and cursing and . . .

SL: Well, sure. That stuff's awful.

JM: Scared the daylights out of him. it didn't start a fire or anything, but it blew that switch up. And melted our wire, our little cables comin' in off that antenna. And eventually he got on Cox Cable, I think. No, that wasn't it, it was Trans-Video or something that was the first television service around. We got off the . . .

SL; I forget what that company was called.

JM: Yeah.

Sarah Moore: Scott, lunch is here.

SL: Oh, okay. Well, we'll go ahead and stop here and go out and get something to eat.

JM: Yeah, Okay.

[Recording stopped]

[01:23:01] SL: So, John, we just had Penguin Ed's Bar-B-Que from the original B & B barbeque shop down the road here. I ate way too much. [*JM laughs*] So if we need to—are you a coffee drinker?

JM: Yeah.

SL: If we get drowsy, we may have to take a break and get some coffee in us 'cause that . . .

JM: Okay.

SL: . . . that heavy of a meal just makes me wanna [*JM laughs*] sink . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . into nothingness.

JM: Yeah, I've gotten to the age where I need a . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . afternoon nap about three o'clock. I start . . .

SL: That's right. That's right.

JM: . . . slumping.

[01:23:34] SL: That's right. So we've been getting great stories about your earliest memories over on Lafayette, but also some of the stuff that was happening out at the farm. And we were just talking about a dual antenna system that your dad had rigged up with a switch at the end of the couch, and at one point in time—this is for the TV. And at one point in time, lightning hit, and you had ball lightning in the house, and your dad swallowed the chewing tobacco that he was chewing on at the time. That's really quite a remarkable incident. Not many people on earth have ever experienced anything like that, so I thought that was a great story.

JM: Yeah, for that to blow up right there just within inches from his feet . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . the way he was layin' in the couch watchin' television.

[*Laughter*]

SL: Feet to the fire.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Literally.

JM: It's a wonder he didn't destroy the television as well but . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . once that switch blew up, that—nothing would go on to the TV, I guess.

[01:24:45] SL: I can remember when we got our first TV, and it was black and white. And I can remember some of the programming. Seems like Ed Sullivan was pretty popular, and there was also—seems like there was some other program that was very popular back then. And you mentioned that the broadcasts didn't go around the clock like they do now.

JM: Yeah.

SL: It was really over by ten or midnight at night and—do you remember any of the television program that you were fond of in those early, black-and-white days?

[01:25:25] JM: Hmm. We had to just settle for whatever was on. You know, you'd only have two channels, maybe, to select from. And it was a process, there, of flickin' a switch to where you're pickin' up the signal off of a different antenna . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . up here on the roof, and I—then also go to Channel 4, whatever that is, you know, whatever it was for Fort Smith or Muscogee or whatever. But let's see. There was the *Hit Parade* . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . that would come on. And I don't know how they were able to duplicate those songs as well, but once rock and roll came, it was pretty much impossible for that type of singing and orchestra groups to duplicate rock and roll songs. Elvis, for example and Fats Domino and those kinds of musical artists. So it—those songs were becoming on—were coming on the *Hit Parade*, and it just became impossible for them to—you know, they could do "I was sailing along," you know, "Moonlight Bay" or . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . all these other quaint, Mayberry songs, you know, [*laughs*] that they would play.

[01:27:03] SL: Did y'all have a record player in the house?

JM: Yeah.

SL: And were—do you remember—were they 78s that you started with and . . .

JM: Yeah, and actually, over at my grandmother's house, they had the kind of songs where you have these big, quarter-inch-thick records—in fact, they're still over there—and there'd just only be one song on that side. It wasn't like the 78s, you know, where you'd have five or six songs . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . on one side, and turn it over, and you got five or six on the other side. But I don't remember sittin' around listening to records that much. When we got in high school, 45s were the rage. And lot of our teenage friends would have big stacks of 45s. We never had enough spare money to buy records. Before television, we liked to sit around on—especially Sunday afternoons and just listen to the radio. And there were programs there that were staged in a theatre kind of a setting, a radio studio, you might say, and they would have different people reading the different parts there, and you'd sit there, and you would remember—you could visualize what was going on there. If Sergeant Preston's in the Yukon.

SL: Right.

[01:28:39] JM: Or the Royal Mounted Police in Canada or something, or Tarzan in the jungle. And so I remember one of our friends, Buford Hand from across the street, across the highway there,

tellin' us that he had seen a television. I said, "Well, how do they do that? Does it—when they're filming it, are they just standing around in a radio setting there and reading their script?" "Oh, no, no, if they're—if it's a scene out in the jungle, they're in the jungle. Or if they're out on [*SL laughs*]*—you know, if you hear the horses, it's not [*makes hoofbeats with hands*], it's not this sound effects, it's they're on a horse ridin' out there across the western plains.*" "Oh my gosh." Couldn't believe it, you know. Well, anyway, then we got a television, and thought, "Oh yeah, this is great." *The Ed Sullivan Show* and, oh, gosh, what was the other one? There were several—our sisters liked the—oh, gosh, what was her name? She'd come in with a big, swirling skirt. And usually these programs were thirty minute shows. But cowboy shows were always good. [01:30:04] Back to the radio, though. We'd sit down on Sunday afternoon a lot of times if the weather was bad, and we'd already gone to church, we'd already fed the cattle, and nothing much else going on needing to be done. And we'd listen to the radio. And these radio programs were even worse than—as far as the number of murders in the afternoon. [*Laughter*] And so one—several times we would have a little tic-tac, dink, dink, dink, and then make a slash for five, you know, and count

how many murders or how many people were killed in an afternoon, and it'd be fifteen or ten or fifteen, you know. And think, "Boy, this is terrible." [*Laughter*] "Terrible influence for us." You know, people, cowboys gettin' shot or whatever and—but we had some favorites that we would follow. And usually they would be on a kind of a serial basis where you had to tune in next Sunday to see what the next episode was gonna be with this guy.

SL: The Shadow knows.

JM: Yeah.

SL: *The Shadow* was out of Chicago, and . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: I'm tryin' to think what other serials there were.

[01:31:21] JM: Yeah. So we had a radio upstairs that Paul and I would listen to, kinda keep on a little bit while we were studyin'. And gosh, there maybe might be one decent song every thirty minutes. The rest of the time it was just stuff you just didn't care a thing about, you know . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . bein' teenagers, wanting dance kind of a . . .

SL: Sure.

[01:31:49] JM: Rock and roll kind of songs. And so our favorites

was on a clear night, you could pick up WNOE from Chicago. And they had lots of good music. I don't know what part of Chicago they were broadcasting from, but most of the time if you got close to that band, it just wouldn't be coming in. And it seems like Fayetteville had two stations that broadcast pretty good music. So probably from these descriptions of how to do things, Indian lore and pioneer things that—these cards that would come between the shredded wheat, I had found out how to make a crystal radio.

SL: Sure.

[01:32:45] JM: And so I got real interested wrappin' up a toilet paper spool. Wrap that up, you know, and . . .

SL: In copper wire.

JM: . . . polish it and anyway, makin' a crystal radio. The only thing you had to buy was the crystal, and we had—we'd found some earphones, and so you could rig that thing up and tune into the local radio station. And it didn't run on electricity or anything. It was really . . .

SL: Mysterious.

JM: Quite. [*Laughter*] Quite the deal. And I remember thinkin', "Boy, wouldn't it be something if you could invent a crystal radio like that that doesn't run on electricity." So it wouldn't matter

where you are, you could take it with you walkin' around, out checkin' the cattle or haulin' hay or anything you . . .

SL: Right.

JM: Whatever you're doin' out away from everything. And a portable radio. Be quite the deal, you know, and look where we are now.

SL: Right.

JM: And [*laughs*] ear buds and so forth.

SL: Right.

[01:33:51] JM: And so our barn was, mmm, 150 yards away or so, and I—there had been a telegraph line going out to Prairie Grove, and the line went down on the edge of our property, on the back end of the farm. And so that line was just laying on the—this wire was just on the ground, and one of our projects that Daddy hired us to do at twenty-five cents an hour [*laughs*] kind of work was to roll that wire up, never knowin' when you might want a big roll of copper wire. So anyway, I decided to get that wire and make an antenna between the gable on our house [*SL laughs*] all the way down to the barn to be able to pick that up with my radio, my crystal set. And I'd studied up on it and had it grounded and everything because I didn't want it to hit light—get lightning struck and set the house—burn the house down.

SL: Right.

[01:34:59] JM: And so anyway, I had that radio reception line rigged up down to the barn up until when it burned down. That's another story. Poor Paul was tryin' his best to get something done around there and got in a little bit too much of a hurry one day puttin' up hay. And the hay-hauling, the help guys, were in there complaining about how they couldn't work in there because the bees, the wasps were threatening to sting 'em. And so Paul wasn't afraid of—he was not very allergic to bee stings or wasp stings, so he got in there, and said, "Aw, hell," and he got a wad of hay and set it on fire and was burning these wasps down, and course the fire goes down into the hay, and the next thing you know, it's outta control, and the barn burns down.

SL: Wow.

JM: And so and it just so happens it was at a time when Daddy—well, the rest of the family was all out of town. I was married at that point, and I wasn't living at home on the farm anymore. And Daddy had gone way back up in Maryland or somewhere back in there, in that direction, to pick up my sister Mary Sue who was workin' in summer camp as a counselor, a camp.

SL: Kay.

JM: And so the whole family . . .

SL: Was on that trip.

JM: . . . without me—I was married and workin'. My brother was home holdin' down the fort. And so they come home, and the story was that Mary Sue was sitting on—sittin' outside the window. "Oh, wonderful bein' home again," and startin' up the driveway, and she says, "Oh my God, where's the barn?" Daddy says, "What barn?" [*Laughs*]

SL: Oh, no.

JM: "Oh! Oh!" Starts havin' a fit. Course the barn's [*laughs*] been burned down. And it's not funny, of course. And but poor Paul had to explain what had happened to the barn. He was tryin' to put up hay. Paul says, "Well, heck, you know, here we were in the late August, early September. We didn't have our hay put up for the cattle. And I was tryin' to finish up the haying process there and get the hay put up." [01:37:36] I had mentioned earlier about our Jenny. That's quite a story in itself. Our—we called her Din Din. She was a female donkey. That's a Jenny. Daddy'd bought her at a—let's see. I think there was a neighbor up on Sang Street, fairly close, that had her. They didn't have a pond for the—this Jenny to drink water out of, so they had a—they just watered her with a hose in a tub. So she was used to drinking city water.

SL: Right.

JM: By then we had city water rather than well water with the sulfur flavor and everyth—we had city . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . city water. And so she wouldn't drink out of the pond. So she would come up on the porch lookin' for a drink of water if her trough—if her washtub was empty and bray at six in the morning or something [*SL laughs*] in the window, just three feet away from where Daddy was sleeping . . .

SL: Oh my gosh.

JM: . . . in the bed next to the window. [*Brays*] Like this. And bang, bang with her foot on that tub. Bangs, crash, bang, bang, bang with that washtub and braying wantin' him to get up and get her some water.

SL: Needs some attention, yeah.

[01:39:02] JM: And so Din Din was quite a pet, and Daddy—he either bought it with the animal or bought it later, but he bought—he had some harness for Din Din, and we pulled this double shovel out there in the garden to plow between the rows of corn or tomatoes, whatever, and so we used her a lot for that. We'd use her for—we'd go back and cut firewood, and we'd cut the tree down—that's another story about how we cut the trees

down before chainsaws—and then we'd limb it up with our axes, and we'd take these tongs and hook on there and have the Jenny pull it on down to a place where we kinda stockpiled 'em gettin' ready to cut 'em all up into firewood. But another thing that we used Din Din for was pullin' our little wagon that we had. Daddy somewhere bought a buggy. [*SL laughs*] And [*laughs*] big ol' wheels like that about.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Four-and-a-half-foot-diameter buggy wheels, and it had a little bench there and kinda room in the back for—you know, the kids'd load up on that. We've got some pictures of Din Din pullin' us around in the front pasture there.

SL: That's big doin's.

JM: That was a lot of fun.

SL: Yeah.

[01:40:47] JM: When the barn burned down, the buggy and all the harness, all that stuff went with it, unfortunately. By then Din Din had already died, but she was quite a pet. It was possible, too, to ride her. But you've heard of bein' stubborn as a mule.

SL: Yes.

JM: Well, you know, [*laughter*] if she didn't wanna go, you were just not going. You—we'd jump on her and—bareback. We didn't

have a saddle for her. And kinda get her head pulled around where it's aimed wherever you wanna go. And she'd walk a couple of steps and then pretty soon she'd just kinda shake. And her favorite thing was to head over towards the clothesline because she knew that we would—the clothesline would probably snag us and drag us off, get us off of her back. [*SL laughs*] Her next favorite thing was she'd head down to the nearest pond, which would have a dam, because she knew that if she walked down the steep bank of the dam, boom, boom, boom, like this with her front legs, we'd just come rollin' off head—over her front of her head.

SL: Eject button. Yeah.

JM: We'd get up, "Oh, man," and try to get her around back where we'd wanna go and [*SL laughs*]*—*but she learned that if she didn't wanna go, which was usual. [*Laughs*] You know, she just didn't wanna carry us. Now she would pull a—in harness she would—she'd go all right. We didn't have any trouble about gettin' her to go where we wanted.

SL: Right.

JM: But if she was packin' a, you know, 130- or 150-pound young boy on her [*laughs*] back, you know, she—that was a whole different matter.

[01:42:41] SL: You know, you've mentioned several times about the family not being really able to afford much of anything except necessities, and you've also talked about inventive ways for additional income. And so I'm wondering in the work that you and the kids did in most times were—was that income expected to go into a family pool, or was it just the kids being given direction on how to make their own money so it didn't affect the family budget? You know what I'm tryin' to say?

JM: Yeah. Mostly it'd be our own money. Like sellin' those tomato plants I was tellin' about. There was another money-making idea that Daddy came up with that we would—oftentimes in selling cattle, it was just a matter of loading up, oh, three or four in his truck and takin' 'em to the sale barn.

SL: Right.

[01:43:57] JM: And so then you'd wait and wait and wait for your animals to go through the line or through the ring and be auctioned off. And so we had this one area on the farm that for some reason had become overgrown with sum—with—what was that stuff? Sumac, I guess is what the plant was. But anyway, it'd make a real quick stalk real straight, and you could trim the leaves off of it, the branches, and it made a pretty good walkin' stick there. It's almost like a cane, but it was more flimsy. We

also had hickory sprouts that you could cut off and make a staff, a kind of a staff out of. And so we'd work and work gettin' these staffs, a cattle poker kind of staffs made and go down there and sell 'em to these guys that are runnin' the cattle through the ring 'cause they always need some kind off stick or something to poke cattle with, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . and wave 'em in a certain direction. And we'd sell those sumac stakes for twenty-five cents because they were pretty flimsy. And you'd see these guys beatin' on cows, "Get in there! Get in there!" and [*laughs*] these sticks were just flying and fallin' apart completely.

SL: Right.

JM: Pretty worthless.

SL: Right.

[01:45:31] JM: And those were twenty-five cents. And the hickory sticks would sell for I think seventy-five cents or a dollar or something.

SL: Yeah.

JM: They were much more substantial.

SL: Stantial. Right.

JM: Yeah, they weren't gonna break. And so usually after sellin' a

couple of head of cows, steers, or whatever Daddy was sellin', he would feel a little bit flush enough to where we could afford to get a—he'd wanna go in the cafe that the sale barns always had and get a piece of pie and a cup of coffee.

SL: Yep.

JM: And for our part we'd get a—maybe share a piece of pie or something [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . between Paul and I.

SL: Right, right.

JM: And but . . .

[01:46:20] SL: Well, you know, a lot of these stories are Paul and you, so I'm assuming that the first two born, is that right?

JM: Yeah.

SL: One and two?

JM: Mh-hmm.

SL: And then the four girls, so there was a real division there of labor and responsibilities. I got—I'm kinda gettin' the impression that you two guys were the—took the brunt of trying to help the family along through its finances and getting all the chores done and . . .

[01:46:54] JM: Yeah, but the girls were doin' a lot in the house.

They also got in on the milking part.

SL: Hmm, okay.

JM: They'd take their month of milking. They'd also help on haulin' hay. These were the square bales, and the heavier part like lifting the bales, buckin' 'em up into the loft, for example, that might be Daddy or Paul or me. And the girls usually got the job of draggin' 'em back, we called it. You know, draggin' 'em back to the far end of the loft, where the next . . .

SL: They get stacked up.

JM: . . . the next man or boy would be . . .

SL: Stackin' the stuff.

JM: . . . stackin' 'em, you know, puttin' 'em up wherever. And so they're—or they might be driving the truck or something. But anyway, they did a lot of helping on that sort of stuff outside. And they did a lot of work in the garden. [01:48:04] There was one year where in the garden, for some reason, morning glories took over. I don't know why we let 'em get so far ahead, but it was just like a total bed of this deep in morning glories with a little sprig of corn showin' here and there.

SL: Right.

JM: And we had to go through there pullin' those morning glories up and we'd roll these big rolls—they'd be this big and that wide—of

morning glories up to save the corn in between and then carry these big bundles of rolled-up morning glories over to the side and throw 'em in the ditch or over the fence or whatever. But usually if it was something the girls could help out on, mowing the grass or milking the cows, that sort of thing, the girls got in on all that kind of stuff, too.

SL: So . . .

JM: Not to mention takin' care of the younger kids.

SL: Right. There was that—there's also that. [*Laughs*]

JM: Yeah.

SL: 'Cause there's such prolific spread of kids.

JM: Yeah.

[01:49:12] SL: Now I wanna get back to all this, but you also mentioned that you thought of a couple more stories you wanted to tell about when you were living over on Lafayette.

JM: Yeah. My kids have talked about—my kids talked about growin' up back in the [19]70s and so forth, and how used to be you let your kids roam around, and you didn't even know where they were, and you just knew they'd be back about suppertime, and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . that sort of thing. And I say, "Oh, gosh, yeah." Growing up

over on Lafayette next to the railroad station, Paul and I would go down there and climb in the cars that were on the side rail there, in the sand cars, especially, were our favorite, and play in the sand like a big—one giant sand pile.

SL: Right.

JM: And nobody would know you were there unless they were up on the bridge and lookin' down. [*SL laughs*] And we would be worried thinkin', "Boy, we gotta make sure if this car starts movin' for some reason"—although it's not hooked up . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . [*laughs*] "then we got to jump, and we got to get outta this quick." And we'd—I remember Mama worryin' about us playing under the bridges and—because hobos would sometimes—sometimes you—I don't remember seein' hobos so much, maybe once or twice—that would camp out under the Lafayette Bridge, for example, or the Maple Street Bridge. But she worried about that, but not to the point that she had us to never go down there.

SL: Right. Right.

[01:51:01] JM: Another little favorite thing we used to do—and this was when the engines were coal fired—coal generated—coal-fire generator steam engines, and so they had a big smokestack.

And in the summertime if we were eating watermelon, we'd save the rinds and go down there and wait for a train to go by so we could drop a watermelon rind in the . . .

SL: In the sna . . .

JM: . . . smokestack.

SL: In the stack. [*SL laughs*]

JM: Well, so diesel engines came on the scene, and on the top of a diesel engine is a big fan blowing, and that was even more fun because if the watermelon rind hit that fan, it'd psssh—it's shatter that watermelon rind, splatter it all up, spray it all up.

And [*laughs*] I member several times the conductor'd be shoutin', "No, no! You kids get back away from there."

[*Laughter*] And we're up there like this gettin' ready to—tryin' to determine where exactly is this gonna go when I turn loose of it?

[01:52:07] SL: That's great stuff.

JM: Yeah. It's crazy.

SL: Yeah, that's—that was your . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: That whole railroad thing was great opportunity for you guys to knock around that . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . that stuff. And back then, railroad was still a pretty big

deal.

JM: Yeah, it wasn't just the passenger line goin' through. I mean, the passenger train now that goes from Springdale down to Van Buren and back.

SL: Right. I think I remember my parents . . .

JM: For tourists.

SL: . . . going down to Little Rock and then over to Mississippi for the football game by train. Comin' back home that way.

JM: Yeah. Yeah, it's amazing. I can look at that train track, and I think, "Well, right there's the train track where my grandfather came here when he first came here" . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "to teach at the university."

SL: Yeah.

[01:53:00] JM: That's—right there that train station, that's where they got off.

SL: That's right.

JM: And vacations that they would take. Like, well, here are pictures of them in Hot Springs or something. Well, they had to take the train and go to Hot Springs. Or other pictures of them goin' to Sulphur Springs up here north of Gentry, which was something of a resort at that time.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And well, they'd have to take the train out there. I'm not sure what the route was up to Bentonville and over or something. But so it was—and they didn't have a car until the [19]30s when Daddy got old enough to drive. And so to go somewhere, you know, they'd have to get their suitcases and carry 'em down several blocks to the railroad station on Dickson Street and get on the train. [*Laughs*] That's just they . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . how you got around.

SL: Yeah. I wonder how many trains—do you remember how many trains a day came through Fayetteville?

JM: No. I don't know.

SL: I bet it was multiple.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. It was the means until the combustion engine really got going well.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Kind of left the buggy behind and became cars.

JM: Yeah.

[01:54:32] SL: So the—I'm interested in your grandmother that didn't go to the farm with you. Now the house we're talking

about is not the house that she eventually lived in. Is it—was the those—was it a white wood-sided house that you moved from, or was it in the . . .

JM: No, that house burned down in 1925.

SL: Oh, okay.

JM: Yeah.

SL: So it was the Italianate . . .

JM: Yeah, the brick, clay-tiles roof. That house.

[01:55:17] SL: So what can you tell me about your grandmother?

JM: She managed apartments. She was quite the writer. She was—became a poet laureate of Arkansas and had a monthly poetry club meeting there in her house and would go to poetry conventions, writers conferences, writers conventions, that sort of thing like in San Antonio and different places, where she might be the guest speaker. She published a number of poetry books. She's got, oh, a stack of albums, mostly containing clippings of where her poetry—a poem was published in a newspaper in Chicago or a newspaper in Memphis or Little Rock or anyplace. Anyhow, she would get a copy of that, and she would cut it out and put it in her scrapbooks. She's got a stack of scrapbooks probably like this, and each scrapbook is big, like two feet by two feet kind of scrapbook.

SL: So you come . . .

JM: And . . .

SL: . . . by the librarian gene honestly, don't you?

JM: [*Laughs*] Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Okay.

JM: Yeah. So and . . .

SL: Do you member . . .

[01:57:50] JM: I think probably publishing is a real—I think people who are involved at the university are kind of encouraged or pushed to publish. A university professor, I'm thinking, is encouraged to publish something in his field. And so my grandfather, the professor, published a great number of books, textbooks, on language. One is kind of a—not exactly a tourist book, but a book about Italy and traveling to Italy, kind of interesting things a traveler might be wanting to study up on before a trip. And so I think that inclination might've rubbed off on my grandmother, then. She got interested in poetry, and then what are you gonna do? Just one at a time send 'em out to newspapers. Well, she got interested in publishing a book of her works. We have a number of those books. And lots of—lot of different members of the family have copies of those books. Once in a while, someone will—some friend from church, for

example, will be moving into Butterfield Trail Village or something and consolidating their stuff. And they'll say, "Oh, we came across this book in our bookshelf and wanted you to have it. It's a textbook from your grandfather," or "It's a poetry book from your grandmother." Mimi, who was her nickname for us. We thought it was a nickname that only Mimi had, but now we've found out in later years that lots of people . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . call their grandparents Mimi or their aunt or . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . or whatever. [01:59:11] And but she was always the matriarch of the family. And she was always making sure that we had—well, for example, she—as Paul and I were growing up—and she did these kind of things for the other kids, too, but she made sure that we had dance lessons in the seventh grade. Now we were goin' to dance lessons over in the basement at Sue Keller's dance studio . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . over on Reagan—at the corner of Reagan and Arkansas Avenue.

SL: Right.

JM: In the basement. And so we were learnin' the rumba and . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] That's great.

JM: . . . the, you know, the waltz. Different dances, which is a—was a great help to us as we got along through college or high school and college. And then makin' sure if we had a big dance to go to and it was a formal that we had a white tux, white sport coat, and tuxedo trousers with a stripe down, you know . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . the leg and all that stuff, and a cumberbund.

SL: You bet.

JM: And a shirt with just studs instead of buttons and . . .

SL: Yep.

JM: . . . all that stuff. So [*SL laughs*] she said that her ther—her thought was to always remain useful. Find some way to be useful in your family. And she was absolutely the model grandparent. So she took a lot of opportunities to take us on trips and thinking of something the she could take us on.

[02:01:04] For example, we were in high school, and the Arlington Hotel—she liked to go occasionally to Hot Springs and just visit and hang around, you know, look . . .

SL: Great hotel.

JM: . . . look at things, and so she took us several times to Hot Springs for New Years. They would have a big party in their

ballroom, and the whole ceiling would be filled with these great-big, red balloons.

SL: Sure.

JM: And the tho—at the end of the evening about one thirty or so, they'd let 'em all down. You could take balloons home. The next morning, then, would be a big breakfast or a lunch at the big, fancy restaurant there. And I . . .

SL: Yeah. Still do that. Yeah.

JM: . . . remember going there, and it was the—you know, we're thinking, "Oh, my. Look at the price here. You know, \$3.25 for this big meal, you know." [*Laughs*] Course, that'd be like \$40-50 or something in today's money.

SL: Right.

JM: And but she liked takin' us on trips like that. But that was a very small trip. Bigger trips would be like to malt—to Mexico or New York.

SL: Now . . .

JM: Canada. Florida.

[02:02:32] SL: So were the—sounds—there must have been a division in family finances, then because . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . she . . .

JM: Mimi always—she said, "I always like to—it's important that you always have a hidden million." [SL laughs] Not that she had a million but [laughs] she—in Italian, it's you put forth a good face, a *buona faccia*. You know, it looks like you just won the lottery, you know, you look like the picture of success, whether you are or not, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: If you got two nickels to rub together or not. And but she . . .

SL: Did she prefer to speak in Italian? I mean . . .

JM: No, that's . . .

SL: . . . that's Italian . . .

JM: . . . funny. You know, here—we were growin' up with the professor of languages in the next room. Living at the same table, you know, and everything. And Mimi was born and raised in Bologna. Came over when she was ten. And yet the only time they spoke Italian was among themselves when they didn't want us to know what they were talkin' about. [SL laughs] Except you could kinda get the drift [laughs] if you knew a few words. And but you know, here they were not teachin' us any of the Italian language. But the problem was World War II was goin' on. America was at war with Italy. And I can just only imagine what it'd be like to immigrate to another country, and

you're over there tryin' to make a life for yourself in this other country, and all of a sudden you find out that your adopted country now is at war with your . . .

SL: Home.

JM: . . . home country. You know, what a nightmare . . .

[02:04:35] SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . that would be. And so along those lines, when Daddy was called up, they were worried sick that he would be sent to the European theatre. You know, might, for God's sake, be shootin' . . .

SL: Relatives.

JM: . . . other Italians . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . over there. Well, at least he was sent to the Pacific side of things. And the Aleutian Islands. He went there right after, maybe six months after the marines had chased the Japanese out of the Aleutian Islands. And but there were still some episodes there of stragglers who were hangin' out—hangin' back in caves. Anyway, so we didn't—we never really had any lessons on learning . . .

SL: Italian.

JM: . . . Italian.

SL: This might be a good time to . . .

JM: Till college.

SL: Yeah. This might be a good time to refer to the book that your grandfather provided you. The—I got the impression it was kind of a diary, but it was also pretty autobiographical as well. But wasn't there a really serendipitous series of events that put your grandparents together? I mean, didn't he see her somewhere and just . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . love at first sight, and then all of a sudden, you know, all that.

[02:06:22] JM: Yeah, there's a chapter about how he met. He was—there was a whole string of serendipitous events. Startin' from just being born, of course, but his father was in construction and had to leave Italy to go and find work and was able to send money back and support the family. And he had already lived in childhood several years in Brazil, where he would've picked up Portuguese.

SL: This is your grandfather.

JM: My grandfather, yeah. The professor. He'd lived several years in France where he wou—picked up French enough to be able to sell himself later to a dean at the University of Columbia.

SL: Right.

JM: The interview took place in French, speaking French. [*Laughs*]  
And at the end of the interview, the guy says, "Well"—the dean says, "Well, you can consider the job yours," you know, teaching at . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . Columbia University. The—he had become interested in languages and being in the—living in Northern Italy, there's a lot of German influence there and German—even now German is kind of the second language if English isn't, you know. If a tourist acts like they can't quite speak Italian, well, the storekeeper will spring some German on him.

SL: Right.

[02:08:11] JM: [*Laughs*] Or if they realize you're an English speaker. So anyway, learning—getting a background in languages created an interest. And that's what he studied in school in Italy. And then being a probably the only one on the ship coming over with all these other immigrants—*immigranti*.

SL: Right.

JM: [*Laughs*] The word ends with an *I*. Masculine plural. He got the job of documenting all their records.

SL: Right.

JM: Asking, interviewing each one of 'em on their way across the ocean there to New York. So that gave him a nice, posh, private room instead of . . .

SL: And food.

JM: And food, and not have to sleep down in the bunk quarters with all the other people. And various other episodes of when he got to New York and—enough to—so that his boss at the factory where he was making these little pieces of something at a factory, his boss got interested in him. And his boss was a German, and so he was probably not conversing in Italian, he was conversing, probably, in German to his boss about kind of a lofty subjects about Greek mythology and things of various tourist sites in Italy and so forth and the Alps. And he was able to impress him enough that his boss gave him a lot of latitude. [02:10:02] And then when he goes up to—his parents were living close to Yale, and he decided to go up to Yale and look around, see what he could find out about—how good is this big, fancy, hotsy-totsy university? And he meets the language—the Latin professor and impresses him enough with his language and so forth that the professor, boom, gives him a scholarship to Yale without even a transcript. All he had was . . .

SL: His words.

JM: . . . some samples of his homework.

SL: Right.

[02:10:47] JM: From Italy. And one of his homework samples was a poem by Virgil, the Roman poet . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . in Latin, of course, Roman language, written in the—BC something, whatever.

SL: Right.

JM: And it's about the making of a bread—of a focaccia, basically, a bread topped with cheese and some herbs and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . so forth, little tomato sauce. [*SL laughs*] Basically a cheese pizza or focaccia, more like it. And he had translated this, and his professor in Italy had written A, you know, excellent for something. Anyway. And so his Latin professor that he was—he had located there to talk to was so impressed with his translation that he [*snaps*], boom, he gave him a scholarship. Said, "Oh, you must come here and go to school. We have very few Italians here from—that are here in the university of Yale." Most of the immigrants were coming over as working-class people . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . on account of the bad economy—economic situation back in

Italy, and so they were anxious to get some of what he had to offer in the way of his culture and so forth. So his comment in the book was that, "So there you were. There it is that—or there it was that a simple Virgilian"—Virgil.

SL: Right.

JM: . . . "*Virgilian foccacia preparata al Italiana*"—prepared . . .

SL: By . . .

JM: . . . in the . . .

SL: Italian way.

JM: . . . Italian manner . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "from me opened the doors to Yale. [*Laughs*] And opened the doors to America." And so he got a master's degree. Then he goes to New York to seek his fortune and makes an acquaintance who puts him in touch with somebody at Columbia. And he goes and t—and interviews at Columbia for a teaching job, and the interview is conducted in French. And he was able to present himself well enough in French to [*snaps*] get the job. So he taught there for two years, I believe it was, or one year, and then interviewed around the country there and landed the job in University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in [19]05.

[02:13:44] SL: When was the first time that he laid eyes on who

would become his bride?

JM: So he taught here for two years. At the end of two years, they decided to—the university decided to reorganize the language department into three different departments. One would be the romance languages, meaning the language of the Romans.

SL: Romans. Yeah.

JM: Meaning a number of different languages: Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, of course.

SL: Right.

[02:14:16] JM: Different ones that evolved from the—from Latin.

And they gave him the chairmanship of that department. So he says, "Here it is. After only two years—I came as an assistant professor, an adjunct professor, and in two years I was the head of the department." And so he goes back for a visit. His parents were living in New York at the time, so he goes back for a visit. The newspapers had a—had, earlier in the year, like October, had a competition of—to elect the queen, the Italian queen—it's kinda like the queen of—the grape festival queen.

SL: Right.

JM: Of the five different boroughs . . .

SL: Boroughs.

JM: . . . of New York. And each one had their own Little Italy. And

so anyway, Mimi had—was one of the contestants, Rosa, whose last name was Zagnoni, Z-A-G-N-O-N-I, and that G-N in Italian is a nyo kind of a sound, Zagnoni, like lasagna. It's not lag-zanya. [Laughs]

SL: Right.

[02:15:37] JM: So she was one of the contestants, and as things turned out, he was shown her picture from the newspaper, which I have the newspaper in my album there. And so he got his friend to set him up to take him over to their house in Brooklyn and introduce him. He was all worried about it and everything. So he didn't wanna be too pushy about it and not—he didn't wanna be kinda uncool and show that he was just dying to meet this beauty. And so but he couldn't wait for the three or four days to pass till that—his friend got around to takin' him over there, so he went over on his own . . .

SL: Ah. [Laughs]

JM: . . . and walked up and down the street. And his book was written in Italian, you know, and so we had spent many years getting it translated. That's another story. And so anyway, he's walkin' up and down, and he finally sees the door open, and out comes this *grave matrone*, he said. And—the grave—I had to look up the word in several dictionaries. What could *grave* mean

besides grave? And obviously, grave or something. [*Laughs*]  
Stern.

SL: Right.

JM: A tough-lookin'—you know, a really . . .

SL: Matriarch.

JM: . . . overbearing *matrone* is, of course, a matriarch.

SL: Right.

[02:17:23] JM: And she sits down and starts reading the newspaper with her opera glass, which he had another Italian word for, *?oculina?*, I think it was. And pretty—and he keeps walkin' up and down the street, tryin' to hope that the beauty is gonna appear, and he starts thinking that his friend has just pulled a joke on him. There's no girl at this address, it's just this *grave matrone* [*laughter*] that's come out and sittin' on the front porch. And pretty soon he hears her holler, call back into the house, "Rosa, come out here and take a look at this strange"—and there's a word that doesn't have a translation. It's a dialect word. I forget the name of it, the word itself, but *umare'in*, I think was the way it phonetically looks like it would be pronounced. And he said, "Oh, my God," he thinks to himself, "I'm not a big man, I'm not a hunk and, you know, muscles. You know, I'm just an average size man." He was five foot

eight, I think. And, "But to call me *umare'in*," you know, which more or less translates, I suppose, to that funny little man, "Oh, my God, what an insult. Here I am embarrassed. I have to think of my dignity. I'm the chair of a department. I'm not just a professor. I'm the head of a department. And here I am being called that funny little man." [Laughter] You know. So he finally gives up and goes home. [02:19:05] In a couple of days his friend takes him there, and he's—his friend goes in and chit chats and says, "Oh, well, by the way, I've got my friend—here, come on up and join the conversation." So he comes up and he—they visit with the mother, the future mother-in-law for a period of time, and he keeps kinda elbowing the friend like, "Let's—when are we gonna see the—Rosa? When are we gonna get to meet the beauty, here?" And so finally he says, "*Oh, la signora, dov'è?*" The *signora*—*signorina*, "Where is the—your daughter?" "Oh, oh." She calls him—calls her on down, and then they have this conversation, and she's—he says, "But wait a minute. Your name rings a bell. You member—do you member an episode at the"—at a kind of a burlesque sort of a show, a variety show in Coney Island where there was a magician doing various tricks, making rabbits appear out of hats and things, and he had done a magic trick of—called the trick of

the flags or something, and he pulled up a flag of Italy and was making fun of it. And at the time—at that time, this was three years before—three or four—a girl gets up in the back and not cusses but chews him out about making fun of the Italian flag, that this is a flag that should be well respected and —whatever. Anyway, stood up for the Italians. And he says, "Oh, my gosh, that was you! I remember at the time," he says, "I didn't tell her that at the time"—this was three or four years prior—that he had thought that if I ever got to where I could support a wife, if I had something to offer, financially stability, some status, you know, here—I would marry her. That's the girl I would marry.

SL: Right.

[02:21:30] JM: And here he has met her now. [*SL laughs*] And he's the head of a department at the University of Arkansas, and now he's married her. And so they courted that summer, and that was the summer her dad was dying of pneumonia.

SL: Oh!

JM: Had a—got a cold that lingered on and went into pneumonia. And he died that August of that summer. And so suddenly—Mimi could tell about back then. She said, "Boy, I learned very fast what the importance of money is." At the time in 1904, 1905, along in that period of time, money was a dirty subject.

You didn't talk—you know, business was what—you know, there was something immoral about going into business.

SL: Hmm.

JM: There was—money was a dirty subject that women were not supposed to really be concerned about. She said if you had company come over, well, there'd be small talk around the dinner table, and then the men would get up and go into the parlor and smoke cigars or something, and the women would go in the other room and take care of the dishes or knit, you know, do something, play some cards or something. So the men would be off over there talkin' politics or business.

SL: Right.

[02:23:05] JM: And so I'm sure they didn't know what the deal was when the landlord came around for the rent. Rent? What's that? What do you mean, rent? You know, and so she said that she learned very quickly how important money was and what you need, you know, about having to find ways to make a living and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . she waited tables and sold roses on the street, you know, like you see in—over in Italy. And sold her grandmother—I mean, her mother was a very fine—she was nearsighted, but she

could make wonderful lace and embroidery and that sort of thing. We still have a lot of her needlework. And a lot of her needlework, a [*laughs*] whole trunk of it. And but she would take some of that and try to sell it around different places and go to a hock shop, you know, pawn store at—and they'd say, "Oh, no, this or that," you know, and gosh, it's something you've considered to be a family treasure.

SL: Right.

JM: And they're sayin', "Oh, no, it's worth almost nothing," or whatever.

SL: Right.

[02:24:31] JM: And so they—my grandfather, then, had to come on back first of September, roughly, to start the school year. And they corresponded back and forth. Apparently those letters of correspondence didn't survive, or we never have found 'em, anyway. Didn't survive the fire of 1925. And so he, in the meantime, he was having a house built on 617 Lafayette. Their house in Brooklyn, incidentally, was 617 and so . . .

SL: That's serendipitous.

JM: Yeah. That's crazy.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And so anyway, they corresponded, then. Kinda dated long

distance, you might say, and got married then the following June or July, and then, presumably, went on some kind of a honeymoon trip. And then they all loaded up with the *grave matrone* in tow [*laugh*], and he wrote that book in—and moved back to Fayetteville or moved down to Fayetteville, and my grandmother said she remembered seeing her first cattle running around loose in a pasture [*SL laughs*] as they pulled on out into New Jersey.

SL: Right.

JM: Got on out of town a little bit. She was real anxious to see what the countryside looked like, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: "Oh, my God, look, look, look! The cattle are runnin' around out there." In Europe, you don't see cattle runnin' around. You don't see fences up by the road because cattle are not runnin' loose, or horses, either, pigs.

SL: Right.

JM: Anyway, they're kept up in pens or in barns, and then you harvest the hay and you bring the hay to the cow.

SL: Sure.

JM: Or whatever. Goats. [02:26:36] So anyway, so he wrote this book in 1932, [19]31, [19]32, along in there. And the mother-

in-law was still living with 'em. And so it might have been that she got—the mother-in-law got a kick out of that, and she was probably saying, "Yeah, but I called you the little funny guy."

[*Laughter*] The *umare'in*.

SL: That's fun.

JM: So she surely read the book. And when I first came across it, I thought, "Ooo, wait a minute. When did Nona die?" and I went back in my records there. "Oh, gosh, she died in [19]33." And so I thought, "Oh, man. She was livin' right there in the same house." [*Laughter*]

SL: Yeah.

JM: And so I'm sure they got a kick out of that.

[Recording stopped]

[02:27:37] SL: We're starting on our third segment. And the material we have to cover is so prolific, I'm startin' to think that we may have to do another day of us getting together 'cause I don't want to sell short either your life story or the book that you brought me that your grandfather wrote. So I think I wanna get back to your story for a while, and I think where we left, you had mentioned something about fox hunting, and I'm assuming that's out on the farm, out on 16?

JM: Yeah. When Mom and Daddy bought the farm out there, and

then he bought the back end of the farm, the part where it's basically that west mountain on the west side of what's now Interstate 49 where it swings around the west side of Fayetteville, he speculated that someday there will be a bypass around Fayetteville. At the time cars were having to pull up School Street and hit Dickson Street there at Woodruff's Cleaners, there . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . on that intersection there right by Jose's or—it's not even Jose's any more. And go up Dickson Street to College and then north on College to get through town.

SL: Right.

JM: Or goin' the other way, goin' south. And then they had—it's—that was even before they put in Archibald Yell zigzag up through there to get the traffic over to College Avenue without having to go through Dickson Street. And it seemed like such a far-off idea. We thought, man, you are seein' the future a hundred years from now or something.

SL: Right.

[02:29:43] JM: And as it turned out, it was only twenty years before they—the highway came through. The . . .

SL: The bypass.

JM: . . . bypass came through.

SL: It was just a two-lane thing.

JM: Yeah, just a two lane but . . .

SL: You mentioned.

JM: . . . they were takin' a hundred-yard-wide swath of land all the way through there. We thought, "What are they ever gonna need that for?" Access roads, of course, and then, as we see now, widening. But so the back end of the farm, especially, had a lot of field areas that could be expanded by clearing and puttin' up firewood, basically. So we would go back there and cut firewood. And I think Daddy was getting \$7 a rick, and the truck would hold two ricks. Well, we'd cut one truckload for the house, for ourselves, and one to sell. And it was quite a project there. And we would throw all the limbs into piles at fairly close range there. We'd have a lot of brush piles back there. After a season or two of them collecting dead leaves that happened to blow in there, they were fairly easy to set on fire, and we could go back there and build a bon—or set one of those on fire, have us a nice bonfire. And for an evening out, you might say.

SL: Right. Sure.

[02:31:17] JM: This—the—Jim Harrison, field hand, farmhand that I was tellin' you about, he introduced Daddy to fox hunting. And

we—he had some foxhounds, and Daddy got some foxhounds, and mostly we'd keep all the dogs up at our house around the farm, and we'd go out and get the dog's adrenalin flowing by blowing our dog horns, which were made from bull horns, basically. Some of our better ones we had bought on a trip to Mexico that my grandmother took us on sometime in the middle [19]50s or something. I've got a—something on that in the timeline. And booo, booo, you blow those horns, and oh, the dog's'd just start goin' crazy. Just "Oh, man, we're goin' out, we're goin' out, we're goin' out!"

SL: Right.

[02:32:19] JM: They'd run up and down the mountains now, chasin' fox. So the idea was not to kill the fox or hurt the fox in any way. Fox—the thing—good thing about a fox is that they run around fairly close to their den tryin' to shake the dogs, and so you get to listen to the dog race around. [*SL laughs*] And you have to be familiar with your dogs enough to know who's in the lead. And if you got several people's dogs in the race, then you have this argument about who's in the lead. "Oh, that sounds like Old Blue up there."

SL: Huh.

JM: "Oh, hell you say. That's Bentley," or some—whatever.

[Laughs] And course Jim had his dogs, and Daddy had his. And so you'd sit around out there by the fire. And sometimes they'd bring a pot of coffee out there and put that coffee—it'd be cowboy coffee. Just one of these . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . kinda pots like this.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And you just dump the grounds in there, and after the grounds settle to the bottom, then the coffee's done. And if it boils—or it kinda cooks for a couple of hours there, it's enough to wake the dead. [Laughter] But usually the—this wasn't something the girls were interested in at all. Just—it'd be Paul and I, and we were just only barely interested if nothing else was goin' on, if we didn't have a date or party, nothing was goin' on.

SL: Right.

[02:34:00] JM: We might go ahead and go out to listen to the dogs run. But if they were chasin' a wolf, that wasn't so good because they could—these guys could tell whether they were chasin' a fox because they were kinda running around in the same vicinity, even the same side of the hill, not goin' over the other side where they couldn't be heard. A wolf, on the other hand, would tend to run in a straight line tryin' to outrun the

dogs. And so the dogs would leave out. You'd just hear 'em further away and further away and . . .

SL: Whoa.

JM: . . . pretty soon you didn't hear 'em at all. And then it was hard to gather your dogs back up. Maybe they'd be so far out that they couldn't find their way back, and you'd have to drive around the next morning on out west of town somewhere and try to locate your dogs. And this bonfire and fox hunting and so forth took place over there in the valley between the two hills. Right where 49 Highway is. It's kinda funny to think that that used to be the absolute boondocks back there. You'd—you could go back there and spend all day cutting wood and never see a soul.

*[Laughs]*

[02:33:14] SL: Right. Right.

JM: Except your own group. And the big no-no for fox hunting as far as your dogs were concerned, the thing you'd be most embarrassed about, would be if they started chasing rabbits because—*[laughs]* I don't know how the dogs were supposed to know that they were not supposed to chase rabbits, but that was the deal. If they—if it was a very short race and the rabbit found its hole, which the rabbit would find its little den, then the race would be over. For some reason, the dogs didn't seem to

get into coon hunting where they'd tree a coon. A coon would typically climb a tree, and coon hunters would—we never got into this, but coon hunters would have their dogs trained to tree a coon, and they'd go out there—they'd hear the dog barkin', they'd go out there in the woods and find—catch up with their dogs and shoot the coon, who was up in the tree. Well, we never got into that. Maybe we didn't have coons. But our dogs were—they—somehow they knew how to chase fox. And for some reason, a dog can tell if a fox has run across this area here, they can smell that, and they know that he went that way, and not that way. You know. It seems like smell over here, it smells over here a little hotter than it does over here, you know.

SL: Fresher or something. Yeah.

JM: Fresher by just a millionth of a degree or something. I don't know . . .

SL: Amazing.

JM: . . . how they can tell which way the fox is goin'. Looks like they'd be chasin' up the wrong direction part of the time. But apparently not. This was also before we had deer around in this—around Fayetteville very close. And so there wasn't any dog racing—dogs chasing deer. I'm not sure how that works during the night anyway. But we'd go out, oh, after dark

anyway, and go fox hunting. I don't know whether anybody over in Madison County, shall we say, [*laughs*] the hinterland over here to the east, if anybody—or the north or the south, if they still go out dog hunting anymore, or fox hunting.

[02:38:01] SL: So a couple of things. I—you know, the films I've always seen where there's a fox hunt going on, it's in the day. And you mention treeing raccoon. I've always heard raccoons were very, very intelligent, and they could actually drown a dog. That if your dog got lured into water of any kind that the coon would be able to hold its head down . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . and drown it.

JM: Huh.

SL: So I always—so I'm wondering if they're chasing a wolf and they head straight out, and they're over on—in another valley somewhere, did you ever lose any dogs to fox hunting or hunting?

JM: No, but sometimes they'd be a little hard to find, especially if we took 'em out deer hunting down in the Ozark National Forest. Back in those days you could hunt with dogs. That would be particularly exciting to be on a deer stand and hear your dogs strikin' a trail . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . over there about a mile away, and they're comin' your way.

SL: Right.

[02:39:19] JM: And you know you're on this . . .

SL: Stand.

JM: You're above on a—above a bench, say.

SL: Right.

JM: Where you can see. You got good vision—visual on that bench, and you figure, "Oh, they're probably gonna come along this bench and come runnin' right below me here."

SL: Right.

JM: And usually a deer would be maybe a quarter of a mile ahead of the dogs. So you're hearin' the dogs over here, but you think the deer . . .

SL: Knew the deer is close by.

JM: They're comin' this way, and you're speculating about where they're gonna come. And pretty soon, you know, they're still way over there, but you're hearing crashing over here, crash, crash, crash, with the . . .

SL: Right.

JM: Here comes a big doe. "Oh, man. Dadgum. Maybe there's a buck behind her," [*laughs*] or something.

SL: Right.

JM: Anyway, it was—deer hunting with dogs was a real exciting thing. [02:40:08] Now there's—that would be in country that the dogs were not used to, and so there would be problems about getting the dogs rounded back up. But you could go out with your horn, you know, that dog horn that I was talkin' about, and try to call 'em up and get in a high place there above a valley or something, a draw, and start blowing your horn there and hopin' your dog's gonna appear. I don't know if Daddy ever lost any dogs, but there were times where he had to go out several—maybe in the morning and again in the evening or something and try to find his dogs. But they'd have collars, and they'd have the name and phone number on the collar.

[02:41:02] SL: Right.

JM: But . . .

SL: Right. Now they have GPS things they can . . .

JM: Yeah. [*Laughs*] GPS.

SL: . . . like put in their hide.

JM: I don't know. There may be—may not be any areas where you can—or there may be only a few areas where you can hunt with dogs, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: There are so many deer now that . . .

SL: Oh, it's unbelievable. We have deer in our yard every morning.

JM: Yeah.

SL: And night. And we're half a block from 71. [02:41:31] So did the rest of the kids acclimate and enjoy living on the farm? Did it—I mean, it became their way of life, right? I mean . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . when did y'all move off the farm? Or have you?

JM: We—I think Paul and I probably have better memories of livin' on the farm and doing adventuresome things and so forth more than the girls did in hearin' them talk about maybe not having as happy a childhood as we did. And but it was kinda funny. We were pretty poor, but we felt like we were—we didn't really recognize that. We felt like we had this hidden million, you know?

SL: Right.

JM: We had a grandmother who could bail us out or something.

[Laughs] I don't know . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . whether she really didn't have the means that much—that much extra funds, but she was able to buy us a car when we needed one and that sort of thing when we got married and . . .

SL: That's good news.

JM: And or actually bought Paul and I a car to date in, and so we didn't have to take the family station wagon [*laughter*] like we started out with.

SL: Right.

[02:43:12] JM: But Daddy liked to—oh, I haven't talked about the—Daddy liked to kinda look for unique experiences that he might involve us in. He and Mama got involved with the—with a riding club. I guess it was called Northwest Arkansas Riding Club. And they would get together periodically, anyway, and go for horseback rides around the area. And they—on this one occasion, first time Daddy went on one of these—they called it a cavalcade. And a couple of hundred of 'em would get together and—mm, coffee. And ride—I think they started out at Huntsville—well, they might have started out from Fayetteville, but they rode all the way to Little Rock on a five-day ride.

SL: Golly.

JM; And let's—yeah, they started in Fayetteville, and they rode to Huntsville, first night, spent in Huntsville.

SL: That's a ride in itself.

JM: And then from there they rode all the way to Ozark. And I know Mimi loaded us up, and we all, as many of us as would fit in the

car, went down to see Daddy at Ozark. Usually these camping—the campouts would be at the fairgrounds or at a—some other river crossing or something where it made a logical place . . .

SL: They could water the horses and . . .

JM: . . . water the horses and everything. And so the next year, they were gonna have another cavalcade from Fayetteville, basically. Or actually started in Prairie Grove all the way to Fort Smith and ride in the rodeo. This other one to Little Rock was for the purpose of riding in the parade, rodeo parade through the streets, and then also make an appearance there at the rodeo. [02:45:21] And so we started tryin' to get the horses in shape and ourselves in shape, you know, ridin' as much as we . . .

SL: This is you and your dad and . . .

JM: And Paul.

SL: . . . and Paul.

JM: Gettin' ready for this cavalcade to Fort Smith. So the first night was out at the Battleground Park in Prairie Grove.

SL: Prairie Grove.

JM: And several hundred of us on horseback.

SL: Wow.

JM: And as much as possible, we are off the road on—in people's

pastures and so forth goin' across—or where it was just a place where the farmer'd been drivin' his hay wagon or something. And a lot of it, though was on gravel roads. And then crossin' the bridge was kinda spooky. Crossin' the bridge on the Arkansas River, that is, [*laughs*] with your horse. I think we walked our horses across. We didn't want 'em spookin' and throwin' us off in the water or something.

SL: Right.

[02:46:25] JM: And at the first night—after Prairie Grove and then after the first ride, we camped out on Lee's Creek down there where some road—the road we were on crossed Lee's Creek.

SL: Right.

JM: And I remember they were—they had the hood of a car, big, flat hood thing or some kind of metal. I think it was a hood of a car. And they'd been fryin' bacon on that. Had a big fire underneath it. [*SL laughs*] And they're just crackin' eggs on it there and havin' bacon and eggs. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

JM: On this huge . . .

SL: It's like a cattle drive.

JM: . . . cooking surface . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . surface thing. Yeah. And so we [*SL laughs*] got on down to Fort Smith there and got to ride up the main streets there of Fort Smith for the parade for the promoting the rodeo. And then we got to ride—they announced us at the rodeo, and we got to ride in and do—at full gallop a big figure eight around here holding flags, you know . . .

SL: Those were good horses.

JM: . . . riding at full [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: "Come on, come on, keep up." You know.

SL: Right.

JM: And that was kinda fun.

[02:47:42] SL: That's big stuff. So . . .

JM: And . . .

SL: . . . when they rode to Little Rock, did they go down through Cass?

JM: Yeah.

SL: On Highway 23.

JM: I think so.

SL: Yeah. That would make sense. That's a little bit shorter.

JM: Probably not paved at that point.

SL: It probably was not.

[02:47:57] JM: Yeah. Another interesting story I wanted to tell you about Daddy [*laughs*] came up with—how many kids have put up a circus tent? Helped put up a circus tent. So at the Tontitown Grape Festival at this point in time, they were having a circus to come in and, you know, full, three-ring circus . . .

SL: Good.

JM: . . . with big . . .

SL: Big top.

JM: . . . you know, the big top and everything.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And so Daddy found out about it, and I don't know, somebody told him that they were lookin' for some raw-boned boys, some strong boys to help put up the tent, and they would get a free pass to—for the show. "Oh, yeah, that sounds good." You know, we weren't doin' anything anyway, I guess. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

JM: And except haulin' hay or something. And so he took us up there and got us in talkin' to the right people there and he—"Yeah, yeah, all right, we can use some help settin' up bleachers and helpin' with this tent." Or the tents, various side shows and whatever.

SL: Right. Midway.

JM: And so we got up there. The big tent was all layin' on the ground, and they were gettin' it all spread out and organized and everything. And some guy was out there in the middle of it workin' on something like this. And we're lookin' around tryin' to figure out what are we gonna be assigned here . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . to do? And I said, "What's that guy doin' out there?" "Ah, hell, that idiot? He walked the horse shortcut across the tent, and the horse's hooves have—every time he'd make a step, he would cut the tent. He's out there sewin' that tent up. We gotta sew the tent up before we can" . . .

SL: Stretch it.

JM: . . . "put it up or else we'll, you know" . . .

SL: It'll rip apart.

JM: . . . "have—leave little breaks every so" . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "so far where the horse had stepped."

SL: Right.

[02:49:58] JM: And so anyway, we went through the process there. They had an elephant that was drivin' the stakes. Had these metal stakes to drive in the ground about three feet or so, and that elephant could grab that big . . .

SL: Mallet.

JM: . . . s—mallet with his trunk and bam.

SL: Really.

JM: Hit that stake, and it'd go down, and that's probably flint-rock country up in there. You know . . .

SL: That's unbelievable.

JM: . . . it's not like just topsoil eight feet deep or something.

SL: Right.

JM: You got that chert and gravel . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . down through there. And bam, it'd drive that thing in. And lead that elephant over here to the next stake, and he'd drive it in the ground. And so we got the tent up. And then they started unloading the boards for the bleachers. And you know, we're carryin' those around tryin' to keep from gettin' splinters because it was—those boards were all full of splinters.

SL: Right.

JM: All wear and tear, you know from loading, unloading. And so we got—it got kinda quiet after we'd gotten most of the work done there, and we're kinda killin' time in the afternoon. And there was a grape vineyard just north of this area where the grape festival is held—still being held today.

SL: Today. Yeah.

[02:51:20] JM: And so we climb through the fence and go back there and get some Concord grapes and eat 'em until our teeth were hurtin', and so we're—we had discovered a—one compartment that had a monkey in it. And he's all closed up except for this little hole. You could put a grape up there, and this finger would come out and grab that grape and [*laughs*] eat it. And there'd be a finger again, begging for another grape.

SL: Right.

JM: So we were feeding that monkey. And so anyway, we got to set up that circus tent, got to see the show and go around there and get some . . .

SL: Di . . .

JM: . . . cotton candy and so forth. We didn't get paid anything, but we got a free show, and we got the experience. You know, kids grow up today and, you know, who has . . .

SL: There's not that many big tops left.

JM: . . . ever set up—helped set up a circus tent, you know.

SL: Much less used an elephant to do it.

JM: Yeah.

[02:52:20] SL: You know, I've seen film of elephants helping raise the tent like they would—I don't know, maybe somehow or

nother attach to the main post and pull it up . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . somehow or nother.

SL: Yeah.

SL: Did they—I mean, how did you raise the tent?

JM: There were ropes, you know, pulleys that . . .

SL: So they were . . .

JM: . . . you know, get that main post to go up like this and raise the tent, and it was quite an operation.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

JM: The regular crew knew what they were doin', and the rest of us were just helpin' out. Say, "Oh, here, go grab that rope and pull on it," and that sort of thing.

[02:53:07] SL: Now your dad had a degree from the University of Arkansas?

JM: Yeah.

SL: And what did he get that in?

JM: The humanities, he said. The fine arts . . .

SL: Okay.

JM: . . . degree.

SL: B.A. in humanities or . . .

JM: Yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh. He's on the sidewalk up there in I think

1939. So . . .

[02:53:27] JM: And what about your mom? Did she have a degree?

JM: No, she went—she had two years, and then got a master's degree in raising kids. [*Laughter*] I mean, she got a doctorate.

SL: Yeah. No kidding.

JM: She got an advanced degree in . . .

SL: Right. Right. Distinguished.

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Yeah. I know as a grandparent, the—lookin' after one is one full-time job. Two kids, that's two full-time jobs. And she had three before Daddy got home af—from the army.

SL: Wow.

JM: To look after, and then eventually eight kids.

SL: So.

JM: So.

[02:54:12] SL: You went to Fayetteville High School.

JM: Yeah.

SL; Washington Elementary? Or did you . . .

JM: No, no. St. Joe's.

SL: . . . Catholic—St. Joseph's.

JM: Yeah.

SL: All the way through.

JM: Yeah. Yeah, it's funny. The new school, which is now apartments, but the new—the old school was in a house, and there were just three rooms, but—three classrooms there. For seven gra—seven or eight grades, maybe. Eight grades. And then the year that they built the school there, St. Joseph's on Lafayette, the classes were held in the basement of the church, which is now apartments . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . or condos. And so some years we would—I mean, sometimes we'd look at that basement, and we'd think, "How in the world did they have eight grades?" You know, it'd be a classroom with three grades in it that the teacher would have to organize, you know, three different programs there of lesson plans for three different grades. Because each classroom just had one nun.

SL: Right.

[02:55:34] JM: And so anyway, that's where I had my—that's where I took the seventh grade was in there, in the basement of the church. And I often, as my kids have gotten their kids along, and they get to be about the seventh grade, I remind 'em about this major flirt that I had in the seventh grade. "Oh, my God,"

you know. [*Laughs*] So anyway.

SL: What major flirt?

JM: Well, we don't wanna talk [*laughs*] . . .

SL: We don't wanna talk about it?

JM: Oh, they'll know what it was. But anyway, it's my—the first crush that I had on a girl. And she never knew about it. And anyway, I've told her about it since. Went to high school with her and everything. I said, "Oh gosh, did you know that I was madly in love with you in the seventh grade?" [*Laughter*] "Oh."

SL: Yeah, that happened to a lot of guys . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . about sixth, seventh grade, eight grade.

JM: Didn't have enough nerve to hold hands or anything.

SL: Right.

[02:56:36] JM: And so anyway, then the new school was ready for the eighth grade, when we started the eighth grade. And we were just dying to get out of there and start meetin' some girls because bein' out on the farm, you know, we didn't go to any of these Babe Ruth ball camps or summer camps or—you know, we didn't get to socialize with the rest of the kids in town very much at all. And so we were worried to death that they were gonna start havin' a—they were gonna have a high school, in which

case our hopes for a social life would just be kaput. [Laughter]  
We think, "Oh, God, about the time we get along in the eighth,  
grade, they'll announce that they're gonna—they've got enough  
room now and the capacity they're gonna start havin'—they'll  
have a ninth grade. And so, oh, well, all right." The ninth  
grade's where after that you go to high school.

SL: Right.

JM: Around here, anyway. So had the ninth grade also in the new  
school, and then graduated to high school. There was a tangent  
I was gonna get on.

SL: Dating?

[02:57:56] JM: So you know, along about then is when I was old  
enough to get a learner's permit. You know, if you're fourteen  
you can . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . drive a car if somebody's in the car with you, a licensed  
driver. And so Paul and I would double date quite a bit with him  
driving. Then I got to be sixteen, and I was able to drive. But  
our—I'd al—I had often been told to play the field and not to get  
overly . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . serious about anyone, and so [laughs] anyway, I tried to

date as many people as I had nerve to approach.

SL: Right.

JM: None of which was this first romance from seventh grade.

[Laughs] She was already a cheerleader and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: So that was out of my class.

SL: Yeah. I understand that.

JM: So my yearbook from high school has got a lot of pictures of everybody, you know, and there're check marks by this one and stars by that one, and . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . my kids'll look through there and say, "Oh my gosh, Dad, why has this one got a dot, and that one's got a check mark, and this one's got a star?" [Laughter] "Oh, I don't remember."

SL: May—it was your own grading system.

JM: It's a good thing I was green as a gourd.

SL: Right.

[02:59:28] JM: I guess. And I was still gonna tell you something about high school that—back in those days, there was a high school fraternity, the Delta Sig . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . Delta Sigma fraternity. And two sororities. And the High

Scis and the Sub Debs is what they were called.

SL: I kinda remember that.

JM: And so anyway, I felt like my status was greatly elevated when I got asked to pledge the Delts. And you know, these days kids have a senior prom.

SL: Right.

JM: They've got this one big party. Well, each of these three entities there, the two sororities, the one fraternity, would have a formal every year. Like one big party in the fall, one big party in the spring. And usually it'd be—one of those would be a formal. And the other one would be more of an informal party.

SL: Right.

JM: And so that's where these dance lessons from the seventh grade that my grandmother arranged for us . . .

SL: Really came in . . .

JM: My parents, incidentally, would hide by the little window outside watching to see what the little kids were gonna be doin' in there, you know, doin' this kind of a dance, you know, with . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . [*laughs*] real stiff with these girls. And but anyway, gosh, we would have banquets, and before the formal dance, we could hire a nice band for a hundred bucks.

SL: Yep.

[03:01:24] JM: We would—on one occasion, we hired on to park cars at the county fair when the fairgrounds was out at where the university physical plant is right now.

SL: Okay. Yeah. I member those.

JM: And we earned about \$150 or so, the fraternity did, for parkin' the cars, which we were able to rent the UARK Bowl for . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . upstairs.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And hire a band for a \$100 and finance our party. You know, our . . .

SLL: Yeah.

JM: . . . formal. And the—gosh, for—on another occasion, we were gonna have an informal party, and it was gonna be our beatnik par—this before hippies . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . were on the scene, so we were gonna . . .

SL: Absolutely.

JM: . . . have this beatnik party. And we—our friends in the fraternity went out to White River somewhere and cut down cane.

SL: Sure.

JM: Just a truckload of cane . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . and cane break there. And nailed it up on these boards to have these kind of screens between areas of the UARK Bowl there for—you know, you'd have a table back here and all this bamboo and everything. And we're tryin' to have this beatnik party, and we weren't real sure what beatniks do, except play bongos and read [*SL laughs*] poetry and stuff like we'd heard about in California.

SL: Well, they had a beard and cap.

[03:02:55] JM: Yeah, and so they're supposed to have this little . . .

SL: Beret.

JM: . . . goatee of a beard and a mustache.

SL: Right.

JM: Well, so we all started—this was like maybe six weeks before the party when plans started . . .

SL: Gelling.

JM: . . . materializing.

SL: Yeah.

JM: And so we all start growing mustaches and beards as best we could. And I remember [*laughs*] gettin' called to the front of the

class to read something and the teacher looking up at me like this, you know, and laughing at my attempt at a goatee that I was tryin' to grow. And so the principal—gosh, what was his name? the principal called us in and told us, "Uh, we're gonna have to shave these beards off, boys. What's the deal on these beards?" We told him we were gettin' ready for this beatnik party. [*Laughs*] That didn't go over very well.

SL: He didn't care about that.

JM: He didn't like to hear anything . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . about any parties that were not school sponsored or school chaperoned or anything.

SL: Right.

JM: And so it was—it got down to a matter of either shave those off or get kicked out of school. And so it took a day or two to finally decide, oh, well, might as well shave it off, I guess.

[03:04:11] SL: So as far as bands go, back then I would guess maybe . . .

JM: Well, John Tolleson . . .

SL: Well, you're at John . . .

JM: . . . was in on that.

SL: . . . Tolleson.

JM: Yeah, John Tolleson I member doin' a sock hop there at the school. This wasn't the—they didn't just have a senior prom. They'd have a . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . sock hop sometimes, maybe once in the fall and a bigger party in the spring. But and so I member him all by himself. Boy he'd just put on a heck of a show.

SL: Piano.

JM: Playin' that song and singing over here into his microphone, you know, and everyone just goin' crazy.

SL: Yeah. I . . .

JM: It was . . .

[03:04:55] SL: My brother Gary took me—I was already interested in—I think I may have already had a band, maybe, in seventh grade. And he took me to the high school, and John was setting up. And testing his sound system. And he played—oh an—oh, it's, "My love can't give my presents. I know she's no peasant, love forever and forever"—anyway, it was rockin'. I mean, he was just pounding the keys, and his voice was great, and I just got chills listening to how powerful that music [*JM laughs*] was, you know.

JM: I know it.

SL: And it was just him on piano. And he ended up marrying the girl across the street from where I grew up, Gayle Cooper. Also there was another band, Tommy McClelland? Did you ever—he was kinda in there. And of course, Ronnie Hawkins . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . was . . .

[03:06:04] JM: Yeah, I saw Ronnie Hawkins play . . .

SL: . . . was a contemporary of . . .

JM: . . . at several things. I don't think we ever hired him. I'm sure we didn't. We hired Buddy Hayes.

SL: Buddy Hayes.

JM: And . . .

SL: I've got a recording of Buddy Hayes.

JM: I member him playing that trumpet until his lips were bleeding.

SL: Is that right?

JM: You know, it was just—it'd just be—but . . .

SL: He influenced a lot of the music here in Fayetteville early on. I know he was an influence with the Cate Brothers and with Hawkins. And I'm sure with—oh, who we were just talking about. Tolleson.

JM: We had a lot of other little parties at people's houses, you know, that somebody would have—like his daughter would host a

group out to their party, and they'd have it down in the basement or something, you know, with records. And you know how kids like to play how they're busy. They're too bashful to interact with each other, so they get on their cell phone and act like they're busy.

SL: Right.

JM: Punchin' around on their cell phone. Well, what we did instead of—since we didn't have cell phones, was to sort through the records like you're—you don't like this one so much, but you'd rather . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . maybe find one that you do like.

SL: Right.

JM: That was those 45s. Those big . . .

SL: That's right.

JM: . . . 45s with the big hole in the middle. And so . . .

SL: You'd stack several of 'em . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . up on the big spindle and . . .

[03:07:35] JM: Yeah. Yeah, I can think of, gosh, I don't know, of quite a few parties that we'd go to. Usually, I would take girls to the Ozark Theatre.

SL: Sure.

JM: And . . .

SL: Well, you had the . . .

[03:07:52] JM: I remember that you could go out on a date for about a dollar and a half because you could get in for fifty cents, and you could get the popcorn and Coke, then, for both of you, for the other fifty cents. [*Laughs*] That's a dollar and a half.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Course, that's when gas was twenty-five cents, too, so you know, put another zero on everything. It's be like goin' out on a date now for twenty dollars or something. Goin' to a movie, popcorn, and Coke, you know, is twenty dollars or so.

SL: Yeah, there was the Ozark, the Palace, and the UARK. You member the Palace . . .

JM: Yep.

SL: . . . up on the Square? You know, it's my understanding that the Ozark—now this is probably more in your grandad's time—was an opera house. And if you look even now at what's left of it, there's still evidence of those big windows that used to let in all the light. And of course, when movie projection came out, the room had to be black, had to be dark, so they bricked up all that stuff.

JM: Yeah.

SL: That Ozark had a stage, a real stage on it, and it had dressing rooms down below. I don't know if you ever . . .

JM: Hm. I never explored the—or didn't—never got back . . .

SL: Yeah, it was . . .

JM: . . . backstage.

SL: . . . a complete facility for acting and for putting on shows.

[03:09:18] JM: Yeah, my grandmother was in a play, gosh, I don't know, back in the [19]30s or something in the—back in those days, or maybe it was late [19]20s or something.

SL: There at the Ozark?

JM: Yeah.

SL: That makes absolute sense. So I can remember there—even in my youth that there was segregation going on in the theaters, that the African Americans were up in the balcony, and the whites sat down below. And I can also remember smoking in the movie theaters. Do you . . .

[03:10:00] JM: Yeah, somebody would—on the movie would light up, and that would prompt the signal, and you'd see all these other people lightin' up around there in the theater.

SL: Right.

JM: It's just terrible.

SL: And just put the ashes on the wood floor beneath 'em . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . and snuff out the si—yeah.

JM: Yeah. Or throw it down and let it . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah, throw . . .

JM: . . . scorch it, the floor or something.

SL: Right. Right.

JM: It just terrible.

SL: I know, but it was—that was the way it was.

JM: Yeah.

[03:10:25] SL: So I guess we oughta talk a little bit about your—any experiences you may have had with segregation at the time because . . .

JM: Well, when I was still in the—oh, maybe ninth grade, the Little Rock segregation issue . . .

SL: [Nineteen] fifty-seven.

JM: . . . was—was that [19]57?

SL: Mh-hmm.

JM: Yeah, I would've been eighth or ninth grade.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Along in there. And so we had so a few Blacks here, and the race relations had always been copacetic here. We couldn't

really understand why there was so much of a problem. Although we didn't have anyone except whites, Anglo-Saxon white people in the school, in St. Joseph's, at that time anyway. So then when we get into high school, they had been desegregated by about two years. Started in the fall of [19]57, graduated in [19]60. And nobody seemed to think a thing about it. [03:11:51] You know, we had "Bull" Hayes on the . . .

SL: Football team.

JM: . . . football team, and you know, he was a star, and kickoff for him was to put it through the uprights, you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

JM: All the other side—on the . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . other end of the field.

SL: Right.

JM: And but . . .

SL: You didn't . . .

JM: And but socializing, though, just wasn't done, but there wasn't any—you know, there might be a little bit of "Hi, how you doin'" and this sort of thing and a little bit of conversation, but there was very little socializing. And I went in the army. Well, I actually started going to reserve meetings my whole senior year,

and so at the end of my senior year, I went in the army at Fort Hood—I mean, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and on one weekend, one Saturday night pass there in Waynesboro, I saw a interracial couple walkin' down the street, and I thought, "Oh my, there's a Black man with a blonde woman." And, "Oh golly, don't see that back in Fayetteville." [*Laughs*] You know, I was just shocked. And you know, and it's so commonplace now that we've really come a long way from there.

SL: In some ways, yeah.

JM: Yeah.

SL: I mean, back before our time, that was lynching offense.

JM: Yeah. Gosh, he—especially marrying, interracial marriages.

SL: Just didn't happen.

JM: And golly, we've got interracial people in our family now.

SL: Sure.

JM: Distant relatives of my sister-in-law, that—you know, so forth, but . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . think nothing of it.

SL: Right.

[03:13:49] JM: My sis—one of my sisters has a interracial—her daughter's from Thailand, and the father of her child was a

Negro, and man, she's the light of our life, you know, she's the cutest little thing. And swims like a fish, you know. *[Laughs]*  
And she's a very nice little girl.

[03:14:17] SL: Yeah, back in the—those [19]50s and even [19]60s, there were high schools that wouldn't play Fayetteville High School.

JM: Yeah.

SL: 'Cause they had African American athletes.

JM: Yeah, Harrison.

SL: And anyway.

JM: You know, that's—yeah, that's just—and the Razorbacks weren't integrated. You see . . .

SL: It took a long time to do that.

JM: . . . the national team, you know, and it's all white faces.

SL: That's right. That's right.

JM: It was crazy.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Baseball.

[03:14:52] SL: I asked Coach Broyles about that in his interview. I can't remember his exact response, but it was mostly the Southwest Conference wasn't ready for it to be integrated. So which is kind of a poor excuse, but that was the prevailing winds

at the time, I guess.

JM: Yeah.

[03:15:13] SL: Do you remember the first movie you went to see in the theater?

JM: I remember—you talk about the Palace Theatre, which would be right here where we're sitting . . .

SL: Yeah, that's right.

JM: . . . basically on the east side of the Square.

SL: That's right.

JM: There was another one over on the south side. I don't recall the name of it, but I remember goin' to that and seein' a cowboy movie. And I remember Mama had walked us all the way up here to go to the movie, left us at the movie, and walked back up to get us.

SL: This is when y'all were livin' on Lafayette.

JM: Yeah. You know, and here I'd be three or four years old.

SL: Right.

JM: Now, who would do that in today's time, you know, leave [laughs]—man, it's just a different world. It's much more Mayberry, USA, you know, here in Fayetteville. And we would learn all these cowboy things there, shootin' bad guys and shootin' Indians and, you know, all these . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . bad [*laughs*], bad habit things that seemed to be the staple there in cowboy and Indian mu—movies.

SL: Well, back then if someone got shot, they just fell over dead.

JM: Yeah.

SL: There was no pain.

JM: Yeah.

SL: They just fell over dead, and they . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . quit living.

JM: Yeah. It was just that [*laughter*] . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: That's all she wrote.

SL: Right. So there wasn't the—any angst built into it except maybe it was one of your heroes that got shot.

JM: Yeah.

SL: But there was no pain and suffering.

[03:16:52] JM: I member one guy got shot in the shoulder. "Oh, it's only my shoulder." And I'm thinking, "Oh, only your shoulder?" [*Laughter*] "You'll never be the same."

SL: Yeah, so it wasn't a big deal. I mean . . .

JM: Oh, it's just . . .

SL: . . . they downplayed the carnage on a body . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . and all the pain . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . back then. Did . . .

JM: I never took a date to any of these—this theater, the Palace or the other one. Those were not very nice places.

SL: Yeah, they were a little bit more . . .

JM: They were a lot . . .

SL: . . . run down.

[03:17:20] JM: Yeah, a little more run down. Maybe a few times there at the UARK down on Dickson Street. The—when we had our—by the way, UARK Theater—when we had our senior prom, I had a date with another girl that was one of those girls where I had one date with. Many collections there on my yearbook, [laughs] the little checkmarks.

SL: Notch. Have a notch.

JM: You know, just to have a date. Maybe they were the ones that asked me or something.

SL: Right.

JM: I never had the nerve to—or—I never—I always felt like if they asked me, how could I turn 'em down, you know, because I

know that they had to really get their courage up . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . to call me up and ask for a date.

SL: Fretted about it and . . .

[03:18:16] JM: That would be only if they're having a party at their house or something or . . .

SL: Right.

JM: You know, ordinarily girls didn't ask boys for dates. So anyway, besides the dance, after the dance was over, which is like midnight, well, then we had movies . . .

SL: Oh.

JM: . . . for about four hours or so. About . . .

SL: Really.

JM: . . . two or three movies, one after the other, at the UARK Theatre there.

SL: So you just crossed the street.

JM: [*Laughs*] And try to stay awake.

SL: Wow.

JM: And then breakfast somewhere, and then take the girl home.

SL: Wow.

JM: And [*laughs*] . . .

SL: What a great evening.

JM: Yeah, "Well, g'night." [*Laughter*] And long night.

SL: So I'm sure the . . .

JM: So . . .

SL: . . . chaperones kept track of everybody and . . .

[03:19:00] JM: Mh-hmm. So the UARK Theatre would tend to show movies that were a little bit of—I don't wanna say immoral movies, but they were more esoteric or film-critic kind of movies that you'd have to be on a certain wavelength to appreciate. So Betty and I had been married for a while there. I was still going to school, still goin' to the university, and so we walked over there, went to see *8 1/2* by Federico Fellini. And I thought, "What in the hell is goin' on?" I mean, the—finally—we watched it as much as we could stand. We might've watched the whole thing, but we always used that as our reference point for the worst movie we ever saw in our life. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, I do remember the UARK doing more art films.

JM: Art films. That's . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . what I'm tryin' to . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . think of.

[03:20:03] SL: Yeah. Yeah, they all had their genre. The Palace it

seems like had scarier movies, maybe.

JM: Yeah.

SL: I mem—the first . . .

JM: Double features.

SL: Yeah. The first movie I remember seeing was *Abbott and Costello Meets the Werewolf* or—and I just was totally scared, freaked out about that.

JM: Oh. Yeah.

SL: 'Cause . . .

[03:20:29] JM: Speakin' of movies, the [*laughs*—I don't wanna say I was so popular in high school, but the—I would tend to kinda overbook myself there, and I might go to—go see a movie at the Ozark on Wednesday with one girl, but I had another date on Friday, and they hadn't changed the movie yet, so I'd . . .

SL: Well, that's . . .

JM: . . . have to go and act like I hadn't . . .

SL: Hadn't seen the . . .

JM: . . . seen it before.

SL: Oh. [*Laughter*] That's terrible. That's so terrible.

JM: I remember this one girl I had a date with. It was Saturday afternoon, and we'd gone walking around up on the campus there, and had gone—I forget what we had done, but she was

kinda politicking for, "We might as well go out and do something tonight, hadn't we?" And I, "Well"—and in my mind, I'm thinking, "No, I gotta get ree—rid of you. I've got another [*laughs*] date with somebody else tonight." And . . .

SL: She was showing some interest.

JM: . . . I tell my wife about this—"Oh, God, you're"—or I tell my kids about this. And they say, "Oh, God, Dad." [*Laughter*] "You're" . . .

SL: Double dippin', there, buddy.

JM: Yeah. She often tells that story to friends like, "Yeah, John was—he'd have dates with two different girls on—one in the day and another one at night. [*Laughs*] He'd have to get rid of this one and then" . . .

[03:21:52] SL: Well, let me ask you this. I mean, I know that you had—it sounds to me like your father expected you and Paul to be kinda farmhands, and so once you got to high school and you joined this fraternity and all of a sudden you were now dating and having a social life that you didn't really have before, did that open the door—did you get involved with any kind of athletics at all? Did you ever sign up for the football team, baseball team, track . . .

JM: Well . . .

SL: . . . basketball?

JM: . . . when I was in the ninth grade, St. Joseph's had—where I was going to school there, St Joseph's Catholic School, decided to have a football team. Before then . . .

SL: I kinda remember . . .

JM: . . . recess—we'd . . .

SL: . . . them having a team.

JM: . . . just go out, and we'd play a game called kill the man with the ball. [*Laughter*] Which isn't exactly like killing somebody, but killing the man with the ball, you throw it to somebody, and they run around until they're about to get tackled, and then . . .

SL: Then they throw to someone else.

JM: . . . if they can throw it, then you don't tackle them, you go and try to tackle the guy—whoever's got the ball now. And so you just playin' tag, basically. You're not really tacklin' 'em, but you know, you're tryin' to grab 'em. And so there was a couple of the Mazzanti boys from Lake Charles—it's either Lake Charles or it's down in the—not Lake Charles, but Lake Village, Arkansas.

SL: Ah.

[03:23:35] JM: The relatives of the—a lot of the Italians from Tontitown have relatives from there that stayed there at the time the others that migrated to Tontitown left. And so they're

cousins and so forth back and forth. And so some of those Manzanti boys were on the Razorback football team. And one of 'em was kind enough to take on the coaching job of our ninth grade. And so before then if we played an organized football—well, even then, it would be, "Billy, you go down—out for a pass, and George, you try to block, and make—you two guys try to make a hole, and if they—if he's not clear, I'll run." That was the way we described our plays in the huddle.

SL: Right.

[03:24:25] JM: It wasn't like numbers or anything like . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . like they actually have.

SL: Memorized plays.

JM: Yeah, memorized plays where each person's got it memorized.

Okay, for a forty-nine means I'm supposed to block this guy . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . and they're gonna run—the halfback's gonna run through the line.

SL: Right.

JM: Or it's a pass play or whatever. And so course we played offense and defense. And so we got—finally got our uniforms and helmets, shoulder pads, all these kinds of things, got our

outfit together. And he was finally able to schedule a . . .

SL: Game.

JM: . . . triple A or whatever it is, a lower-level . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . football game for us down in Fort Smith. And so we went down there and got pretty soundly beat—beaten.

SL: Right.

[03:25:17] JM: But we had a lot of fun with it anyway. So anyhow, so I decided—Paul and I decided that we would go out for football, that we oughta be stronger than these city boys that sit around loafin' all the time, you know, 'cause we're out here workin' hard and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . oughta be in better shape.

SL: Yeah.

JM: Well, we didn't know they're workin' out. They weren't just watchin'—they weren't just starin' at the sky or something. And so they start off with the two-a-day . . .

SL: You bet.

JM: . . . practice. And oh, man, it's just killin' us because Daddy'd be home loafin' waiting for us to get home so that we could go to work. And so in between the morning drill and the afternoon

drill . . .

SL: You had chores.

JM: . . . we had our chores to do, hay hauling or whatever was goin' on there in August, the August heat, and man, it's—and then you get home after the seven o'clock, after the evening, the afternoon football practice, and he'd have more work lined up for us. And man, we couldn't last with that. So I gave up on that. And the coach told me that, "Oh, if you ever—once you quit, you're a quitter. You're gonna always be a quitter," you know.

*[Laughs]*

[03:26:44] SL: That was probably before salt pills and . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . keeping everybody hydrated.

JM: Yeah.

SL: I member . . .

JM: Thanks a lot.

SL: Yeah, I member early on that it was a big thing to not go with water, that . . .

JM: Oh, I don't remember that so much.

SL: . . . you're kind of—well the coaches . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . kinda looked down at the guys that were hangin' out by the

water jug and . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: The rest of us were over here . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . practicing and—but I do remember when they started introducing salt pills and making us take water breaks. So there was a transition there . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the health—athletic health.

JM: Yeah, it seems like we were takin' salt pills and drinkin' a lot of water.

SL: Yeah, I don't remember gettin' . . .

[03:27:25] JM: I know when I went in the army we had a—down by the water fountain, we had a salt-pill dispenser thing, and boy, the sweat would come out and your belt buckle'd just be green.

SL: Right.

JM: That brass belt buckle.

SL: Right.

JM: From just one day's sweat. But so I dropped outta that and started focusing on social contexts. [*Laughs*] That—gettin' to know . . .

SL: How were your—how . . .

JM: . . . the girls. And so but Paul didn't stick it out either with the football, but he did go into track, and got real interested in runnin' track. But didn't—we didn't do any basketball, although in the nine—eight—in the ninth grade we were playin' basketball over here in the—what'd they call it?

SL: Boys Club.

JM: The—yeah, the Boys Club over here next to the old courthouse.

SL: Right.

JM: So we had a lot of fun with that. But back in those days, they didn't have soccer, and we never got involved with baseball. Baseball was a summertime thing, and our activity in the summertime was in the hayfield. [*Laughs*]

[03:28:43] SL: So how were your grades?

JM: They were pretty good. Kind of Bs and kinda high C and so forth. And back in those days it didn't seem like it was expected that you study as much as kids do now. You know kids now in grade school will have several hours of homework at night. And I tell my grandkids, "Golly, when I was in high school, I'd bring my books home worryin' about the homework that I had to do. I'd worry about that on Friday night. And Saturday, of course, I was busy workin' on the farm, and Saturday night I'm maybe have a date and still worried about this homework, but I'll do

that Sunday."

SL: Right.

JM: Sunday, maybe something else happens, and I'm still worryin' about it on—I'll just worry about it the whole weekend and not do anything about it. Whereas if I just left my books in my locker, I would have—I would think, "Ah, there's no use worryin' about it. I can't go back to school and get my books now." But there was some homework that we would do, but it's not near like kids do now.

SL: Yeah.

[03:30:02] JM: There was—by the way, when Sputnik went up. We were about eighth grade or seventh.

SL: Yup.

JM: Eighth grade. Surely. I member we were in the new school. And there was a big change in the educational emphasis on the sciences and schoolwork and so forth. We felt like Russia was ahead of us in the area of academic expectations, I guess you could say. And so anyway, there was some push towards that.

SL: Seems like I . . .

JM: One thing I've got to tell you about. [*Laughs*]

SL: Okay.

JM: Another funny high school experience.

SL: Okay.

[03:30:49] JM: I couldn't care less about government, studyin'—the class of government . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . you know, government studies or whatever it was called. So senior year comes along, and I'm signed up. I've got every class figured out there. You got phys ed here and bookkeeping here and accounting there or something, and mathematics and— anyway, so there was a real attractive new professor, new teacher of government. And so—and about the second day, all the boys were talkin', goin', "Oh my God, have you seen the Miss So-and-so over there teachin' government? And oh gosh." So I went down to the principal's office and tried to get rid of one of my study hall classes because I we—I was interested in takin' this government class. [*Laughs*] And all the boys were tryin' to do that. Not that we would do anything except just look and admire this person.

SL: Right.

JM: You know. But anyway so that got shot down, so there went . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . my—what otherwise would've been . . .

SL: I'm sure.

JM: . . . my career in politics. [*Laughs*]

SL: I'm sure the counselors saw through all that.

JM: Yeah. [*Laughter*] Yeah, meanwhile I was gettin' interested in algebra and biology, you know, those . . .

SL: So . . .

JM: . . . other things.

[03:32:18] SL: So did—yeah, I was gonna ask you the—your favorite classes were math and science related? Is that . . .

JM: Yeah. I liked—it wasn't called accounting. It was just called bookkeeping. I remember taking a class in typing and thinking, "Man, this is like going to the university and taking basket weaving or something, you know, it's just a fluff kind of a class. I'm not gonna need to learn how to type." You know, huh, computers come out, and boy, it's nice to be able to type.

SL: Right.

JM: And back then . . .

SL: It's however many words a minute . . .

JM: You'd have a test, and the girl next to you'd be going [*makes whirring sounds*], and you'd be goin' dink, peck, peck . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . peck, peck. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

JM: And it was the manual thing. If you made a mi . . .

SL: Always kind . . .

JM: . . . made a mistake, you had to do the . . .

SL: White out.

JM: . . . y—white out. I think it was even the eraser before White out . . .

SL: Yeah, I think you're right.

JM: . . . came on the scene.

SL: Well, that was kinda . . .

[03:33:17] JM: I enjoyed algebra and geometry and that sort of thing. I member—oh, golly, what was her name? The algebra teacher. She was up there forever. Mrs. Karnes. Mrs. Karnes taught algebra. And one—little bit sorta funny little experience. We're sitting there in algebra class, and she asks my friend Marcus Ramsey a question. He gives her some answer, and she says, "Marcus, you just made that up." [*SL laughs*] And he says, "Well, you make up the questions, and I make up the answers." [*Laughter*] She went [lips pressed together as if holding back laughter] like this, like . . .

SL: She loved that.

JM: . . . "I am not gonna laugh, but that's the" . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "funniest thing I ever heard."

SL: Yeah. That is a good response.

[03:34:16] JM: Mrs.—gosh, what was the history teacher's name?

Mmm, I can't think of her name right now but . . .

SL: Skinner?

JM: No. But so I had her for history. Oh gosh, what was her name?

And years later when my kids were in high school, she was still there teaching history. Really amazing. And she'd say, "Do you remember my dad, So-and-so?" "Oh, yeah, how's he doin'," you know that sort of thing.

SL: Well, that should be . . .

JM: Mrs. Heflin. Miss Heflin.

SL: Heflin. Sure

JM: Mrs. Heflin.

SL: Mary Heflin. [JM edit: Laverne]

JM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. She was good friends with my parents, and Laverne had the Conoco station down on Garland, and Tommy got paralyzed on an oil rig or something?

JM: Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh yeah.

SL: Yeah. They used to come out to our—they used to come over to the house and hang out with my parents, and we had a cabin

out on the Illinois River outside of Siloam, and they'd come out for that. And so yeah, and let's see.

JM: Oh, so . . .

SL: There was the daughter, Susie Heflin, I think?

JM: Hm-mm.

SL: Susan, who looks a—almost exactly like her mother. And . . .

JM: See, we're not thinkin' about the Latin teacher. I had two years of Latin in high school.

SL: No, Mary was—no.

JM: Can't think of her name. But yeah, I'm pretty sure that Mrs. Heflin was the history teacher, isn't that right?

SL: I don't know. I remember everyone was—by the time I got there, everyone was pretty frightened of her. She had a [*JM laughs*] very stern look about her, and if we were out in the hall and she caught us out in the hall, it was kinda curtains. But outside of the school and, you know, in a family situation, she was funny and great and chain smoker. Her husband was a chain smoker. I remember him smokin' a lot. Yeah. That was quite the family. I . . .

[03:36:25] JM: So another kind of amusing thing that happened in high school. Our biology teacher at the start of the semester—this was in August, and we didn't have air conditioning. And so

we're downstairs in a classroom that faces to the west and getting the west sunlight, and it was all hot and un— disagreeable. And the next classroom over was the chemistry classroom.

SL: Okay.

JM: And so occasionally, they would have weird, smells of rotten eggs comin' out of there.

SL: Right. [*Laughs*]

[03:37:02] JM: So anyway, the biology teacher announces that the project for the semester will be that you all will put together a bug collection of fifty bugs, and you'll have their genus and their whatever . . .

SL: Phylum. Yeah.

JM: Their family name, family . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . categories and so forth, all organized on pins on a big piece of cardboard.

SL: Sure. I member those.

JM: Fifty bugs. And so she might've mentioned it a second time, but the rest of the semester, she didn't mention it at all. And so about the first of December, she said, "Oh, by the way, don't forget about your bug collection. We need fifty bugs, you know,

all organized and everything."

SL: Is that fifty bugs apiece or the whole class?

JM: Oh, no, apiece.

SL: Oh my . . .

JM: Each person had to have fifty bugs.

SL: Oh my gosh.

JM: You know, it could be five different kinds of wasps or something, and you know whatever, beetles and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . house flies and horse flies and—and so you can imagine it was December. All . . .

SL: All the bugs are gone. [*Laughs*]

JM: . . . before I'm even thinking about bug collections.

SL: Right.

[03:38:17] JM: And so I'm goin' around the house taking light fixtures down trying to find bugs and, you know, lookin' under—going out in the woods and looking under rocks and getting these hibernating beetles and stuff [*laughs*] to—and thinkin', "Man, live—I could've gotten a jillion grasshoppers, and we got June bugs and all kinds of bugs. I—this would've been so easy." But I'd, course, procrastinated about it, just put it out of my mind. And so [*SL laughs*] I was comin' down the home stretch

on gettin' all my bugs, and I'm a—I have to start buyin' 'em from other people that had an extra wasp [*SL laughs*] or an extra grasshopper or something and then payin' a dime for this grasshopper [*laughs*] that I could've just caught, you know . . .

SL: And sold yourself. You could've . . .

JM: Yeah, just could've caught that grasshopper just any day of the season. So I've often thought about that when I see a bug. I thought, "Oh, that bug would've gone good in my bug collection."

SL: Right.

JM: "I don't think I've ever seen that kind of a bug before." Let's see. What else. But boy, the high school's really changed a lot. Grown.

[03:39:35] SL: It has. So after high school, did you immediately go to college, or did you enroll . . .

JM: No, I . . .

SL: Did you join the army?

JM: I had been—I went—my brother had started in the reserve meetings.

SL: Paul.

JM: Yeah, Paul. And so we were goin' to these—I signed up also then. The earliest you could start and get your active duty

delayed was to start at the beginning of your senior year, and then you'd go into—do your six-month military full time in the fall and summer. So it was supposed to be an eight-year-total commitment there. Four years of going to weekly meetings, plus summer camp, and your six months, all within this four years, and then you'd have four years of standby reserve . . .

KL Kay.

JM: . . . where they can call you up, but you're not going to any meetings, and no summer camp. So I thought, "All right, we'll get—I should be completely done by the time I get out of college if I can start at this point." So summer I was going to these weekly drills at the . . .

SL: Armory.

JM: . . . armory out there by the VA hospital.

SL: Yep.

[03:41:08] JM: And so that following summer, then, I got my orders to show up at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for basic training. And like the tenth of July or something like that. And so went up there and went through basic training, you know, where the sergeants are yellin' at you and gettin' right in your face.

SL: Sure.

JM: They—you think they're gonna kill you.

SL: Right.

JM: Or gonna at least punch you out or something, but when you think about it, they don't lay a finger on you. Nobody touches you. They're like [*yells incoherently*] like the—and [*laughs*] they—this one—our first sergeant and—first sergeant has to be meaner than anybody else, you know, and so he—oh gosh, after a month, we were gonna get a pass to go into town, into Waynesboro there. Waynesboro? Is that the name of it? Waynesville or something.

SL: Okay.

JM: Which is right on the main highway if you're going to St. Louis there. And so everybody was gonna have to be inspected. You're gonna be—have to wear real neat, freshly laundered, with starch and everything—your clothes, your uniform, to go into town. And he says, "We're gonna have a fingernail inspection, too. Everybody's gonna have to have clean hands and clean fingernails." Said, "I don't want it to look like you been scratchin' your ass." [*Laughter*]

SL: Yeah.

[03:43:04] JM: We're all at attention like this, "Oh my God, that's the funniest thing I ever heard." And but they were always talkin' to us like that. And so we go to town for the night, you

know, and able us to buy something besides 3.2 beer. Not that we were goin' to the PX, even, at—or even any kind of a club when we were in basic training, we were just there polishin' our shoes and . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . polishing the floor and, you know, doin' everything we could—that we were assigned to do. And saw my first tattoo parlor, you know, and first interracial couple walkin along. Thought, "Oh my gosh, this is a different world out here."

*[Laughs]*

SM: Is this 1960, [19]61 or . . .

JM: Mh-hmm, [19]60.

SM: [Nineteen] sixty. Okay.

[03:43:56] JM: Nineteen sixty. And yeah. At first we were at the—at a processing facility there where they give you a lot of tests and so forth and . . .

SM: Aptitude.

JM: Yeah. Aptitude. My brother told me that what I needed to do was to try to get a truck driving job while you're in basic training, and you'll get assigned to—there'll be some of these things where they'll load the troops up on these deuce and a half trucks, two-and-a-half-ton—they call 'em deuce and a halves—

trucks and haul 'em out to some point there and have a class or have a bivouac or various things. And or have some other assignment for you whereas the other guys are walkin' along on foot, and you're haulin' the kitchen supplies out there or something.

SL: Right.

[03:44:58]] JM: And so on the test I put down that I had a lot of experience driving 18-wheeler trucks and knew how to—which I did know how to drive a hay truck, you know, [*SL laughs*] knew how to double clutch, you know, and . . .

SL: That's a little different than . . .

JM: . . . so forth, you know, and I thought, "Man, I can handle one of those deuce and a halves without any trouble at all, I'm sure. Stick shift and everything. I can handle that." And so anyway, they had the eye test and all this aptitude test and so forth. And so sure enough, I do get that assignment. So there are several occasions there where I—they would have me drivin', and that got some special breaks from otherwise would've been walkin' for four hours to get out to have and class . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . and then walk four hours back, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: But there's a lot of PT. We'd do PT, physical training, every day. One day would be all these calisthenics things without your rifle, and then other times it'd be holding your ten-pound M1 up and doin' all these things, or if you didn't have your rifle in your hand, you're doin' more pushups and jump squats and various things.

SL: Right.

JM: A lot of classes and . . .

SL: Duck walk?

JM: No, not duck walks.

SL: Yeah.

[03:46:35] JM: We didn't do that. We had a lot of marching songs that the sergeant would get us introduced to. Be goin' along, "Hip ho, hop ho, wring out the mop ho, left oh, right oh, left." And we'd all come back with the same thing.

SL: Right.

JM: And [*SL laughs*] some of 'em were off color, and . . .

SL: Sure.

JM: . . . and course. And oh, so one sergeant—I'm surprised he introduced this one. He said, "I don't know, but I been"—let's see. No, that was—that was one of the off-color ones. I been told and . . .

SL: Right. Sure.

JM: Whatever, you know. And oh, one of 'em was, "Hidey hi"—this is all in the beat of as you're steppin' left, your left, your left, right, left. "Hidey, hidey, this is it." "Hidey, hidey, this is it." "Eight long weeks of chicken shit." [*Laughter*] Eight weeks of boot camp, you know.

SL: Right.

JM: And everybody think, "Oh my gosh, our sergeant just led that"—chant, I guess you'd call it.

[03:47:46] SL: So did the boot camp—did you end up with any lifelong friends out of that? I mean, shared . . .

JM: No. No.

SL: . . . experiences like that sometimes . . .

JM: Yeah.

SL: . . . bond relationships together.

JM: Uh-uh.

SL: No.

JM: No. I remember one time we were—well, here's one thing about Fort Leonard Wood at that time. It was all—they used coal for heating the water. And your—each barracks had a furnace room where someone was assigned to the . . .

SL: Load the coals.

JM: . . . get up at the—a couple of hours ahead of everybody else and stoke the fire up. Even though this was August, you'd still need warm water to take a shower.

SL: Right.

JM: And woe be unto him who fails to get hot water for the other hundred people or so in your barracks.

SL: Right. Right.

[03:48:51] JM: I pulled that duty one time, and it was raining. And I'd been told by the guy before me or somebody else that had pulled duty during the rain—he said, "Boy, it's rain in the forecast, you better go out there and get some coal in a bucket and get a supply in the coal—in the furnace room where it'll be dry. Otherwise you might have to dig down in there and get down deeper to get some dry coal."

SL: Right.

JM: "But there better be coal." [*Laughs*] "There better be some warm water for us to shave with" . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "and whatever."

SL: Right.

JM: And so on this one occasion there, I remember the radio was goin' and everything, and they were playin' that song, "It's just

another Saturday night, and I ain't got nobo"—you know, I'm thinkin', "Oh, God, it is Saturday night, and I'm lonely for a girlfriend here somethin' awful," you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. Right.

JM: And I often think about hearin' that song back when I was in basic training whenever that song comes along. We—back then, smoking was very common, of course.

SL: Sure.

[03:50:04] JM: And people were smokin' in the barracks, and we had, on each—about every four feet there was another post holdin' up the building, holdin' up the upstairs.

SL: Kay.

JM: And holdin' everything together. About a six-by-six wooden post. And it had a butt can hangin' on it, which was a gallon can hangin' on this little bracket there, and it had about this much water. You're supposed to make sure that was emptied and cleaned out before you fell out. When they'd holler, "Fall out!" then boom, you're supposed to come out. You better be ready. You're under great pressure to not be dragging around comin' out. And so on this one occasion there, the—they had—everybody had fallen out, and I got about halfway ready to fall in with everybody else. "Oh my God, I forgot"—somethin' or other,

had to run back in and get it. And I got it out of my footlocker, and I got up to leave, and I snagged my canteen on that . . .

SL: On the can.

JM: . . . butt can. Bam, it went down on the floor, splattered all over everything. "Oh, hell." I just—I went on out and left, and our—I thought, "Well, it'll look like it just fell off on its own accord."

[Laughs] And so anyway . . .

SL: So you didn't have to face any music on that? You . . .

JM: No, no. I didn't.

SL: Well, that's good.

JM: Nobody knew—nobody was in the barracks at the time.

SL: Yeah.

[03:51:42] JM: Upstairs in the barracks—well, they told us, when you fall out—when we holler, 'Fall out!'—we'd—they'd practice this fall out. They'd make everybody go back in the barracks, get by your bunk. "I'm gonna holler 'Fall out,' and when I do, I'm gonna have my watch, my stopwatch here. I want everybody in this formation within sixty seconds. I want you to tear the screen door off that barracks over there gettin' the hell out of the barracks." People comin' down the steps and everything, you know, gettin' out of there.

SL: Right.

JM: And so anyway, that was kind of a drill that they were havin' us to learn some discipline, you know, gettin' promptly out there so we were under pressure to have—be shaved, our canteen filled up ready to get out when they—whenever they hollered fall out. Didn't have a watch to know that at—it's twenty after seven, now at seven thirty, they're gonna be callin' us. You know, you didn't have that perspective. [03:52:52] Let's see. Oh, here's another interesting thing. We were—so during the eight weeks, you go on a bivouac for a couple of days. And so they—we're all camped out in these pup tents. Two man—two people in each tent. And so I decided that what I could do was take my M1 and take the strap and kind of wrap it around the tree a little—a couple of times there and then hook—attach it back up again, and then my rifle be stickin' up here like this with the tree, and I could put my clothes on that and my helmet on that.

SL: Sure.

JM: And that would be a good place to kinda stash my . . .

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . my clothes for the next day. And so the next day came, and we get dressed and everything, and I get out there in formation, and the sergeant says in front of our group, says, "Which one of you sons of bitches lost your trigger housing group outta your

M1?" I thought, what kind of an idiot—who would lose their trigger housing group? You know what a M1—how an M1 takes apart?

SL: Right.

[03:54:13] JM: That—pull that little part there on that . . .

SL: Field dress it. Yeah.

JM: . . . trigger housing group, and the trigger, the whole trigger mechanism comes out, and you can break your gun apart. "Oh my God," I thought, "who—which—who idiot—which idiot would be losin' that?" The guy behind me said, "Marinoni, you're missin' your trigger housing group." "Oh my God." I looked at my rifle. "Oh, God." I thought, "How did that happen?" He said, "Well, we saw it hangin' on the tree during the night when I came through to check on things, and I wanted to know which idiot was leavin' their gu—their rifle"—it wasn't your gun.

SL: Right.

JM: It was your weapon.

SL: Yeah.

JM: . . . "hangin' on a tree out there in the woods next to your tent."  
[*Laughter*] It was me. And so I've forgotten how many nights we were out there on bivouac, but it was like three or four, and so I've been known to sleepwalk. And so on this one occasion

[*SL laughs*] in the middle of the night, I woke up, and I was walking around, and I didn't know where. I didn't know where I was or where I'd been or what this light was over here, and I'm thinkin', "Oh man, how did I get here? What's happened?" you know. "Was I just dreamin' a minute ago?" You know, and so I think—out there on the bivouac area there, they had outhouses with a light so that people, if they need to go to the bathroom, they can find where the outhouse was.

[03:56:00] SL: Yeah.

JM: There was a light . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . on the outside of the building. And so I get stopped by one of the guards. "Halt! Who goes there?" you know. [*SL laughs*] "Oh, I'm just"—I identified myself and said I was goin' to the bathroom. And, "Oh, well, that's good. I heard some of those sons of bitches from Bravo Company," which was us, "were probably gonna come over here and cut tent ropes tonight, and I been keepin' an eye out for 'em." And I thought, "Gah, I'm from Bravo Company." [*SL laughs*] B, you know . . .

SL: Right.

JM: . . . B for Bravo Company. Charlie Company was next door to us.

SL: Right.

JM: C Company. And Alpha Company was on over the other way there. Then there was Echo Company on further over. So then I had my perspectives, you know. I said, "Yeah, you know, I need to go to the bathroom." So I'm out there walkin' around in nothing but underpants and a t-shirt, barefoot, and so I get on over there to the bathroom and play like I'm goin' to the bathroom, and then I leave, and I thought, "All right, now this—I'll be able to find—I know where I am now. I can find my way back by locatin' the light on the bathroom, on the outhouse for Bravo Company, and from there I can find my tent." And I thought, "Gol darn, that's scary." You know, I thought about, you know, "Should I tell my—tell the lieutenant about that or"—officer in charge off the company was just a second lieutenant. "Tell my sergeant about that or somethin'?" I thought, "Ah, maybe it'd be best if I just [*laughs*] didn't bring it up." But I—that was the only time I had any sleep walking episode in the army. My wife had some cases of waking up and I'm kinda [*laughs*]—"John, where are—what are you doin'?"

[03:58:05] SL: Sarah?

SM: Yes.

JM: She's asleep.

SL: I think it's about . . .

SM: About four thirty. You been going about an hour and a half.

SL: About four thirty. So why don't we stop and reassess where we are in all this . . .

SM: Okay.

SL: . . .and maybe make some plans to finish this up?

SM: Okay.

[End of interview 03:58:30]