YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Niles Project

Personal Experience

O. H. 538

MITCHELL SHAKER

Interviewed

by

Stephen Papalas

on

March 14, 1984

JUDGE MITCHELL F. SHAKER

Judge Shaker was born at his parents' home at 371 W. Park Avenue in Niles, Ohio on January 3, 1922. His parents were Isaac and Sophia Shaker. Isaac had come to America from Toula, Lebanon in 1901 at the age of fourteen. His mother, Sophia, came to the U.S. in 1911 at the age of fourteen. She was born in the village of Misserah, not far from Toula. Her parents had earlier been massacred by the Turks.

Although Sophia settled in East Liverpool, Ohio and Isaac in Niles, the two met and were soon married at Mr. Carmel Church in Niles in 1914. Isaac had saved enough money working at a Mr. Yezbek's store in Youngstown to open his own in down-town Niles in 1904. Shaker and his new wife ran this store for the rest of their lives. The Shaker Building, as it came to be called, was located on the southeast corner of East Park Avenue and State Street.

The Shakers raised four children: Simon, Mitchell, Joseph, and Josephine. Mitchell graduated from Niles McKinley High School in 1939 and attended John Carroll University where he graduated in 1943. Upon graduation, he attended officers train-ing school at Notre Dame with the U. S. Navy and soon afterward found himself second in command of an LCT in the South Pacific.

After the war he returned home and married the former Mary K. Christopher, whom he had met at John Carroll University where she was studying for a B.S.N. They were married on July 26, 1945. Shaker was graduated from Case Western University School of Law in 1948.

Shaker set up his law practice in 1948 in Niles and successfully ran for the office of Law Director in 1950. He held that position until 1955. Shaker ran again in 1962 and held the office for one term. In 1966 he again successfully ran for that office and retained his seat for 14 years.

Shaker had meanwhile served as executive secretary of the Trumbull County Democratic Party for nearly twenty years. During his 22 years as Niles Law Director, Shaker was responsible for the railroad grade elimination on Robbins Avenue and Main Street. He also was responsible for the annexation of 1906.89 acres of land into the city, which included the Eastwood Mall, the Village Center Plaza and others. Shaker also tried and won several cases before the Ohio Supreme Court.

In February 28, 1983, Shaker was appointed to fill the vacant position of Trumbull County Common Pleas Court Judge by Governor Richard Celeste. He had no opposition in the 1984 election and currently is the administrative judge of the court.

Judge Shaker presently resides at 403 Hogarth Avenue, in Niles with his wife. They have eight children: Mary Alice Weiss, age 37; Margaret Ann Shaker, age 36; Mitchell F. Shaker, Jr., age 35; Kathryn Earnhart, age 33; Thomas J. Shaker, age 32; Patricia L. Shaker, age 29; Christopher J. Shaker, age 25 and Robert I. Shaker, age 26.

Judge Shaker and his family are active in St. Stephen's Church. He is a member of the Elks, the Ohio and Trumbull County Bar Associations, the Order of the Coif, the American Legion and the Knights of Columbus. Shaker enjoys sports and gardening.

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INTERVIEWEE: MITCHELL SHAKER

INTERVIEWER: Stephen Papalas

SUBJECT: Great Depression, World War II, Niles McKinley High School, Law School, Niles' Law Director

DATE: March 14, 1984

P: This is an interview with Judge Mitchell F. Shaker at his home on 403 Hogarth Avenue on the 14th of March, 1984. This interview is for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program. It deals with the judge's own biography, his family background, and the events that he remembers here in Niles as well as his military years in World War II.

There are a lot of things that I want to ask you, but I want to start at the very beginning with your parents. What can you tell me about your family background and where it originated?

S: My father, Isaac Shaker, was born in Lebanon on February 10, 1887. He came to the United States in 1901, the same year that William McKinley was assassinated. He first arrived in Youngstown, Ohio and served as a clerk dusting boxes, sweeping the floor, and learning the business. He came to the United States alone at the age of fourteen with a label pinned on his shirt with his name, destination, the route that he was to take, and all of his tickets to get to Youngstown. There was absolutely nobody with him, and he was fourteen years old.

He had an education in Lebanon up to the third grade. In those days, that was about the equivalency of the second year of high school. My father could speak three languages at the age of seventeen. By the time he became successful in his store, he could speak about six languages.

P: What languages were they?

S: Italian, Hungarian, French, Arabic, English, and he could get along with just about any Slavic language.

In 1904, he came to Niles. He started a business with his brothers at a five-and-ten. The store was located on State Street at the corner of what they used to call the "Old Mill Race". It was right across from the old Belmont Lunch and across from the bus depot. There was a little street that went down there. Henry Davis Plumbing went in there during later years. Before Henry Davis Plumbing, my father had a five-and-ten in there.

In 1907, he moved to the location of what is known as the Shaker Store at 111 E. State Street. That is at the corner of East Park. In 1911, he bought the building from Vincenzo Mango. Vincenzo Mango was a great builder. I think the walls were 18" thick in that building. At that time, it was the tallest building in town until Banc Ohio, the Niles Bank Building. That was the biggest building, four stories.

He passed away on October 8, 1960. Of course, he had been in business in Niles for over 50 years. The last few years he wasn't active. He was actively in business for over 50 years.

My mother, Sophia Shaker, was born in Lebanon also on January 6, 1897. She came to the United States with an uncle. Both of her parents had been massacred by the Turks. She arrived here in 1911. She was located first in East Liverpool, Ohio with her grandmother. That is where she stayed.

She married my father in Niles at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in 1914. It was a two-day wedding. There were two bands involved. They marched to the church and marched back. The reception was on the third floor of the store which was then known as the Moose Lodge.

There were four children born to my parents. My brother Simon was born February 3, 1916 and is a local accountant. For some years he was director of the Mahoning Valley Sanitary District. There is myself; I was born January 3, 1922. I have practiced law for a lot of years and now I am judge. My brother Joseph is an advertising executive with his main office in Chicago and a branch office in Tampa, Florida. He was born July 24, 1923. My sister Josephine lives in Los Angeles. She was born June 6, 1925.

P: Why did your father come to the United States, and more specifically, why to Youngstown?

S: In Youngstown there was a fellow who was like the Godfather. He was the fellow they would contact, just like the Greeks or anybody. There was always a main person in those years who was the central person. His name was Mr. Yezbek. His son still lives in Youngstown. That was the name that he

had on his shirt or his coat. That was where he was going.

At that time, he couldn't speak English. My father could speak French and Arabic. He learned the other languages as a matter of necessity in order to operate his business. The old Italian families like the Patrones and the Accordinos were all customers. They would come into the store, but they couldn't speak English. He learned to speak Italian and they came right to him all of the time and mother also eventually. He would speak to them in Italian and sell to them.

My mother peddled because there was no car. She would take the merchandise and walk through the east side selling sheets and pillowcases. They would expect her. When she would go, they would tell her what they wanted. She would come back another week or so with the merchandise. That was very common among merchants in those days.

P: She walked to the east end?

S: Oh, sure. There were no cars. They didn't have a car until about 1928. In those days in the early teens and 1920's that was what they did. My father never drove a car in all of his life. My mother did.

P: Why is that?

S: He just never had an interest in driving a car. Nick Ragazzo was the same way. Nick Ragazzo has some connections in Niles. He was the same way. He just shied away from it. It is just like some people don't like to go to funeral homes. It is the same principle. It is a phobia that he had. When he got into the car, he would tell everybody how to drive, watch here, watch there, watch the light. He wouldn't drive.

P: You said that your mom's parents were killed?

S: Yes. We could never find out. She wouldn't tell us too much about it. Her parents were both dead. She and her sister, my aunt--who is 80 years old and lives in Akron--lived with us in our home until she got married. She came the same way, but only a little while later.

P: Do you know what village they were from?

S: In Lebanon the village that my father was born in was Toula. That is the name of the village. The county is Batroun. If you look at the map of Lebanon, you will see Batroun. You won't see Toula. Then one hill or two hills are where there is a valley in between was where my mother was born. It was called Misserah. It is also in the same county. They did

not know each other in Lebanon. It was an arranged marriage.

P: Is that right?

S: When he found out that she was here he would ride the streetcars down to East Liverpool to court her. My mother's grandmother checked him all out and everything and approved and they got married. When I say "arranged", he found out that she was here. She was ten years younger.

P: How about going back further? Can you go back further than that? What can you tell me about your own birthplace? What can you remember about it?

S: I can remember everything about it. It was 371 West Park. It was a big house. We had a kitchen that was about 35 feet long. It was about 16 wide. When my mother would go from the sink to the cupboards she would have to walk all the way across the room. It wasn't like today where you have the sink on the countertop. It was a big kitchen. We had a big table there.

When we were kids, everybody was close. That is the difference from today. If you remember when you were raised, everybody was close. My father was there and when he would sit down, everybody sat. You didn't get up and leave the table until everybody was done. Today everybody is in a rush, and "I have to go. I have to go." It wasn't so in those days.

The store was close. It was only three blocks away downtown. You could walk to the store in ten minutes. St. Stephen's School was about two blocks away. Niles McKinley was two blocks. It is the Edison School now. Everything was within walking distance. We had a garden in the back. The railroad tracks and the lumberyard were right behind us.

I can remember my mother when she would hang the sheets up. The trains would go by and then go back out. I think it was better to have some of the soot going and not to have railroad trains going through there. That is the difference.

I was very active. I played a lot of ball, baseball. I remember especially Father Roach. He influenced a lot of lives of people of my age group. Clare O'Brien is another one who was influenced by Father Roach. Jack Burke, and Vincent Lynch were also. You will see some of the names that I am dropping.

P: That is where I heard Father Roach. Jack Burke used to go and see him.

S: That is right.

P: Up in Vienna?

S: There were a lot of them like Marcella McDermott. She was a Haas. There was Mary Francis Hogan Fletcher who moved to Cleveland. That is all my generation that Father Roach influenced.

P: What grade were you in?

S: I was in grade school. He was there throughout high school. We played ball, American Legion baseball.

P: What do you remember about your neighborhood?

S: Next door on one side was a very religious, Irish, Catholic family by the name of MacNamera. They are related to the MacNamara's that are still around. A MacNamara is on the board of education. His grandfather would have been one of the brothers. They lived next door. One of them was a poet, James MacNamara. Somewhere in your research you should run that down. He wrote books that are at the library, James MacNamara. Dorothy MacNamara is city treasurer. Her husband's father would have been this man's brother.

On the other side of the house was a very popular Nilesite by the name of William Snowball. His wife just recently passed away at the age of 95 or 96. Their son, William, is a minister. I think he is retired now and lives in the Salem area of Alliance. They had another son, Al. He was in the service in the PT Boat Squadron with John Fitzgerald Kennedy and knew him well.

P: Where is he at right now?

S: He is in Massachusetts somewhere in the east in the Boston area. It is somewhere out there in Connecticut or one of those states. His address is easily accessible. All you have to do is call Kenneth Weber.

P: I knew him.

S: He is the husband of Rowine Snowball Weber. They lived on one side of us and the MacNamara's on the other.

There was an A & P Store. In those days, the A & P Store wasn't a supermarket. It was like a Convenient Food Market like you would see today. It was right across the street and we didn't have to go very far for groceries.

In the neighborhood were the Easterbrooks, Howard Duck.

P: Was Easterbrook a boxer?

S: Some of the family was. This fellow ran the store.

Howard Duck was in that neighborhood as were the Raders, the Rader family. The Semple family would be Bob Semple's family. Wilson Dairy was right across the street from us where they pastuerized the milk. They had a milk house in the back. That would be the old Wilson family. Bob Wilson was the insurance man that passed away. That would be his father.

P: There is an air-conditioning thing in there right now.

S: No, it is up this way a little bit. There is nothing there now except for a house. Behind it was the milk house. It was the Wilson Dairy.

John Smolka lived across the street from me.

P: What were these people like? Was it a friendly neighborhood?

S: Yes. We never had any problems. The kids always had problems. They would fight with the neighborhood kids. I am talking about the people.

P: Were they happy times?

S: Everybody had a garden. Oh, yes. There was always something going on. There were regular, clean activities like baseball games down at the File Works. The File Works is down by where the railroad yard is on Park Avenue. The tracks are right down there. There is a Conrail railroad yard. There was a baseball field there. We used to go there every night to play baseball. We picked up teams. We had Jackson School in what is the present administration building. We played ball there. We ran track around there. Everything was within walking distance. We never drove anywhere.

P: What are some of your earliest memories of school or of your childhood in general?

S: St. Stephen's School and my memories there were mostly connected with the church. In those days, you went to church every day. I was an altar boy.

P: Then it played a big role in your life and your parent's life?

S: Yes. High school was a different ball game altogether. That was speech, theater. A big influence in my life was Craig Bond, T. C. Bond. He was the speech instructor and

and was really the founder of what you see today; it is still a very successful forensic effort in this community. Witness the neighbor over here, the Kaercher girl, who is doing really well. I see some of those names all of the time in the newspaper. We were quite active. They did a lot of traveling just as they do now. It is no different, the National Forensic League.

I was a bookworm. I will be honest aobut it. I did a lot of studying.

P: Who were some of your best friends in school?

S: George Lynn. He was the captain of the Ohio State football team. He was a good classmate of mine who lived three doors away on Sheridan Avenue.

P: What year washe captain? Do you remember?

S: That would have to be somewhere in the 1940's, the early 1940's. He would be at Ohio State when I was at John Carroll. He was a quarterback or fullback, but he was the captain. Jack Burke was a classmate. Dr. James Williams was also a classmate of mine. Burke and Williams were not only classmates in high school, but at St. Stephens. George Lynn was a neighborhood friend when we were kids. He spent a lot of time at my house, my mother's house. She would bake Lebanese bread and he would be over there. He was probably one of the foremost football players that came from Niles. He wouldn't be quite as big as the Stein Brothers, but pretty close.

Antenucci was another good ball player from Niles that went to Ohio State. The Brutzes were connected with Warren as much as Niles.

P: Where is Lynn at today?

S: He is in California somewhere.

P: What was your ambition in high school?

S: The only one that predicted what my future would be was T. Craig Bond. I fully expected in the influence from Father Roach to go to John Carroll for a couple of years and then go across the lake to the seminary. Lo and behold, I met my wife at John Carroll University. She was a St. Alexis girl and was attending classes there for separate credits in addition to her nursing.

P: What is St. Alexis?

S: It was the school of nursing. It was also a hospital. It is like Trumbull Memorial. It was highly recognized

in those days. 55th and Broadway, if you know where that is in Cleveland, is a real Hungarian and Slovak territory.

P: How did you begin to want to go to law school?

S: I think that was pretty much decided my senior year in college. Of course, I did go to the service. I got my training at Notre Dame and was shipped right overseas. I ended up overseas and they told me that I was second in command of the ship. In six months I was the skipper. I didn't know anything about it. I knew the stuff that we learned in school like the sextons and how to shoot the stars and get your bearings and all from the land and so on. We had an LCT, a thirteen man crew. We were always in a flotilla. There were a lot of master ships. I was commissioned to come home for a leave. I flew to San Francisco. It was the first time that I was on a plane. We flew all the way to San Francisco, nonstop from Chicago. From there, I got on the United States West Point; it was a big troop ship. That was nonstop to New Guinea. I ended up there at the end of 1943.

P: Why did you enlist?

S: It was a V-7 program. I enlisted so that I could finish my college, but they still pulled me out of college.

P: I don't understand. Do you mean that they would defer you until you got out?

S: Yes. All three of us were in the service, all three boys. My brother Simon was an MP in the Army. Joe was a meteorologist in the Air Force and I was in the Navy. We had them all covered.

In 1942 my number came up for the draft. I went in and enlisted in the V-7 Program. That deferred me, I thought, until I graduated. I probably would have been deferred until June of 1943 which was the date of graduation; however, they called me up in March.

P: Three months short of graduation?

S: Yes. I still graduated. The only good thing about it was that I didn't have to write a thesis. I got out of the thesis. My father and mother went up and got my degree. I was in the service. I went to what was called "90 day wonder training".

P: Where did you go into your training at?

S: Notre Dame.

P: For the Navy right there?

S: Yes.

P: Something like an ROTC program?

S: Yes. It is training. You are commissioned an Ensign. You go in as a midshipman and come out as an Ensign. You don't have any idea what you are g ng to do and then you are right off to the South Pacific.

P: What was your first impression of the South Pacific when you got to New Guinea?

S: Barren and hot. It would be over 100 degrees in the evening. You could fry an egg on the deck of the ship because that was how hot it was in the daytime. The ship that I was on didn't have too many facilities. It wasn't really modern. You had to eat canned ham and stuff like that unless you were near a supply ship. We made the landings starting with Milne Bay, New Guinea.

P: You landed the troops?

S: Yes, and supplies. We took them from the big ships into the shore. It would be just like you were seeing the Marines being exited from Lebanon. That is exactly what I had, one of those bigger ships. You could take maybe 400 or 500 drums of gasoline or a couple of tanks, 25 jeeps, or 500 guys. It was the big open, flat bottoms. You dropped the ramp and they would go right on the shore.

I made the landings from Milne Bay and Buna. If you saw the movie "MacArthur," you saw all the names that I am mentioning like New Guinea and Buna. If you have seen the film "MacArthur," you hear about that in there. Mindanao is in the Philippines. I was at Leyte before MacArthur came back. We were in there with the fleet. There are several others. It is hard to remember all of the names.

P: When you went in with the supplies of the men, were you guys under fire when they did this?

S: No, they bombed. We were there when they were cleaning it out. They cleared it out two, three, or four miles deep. There was shelling everywhere. When MacArthur went back there, it was completely safe. That movie is not 100% accurate. You know, you have to doctor it up a little bit.

P: What other experiences might you have had in the war?

S: I had a couple of battles started. We were in good shape because we were sort of isolated and protected off by the big ships, you know, the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. The closest that I ever came to any real serious danger was in the harbor at Leyte. We were always under alert at night. Everything had to be down. We were moving in with some supplies to the beach, the Leyte Beach. I am going along and I am up on top. You have to be familiar with what an LCT looks like. Up on top of the deck where I am running the ship and telling the guy to go left and go right or whatever, all of a sudden I hear this big sound. I look up and there is the bow of the destroyer. I was no more than from here to the light in the other room away. I would just see the guy up there screaming at me. Their engines were all going back. I yelled, "All engines to the rear." I could just see that. Everybody really got white. That could have cut us right in half. That would have been the end of that. We would have all been in the water. That was the closest that I ever came.

We had a lot of air raid alerts. They were never real close by.

P: What did you do when you came home?

S: I got married. I came home and got married. My orders were to go back out. The war in Japan ended on our honeymoon. They dropped the bomb.

P: Where did you get married, here in Niles?

S: No, in Conneaut, Ohio. It was a two city wedding. After the wedding, we had a reception up there. The wedding caravan drove from Conneaut down Route 7 into Niles. We went by St. Stephen's Parish; it was 6:00 and the church bell rang. My mother had a reception at the house, in the driveway, in the house.

P: You set up your law practice here? When did you get your law degree?

S: 1948, September.

P: You went back to school?

S: Right. I went back to Cleveland. After the war ended, I came back home first. I worked at the store for awhile for six months until my brother Simon came home. While I was there, I enrolled in Case Western Reserve School of Law and did my law in two years straight through.

P: How did you find law school? What didyou think of it?

S: It was tough. I enjoyed it. I didn't have any problems.

P: When you came home, you set up your practice in 1948?

S: Yes.

P: When did you go into politics then?

S: 1949.

P: You said that your dad worked in a store as a clerk and so forth. For who?

S: That Mr. Yezbek.

P: Yezbek had a store in Youngstown?

S: Yes. Remember I told you that he swept the floor, dusted boxes, and learned the business there. Then he came to Niles and opened up a five-and-ten at the corner of East State Street and the Mill Race as they then called it.

P: How old was he then?

S: When he opened the store? He opened up that store when he was seventeen. Don't forget people who were seventeen in those days were like people who are like those that are thirty now. They were a lot more mature than what they are today. I am talking about as far as something like that was concerned.

P: Did he open it with his brothers?

S: Yes. He didn't right at the beginning. He brought them over. He did it by himself. He probably had other Lebanese guys that worked with him. Then the brothers came over. He had everybody here. They came and went back. They came and went back, some of them. He even brought his parents here.

P: How many brothers did he have?

S: He had Sam, Akel and Joe. There were three brothers. He had one sister, Mary.

P: How long did he have the store? What point in time went by from the time that he opened the store until he got married? How many years did he have that before your mom came in?

S: He married my mom in 1914. He would have had the store for about ten years, the first store. He had the main store for seven years and he owned it for three years.

P: Mango's building. What are your earliest recollections of the store?

S: Dusting boxes, and hurrying up to get out of there to go and play baseball. My brother Simon was the fellow who stayed at the store. For his era, he was extremely tall. He was 6'2½". In those days in high school, he would be like one of these guys who is 6'10" now. He never went in for athletics because he was always busy working at the store. He would go to school and then after school he would go down to the store. That is how he got into the accounting and so on. He knew the business. He could speak fluent Arabic. He and my dad would always converse that way if somebody came in and was working on a price. They would try to get my dad and brother to come down on the price and they would talk in Arabic. They would see how far down they could go. I can still see that today.

I didn't spend much time in the store. I didn't like it.

P: What do you remember about the Depression years?

S: The Depression years were tough especially on my mother. She did triple duty.

P: How was that?

S: A day or two out of the week would be something like this. The night before when we were in bed, she would make the dough for the bread in a big washtub. Overnight it would raise. At about four o'clock in the morning she would bake the bread and get us off to school and go to the store and work. She would come home for lunch. We had our lunch. She would go back to the store. This was all walking. She would come home at night and prepare supper. It was the same routine in and out. She worked hard. There were times at the store that I can remember that they would make only 75¢ or $1.

I can remember that my father always had a big charge book, ledger book, with names in it starting with Philip Accordino. he is still living and is a dancer. His name was the first one in the book. It would go all the way down to the Z's. When the Depression came the book went the way of all flesh. He just scratched it and threw it away. After the times got better a lot of those people, many of them during the Depression, would come in and make small payments.

Most of the business was charged right before the Depression. It was really tough. There were some relatives in the Depression that were fairly successful. He would have to borrow from them, but he would always pay them back. In all of those years, my father sent money back, of course, to

his parents and family. He helped them to build a church back in his hometown and all. That area now has been taken over by the Syrians. My uncle still lives there, but they are surrounded now. It isn't Christian anymore.

The Depression was tough, but I don't think that we noticed it as much as my parents. It always seemed that they were able to make a go on it like baking the bread, having a garden, and things of that nature. There was also the barter system. People would come in and need a dress or something like that. "What do you need, Mr. Shaker? We have some tomatoes." It was something like that. People brought us stuff free. There were many times that my father would give people things they couldn't afford to buy. He was very close to mainly the ethnic families in town, Italians, Slovaks, Hungarians. My father was the godfather I would guess for about fifty kids. He probably has the record in this community for being a godfather.

P: Who were some of those kids? Do you remember?

S: John McCloskey is one of them. He was a county commissioner. There were a lot of them. People just looked up to him. I am not just talking about people in the Lebanese nationality; I am talking about Italian kids and so on. He had a lot of godchildren.

P: Can you remember any others?

S: No. I just know that he was.

P: Did your mom ever complain about the schedule she had or the work she had to do?

S: No.

P: What about your dad?

S: My mother did most of the buying at the store. She decorated the windows. My father was the boss. He took care of the books and waited on the people. My mother would go to Pittsburgh by herself in the car to do the buying. Of course, you have people call on you from the wholesale houses too. She would go there. Fifth Avenue in Pittsburgh used to be the place where all these people would go for their wholesale.

P: What kind of personality did she have? How would you describe her?

S: She was a very strong person. My dad was more the quiet, but forceful type. You know how a quiet person can be forceful. He will just say it nice and quiet and we know he means it.

He had a small stature. He probably weighed 115 pounds. My mother was sort of heavyset, not really heavyset, but a powerful built woman. As I said, she did everything. My father never cut the grass and things like that.

P: Was your mom an emotional type woman? Was she soft-spoken?

S: She told it like it was. She was the boss.

P: She didn't pull any punches about it?

S: No.

P: Was she strict?

S: Yes, I would have to say she was, looking back and thinking. You didn't get away with much. She was really an all-around person. Take my children for example, the older ones, who remember my father. My mother outlasted him for a great number of years. There is a lot more reference by everybody [to her] than my father. She impressed people more. There are people around town who say, "Mrs. Shaker . . .", you know, the old-timers. It is more so than they remember my father because she was more active and she was more of the person that they would come across and came in touch with because she did everything. She was a strong woman. She was the matriarch type.

P: Can you give me any examples of things that she might have done with you or the kids that would give me a good example of what type of person she was?

S: As I explained to you, if we wanted to go anywhere, she took us. My father never took us anywhere. He didn't drive. It is hard to pick it. She was very outspoken. She would come here to visit us when the kids were small. Right away she would check up on me to see that everything was in order and that the stove was clean. She helped my wife with the dishes and things of that nature.

She and my oldest daughter went back to Lebanon for a visit when Mary Alice graduated from college. She was just the type that always cut the grass and did everything. She just did.

P: Would Chris remember her?

S: Oh, yes. She liked Chris because he was big. My brother Si was big.

P: Chris certainly wouldn't remember his grandfather?

S: No.

P: What did the downtown area look like during the Depression years?

S: On State Street was our store and Niles Hardware was next door, next to the Landmark. It later on moved up to Park Avenue at the area where the back end of the Dollar Bank is. As you went down, you had the Belmont Lunch down there. Across the street was the Warner Theater, Albert Guarnieri Soda Fountain place, the old-style where there was the marble soda fountain and the old-style chairs like you see in honky tonk, and the confectionery. Across the street was the Daily Times, across from my father's store. It would now be approximately where Montevideo's building is. That would be the Daily Times. Mr. Milt Wick, he was a real good friend of my father for many years.

P: How big a building was the Daily Times?

S: It wasn't very big.

P: How many floors, one?

S: It was two floors. I would say it was about the size of Doubets.

P: Is that all?

S: It might not have been that big, but it was two floors. There was Milt Wick and James Wick. I remember them well.

As you went up Park Avenue, you had Paul's Cut Rate, Abraham's Store. That is where the Recreation room is now. If you look on top of the Recreation room building, you will see Abraham's. That was Abraham's Store. He started out with a clothing store like the rest of them. It changed into a furniture store. The Home Federal Savings and Loan was down on the other corner where the Spot Restaurant is. Dollar Bank is where it is now. In between you had Pritchard & Kaye; Hoffman's was the biggest department store in town. On the other side of the street, I don't remember before the present bank building, Banc Ohio, Niles Bank and Reismans were up there on that street. Sid Shaheun had a men's shop on Main Street for awhile. They moved down from State Street. Nick Soriano was on Park Avenue. You had the usual beer gardens and taverns. The diner was on Main Street. I remember that real well. The hotel became The Antler. There was another name for it, but I can't remember it. You had the drugstore on the corner where Rudy Printz used to be. I remember all of that stuff.

P: Were there many cars?

S: No.

P: How about horses? Did they have any horses?

S: I don't remember the horses. It was before my time.

P: Did they have trolley cars?

S: I remember the tracks. They were right in the middle of town. They were there a long time. I remember the brick streets.

P: Do you remember anything that dealt with the relief of those who were laid off? Were there bread lines?

S: Tom Smith was the relief guy. They used to go and get Niles Emergency Relief, Trumbull County Relief. It used to be right next to where the bank is.

P: Which bank?

S: Niles bank. There used to be a room down a little ways, one or two stores down.

P: Would that be one of McGarry's places? It was somewhere around there. I am not sure.

S: Just barely. I can remember Sheridan Avenue and some of the streets that they were working on. I can still see in my mind the big drums with the wood in them for the fire so the guys could keep warm while they were working on them. They were working on them in the cold weather in those days.

Immediately after coming home in 1945 around December, I recall around the Christmas season, my brothers were still in the service. I opted to assist my father in his store until my older brother got home. He had graduated from St. Vincent's College and was in the service. He was the guy who was going to run the store. In between that time and the time that I enrolled in Case Reserve in June of 1946, we formed the Ohio Veterans of World War II. We met over top of Baum Brothers down on East State Street. I was the first commander. When I went to law school, it continued on for awhile and then it finally disbanded. I often think about how they have a problem with 100 people joining the Legion or 75 in the VFW with both wars. There were over 500 in that. It was the only Ohio Veterans of World War II group in the state of Ohio. There was no other. It was the only one called the Ohio Veterans of World War II. It was a powerful force.

That was when John Ross became a policeman in 1946. He became a policeman because he was an Ohio Veteran of World War II. He belonged to the group. I think Elmer Fisher was the mayor at that time. He planned it.

P: I want to ask you about some people. Ross will be one of them. Do you remember Mayor Kearney?

S: Sure.

P: Do you remember anything about him?

S: Mayor William Kearney was the only Democrat mayor outside of Kistler Niles ever had up until that time. I don't remember the years that he was mayor. After that I think came Ed Lenny. That was quite a number of years later between all of your Republicans. Of course, Niles was a Republican town up until the Depression. When Roosevelt came in, Jimmy Lapolla was the old time "Little Jesus" of the Jennings' era and so on. They were all Republicans. When Roosevelt became president, that was when particulary the third ward in those days, the four precincts of the third ward, switched over and became predominately Democrat to the point where after ten or twelve years they had a problem getting the people to work the polls, inside the polls as Republicans. They didn't have enough. You couldn't find three to work in the polls. That is how strong it became. The Depression caused that. Roosevelt turned that around.

P: What can you remember about Kearney? Did he have an explosive temper?

S: I don't know about that. I was pretty young then. I probably was in high school. I didn't remember too much about him.

P: What about Fisher or Hubbard?

S: I remember both of them. I was solicitor when Hubbard got elected as mayor. I was his solicitor. He was a very ordinary person. He was street superintendent and ran for mayor. He went to every house in Niles. He defeated Anthony Reigle. That is how I got into politics. Anthony Reigle and Ed Lenny ran for President of Council. They came to our house. My father was violently opposed to it because he was in business. It wasn't right for anybody in the family to run for a political office. I was just out of law school. I ran and, of course, Paul Moritz was the incumbent solicitor at the time. In a contested race in all of the years that I ran for solicitor, that was the biggest margin that I won by. Does that tell you something?

P: Yes. What possessed you to go into politics?

S: They did. In college and law school both, I was active extracurricularly. I was head of my fraternity in law

school. I was president of student council in college and things of that nature. I was always active. It just came natural that what would I do when I got home, and I started practicing law. I found out that it was something that paid $1700 a year, solicitor. They were telling me that my father had been here all of these years, the Shaker family was well known, and I could win. I had a lot of support on both sides of the political sphere.

P: Guys like Hubbard supported you?

S: Yes, he did.

P: Was it like a slate that you went in on?

S: No, I ran with Reigle. The Hubbard family knew the Shaker family for years. Hubbard was also connected with the Wilson Dairy deal. Hubbard family were milk people too. They were all neighbors back through the years. I had the advantage of having support on both sides. I was just fresh out of law school. I was a young fellow, similar to the Neuman that's in there. He would come in there and you would give him a chance.

P: How long had Moritz been in?

S: I think he had three or four terms. It was something like that.

P: What kind of guy was this Hubbard?

S: He was just an ordinary guy. He was an ordinary Joe. His educational background . . . I don't know if he finished high school or not. He was a street superintendent. He campaigned that he would take care of the streets, see that the streets would be fixed up, and the lights would be on; the policemen will be driving up and down your street, and things like that. He was mayor. Then of course we got the grade elimination.

P: Over on Main Street?

S: North Main and Robbins Avenues.

P: That is right, yes.

S: That was when I was solicitor. Lausche was the governor. I went down there with Elmer Jones, the service director. I introduced myself and told him I was a young fellow from Niles, Ohio. "This is our situation. We have a grade elimination project of $2 million. The city only paid 5%. It was in the bottom of the pile of the director's office down there." I said, "Governor, give us a hand here."

He called the guy up and said, "Move it from the bottom to the top." We got it.

P: How old were you?

S: It was about 1952. I was about thirty. It was somewhere between 28 and 30. I can still remember Paul Hodge. He was an attorney in town connected with the Clingans and all of those.

P: He had been law director?

S: Yes, way back.

P: In the 1930's.

S: He said, "That will never happen." They have been talking about that for thirty years. I said, "I am going to take a chance anyhow and go down." We passed a bond issue. It was a small amount. We didn't need much. That was the whole thing. That is probably the first thing that comes to my mind that I was really happy about.

If you go over the bridge on Robbins Avenue there is a plaque and you will see the names on it. You have to clean it up; it has been a long time.

Lenny became mayor. When we cut the ribbon, Lenny was the mayor then. When we got it, Hubbard was the mayor and it was my first term in office.

P: People talk about Lenny like he had some kind of powerful, political machine for awhile. Did he?

S: Yes, he did.

P: Where did his base of support come from?

S: I think mainly he was able to forge a union of the Irish and the Italians. For years in Niles they always seemed to be central in their own area. For years, Niles was Irish and Italian. Now it is the united nations. When Reigle ran for mayor, the Irish didn't vote for him. When Lenny ran for mayor, he made Reigle his safety director. That cured it. That is why you see to this day that has happened. Shaffer is the mayor, right? Who is the safety director?

P: Marsico.

S: Slanina ia also an ethnic, but go back a little further. There is Art Doutt, Joe Marino. You have the same kind of set-up. The best combination that they had going for

a long time was the Italian Republican, Carmen DiChristoferro. They had the combination. There was not so much the political voting as the ethnic background who were electing people. That is how Lenny became successful, plus he was raised with the Italians. He lived up on South Street on the corner of Crandon. He lived in that area. He started over on the east side. Everybody started over there. Mason Street is the beginning of Niles. You probably ran into that all over the place. That was the main drag. If you see all of those names, you will see them. The ones that are on Bentley and those other streets and you go back and look, you will see that they started out on Mason Street. There are still some beautiful homes there. If you get inside of them, you can see the woodwork. There are some nice homes there.

P: What kind of person was Lenny as a mayor? Was he intelligent? Was he dynamic? Did he take the initiative very often?

S: He was an operator. He knew how to operate.

P: Give me some examples.

S: I think in all of the years that Lenny was mayor, he seemed to be able to get along good with the council. We never had a strike that I can remember. He didn't like you to talk and suggest. If he asked for an opinion or something like that, he would take issue with you.

We started out together. He was running for president of council and I was running for solicitor.

P: Was he successful when he ran for president then?

S: Yes. He had several terms as mayor. When Westenfield ran one time, he defeated me the third or fourth time that I was running. That was the occasion when Lenny was selected. Those were two of your terms then.

P: What was accomplished during his term, can you remember?

S: The grade elimination was completed. He paved the streets for people, and did not charge them.

P: That is how he got in there for his fourth term?

S: Yes. If you go up through Scott Street and High Street, some streets where there are no curbs and all blacktop, it never cost them anything. They used to come up to me and say, "Let's go up and see if we can transfer some of the

money out of the light fund". Bert Holloway, that is a big name, would come to me and complain. I would file it with the tax commission and the common pleas court for $100,000 or $150,000 out of the light fund for the street improvement. In those days, $100,000 would pave a lot of streets. If people wouldn't object, it went through.

P: Would Holloway scream?

S: Yes, he would make some fuss about it. He was very protective of the funds in the light and water department. He did a good job. That was his whole life, running the light office. He and Lenny near the end got into it pretty strong.

P: Over what?

S: There was just a conflict of personalities. Holloway just thought that was his domain. The mayor told him, "No, I am the boss here. Here is what we are going to do. We are going to put the line here or we are going to get a stand pipe."

P: When you got defeated by Westenfield, how did that happen?

S: Two things. A basic error; without mentioning the name of the other person, he talked my brother into running for the school board. With him, it didn't make a bit of difference. People felt that they were trying to get somebody, in those days, from the Catholic church on the school board. I was the law director, solicitor, at that time and there are both names on the ballot. You see what happened? Both names were on it and they used it quite a bit, "What do they want, everything?"

What is there to want everything on the school board? That is a dedicated position. You don't get any money for that. They interpreted it that way. Plus, the big thing was the guy was a schoolteacher that taught a lot of people. I will give you the best example that I can give you. Lucille Ponte was one of the schoolteachers. Joe Bassett ran for councilman. Anybody that is a school-teacher that runs, it seems that if you look around a lot of your council people are schoolteachers.

P: And their students?

S: They are on boards of education in other districts. You see that all over the place.

P: Was it a Catholic issue?

S: They made an issue out of it. It really wasn't. It didn't apply in our family because we never had that problem. They did use that.

P: I have spoken with some people and they said it was an issue up until before the war.

S: Yes, but this was after the war. They used it as an issue. It was just one of those things. We didn't think anything of it. When he said he wanted to run for the school board, it didn't even cross my mind. If I would have thought what came out, he would have never run. He didn't win.

P: He didn't?

S: No.

P: What happened then? Did he stay in one term and then you went after him?

S: No, he got more than one term.

P: Oh, really?

S: I never defeated Westenfield.

P: I thought that you did?

S: No.

P: What happened there?

S: He had two terms and came to me and said that he didn't want to run again and he would appreciate it if I would go back in. He came to me. I ran. I had several opponents. MacQueen and I traded off a couple of times. David Dull ran once. Tom LaPolla ran once. Woodford ran once. They are all good friends of mine.

P: Did these guys defeat you in an election or did you step out for them?

S: No. I won all of them. The only ones that ever defeated me were Westenfield and MacQueen. MacQueen and I traded off. He beat me once. I beat him once.

P: How did you accept it when you lost to these guys?

S: I would go down the next day and sit down with the boys and have coffee.

P: You were thirty years old for example and you went to the governor and got the grade elimination . . .

S: That isn't what did it. Just like I said, that was a big issue. Let me give you the example. Four years ago Dave McLain was on the ballot, unopposed, for judge. Bill McLain was running for probate judge. You would think that the name McLain . . . He didn't win. Smith beat him. That was in a strong democratic area. In those days back then, Niles wasn't that strong democratically. It was a flip. You could have a Republican mayor and a law director that was a Democrat.

P: Tell me a little bit about "Little Jesus".

S: Up until the time that he passed away, he was very visible. He lived right down here. He helped me a lot in my early days practicing law and politics. He gave me a lot of advice. He lived right down here on Robbins Avenue a couple of doors from Marty's there where Lucille Ponte lives now. Actually, we lived in the same precinct here. I went to him back in 1950 and told him that I would like to be a precinct committeeman. He was a fine fellow. He said, "Sure." I asked him if he would let me run and he said, "Okay." I have been one ever since. That has been 34 years.

He was a great advisor without a law degree for all of the Italian people. He made wills out and notarized papers, contracts, and things like that. In those days, you could do that. Nobody made a fuss about that. If anybody had a problem, they would call him. He was a big Republican in the Depression. He switched with Roosevelt and became a big Democrat. I don't think he ever served on council when I was in. I think his term of council preceeded my political stirrings.

P: Can you remember Solomonson?

S: Sure.

P: On council?

S: He was never on council when I was there. He had served on council eariler. I remember Solomonson primarily from his letter writing and appearances at council meetings.

P: He seemed to try, I hate to say rock the boat, but he tried to impress his opinions on other public servants and he did it in the newspapers?

S: He was a very negative person. He was critical. He was a veteran of World War I and very active in the Legion. I never had any problems with him. I always got along with him pretty well. I never served politically with him.

P: What about "Little Jesus" and him?

S: Not so much. I never noticed it. If it was, it was before my time.

P: What can you remember about the Jennings' family?

S: I remember the heydays were before I ever got into office. I was just real young, but I can remember there used to be a lot of cars over there and a lot of activity.

P: Did they help people during the Depression?

S: Yes.

P: Can you remember?

S: No, I can't remember. I just know from how you found out. That is how they kept their political influence. In those days just by hearing people talk, they could deliver votes. When they told you that 100 people were going to vote in a certain precinct for Joe Smith, 100 people voted for Joe Smith. It is just like the Jesse Jackson deal now. It is the same kind of a principle where he goes into an area. It is just like Mondale and the mayor of Birmingham says that he is going to be for your and get you 6% of the blacks or 10% or them all. That is the way they operated in those days. They did that and were successful because they had the money and they were able to help people. If somebody puts bread on your table and they ask you to vote for Joe Smith and they still like you, they will. Things were a little different in those days. There was a little more leniency about the activites that went on, and the bug stuff like that. That is back in those days and it was wide open. I suppose it is still there now, but you don't see it. There used to be guys walking around the street and picking up the slips when we were kids. I can remember guys going from store to store picking up the slips. Nobody bothered them. Things were too tough. Who was going to bother you?

P: This is a controversial thing and some guys still don't want to talk about it, the Chippy Mango case when he shot Marty Flask and came back in the early 1950's and they had a trial. Do you remember anything about that?

S: I was the prosecutor in the municipal court when he was bound over to the grand jury. When I was law director in the early times, I did both jobs. I did it for many years. In recent times you have had an assistant prosecutor a la Tony Coxea. He doesn't think you should have one. He thinks that you should be able to live on $1500 a year

or something. When they brought him back, he turned himself in. There was a preliminary hearing. I was in muncipal court with Judge Giffen as the judge. He was bound over to the grand jury. There was no real big thing about it. This was a very short deal.

I recall the case up in Warren where they had the case. Buchwalter represented him. The main argument was he served his time by being in hiding all of those years. There was a lot of discussion that they knew where he was all of the time and that kind of thing. I never knew myself, personally.

P: What kind of guy was Mango?

S: Chippy? He was a nice guy. When he got off, I think he had a taxicab business if my recollections are right. He was very friendly. He was never mad at me because I was doing my job. It was just a preliminary thing. I don't know how long he lived after that.

P: He died in the 1970's.

S: He lived quite awhile then. He probably lived in town for fifteen or twenty years.

P: What kind of influence did Jennings have on politics?

S: Strong.

P: Until his death?

S: I think this was prior to my time. When I came into office in the 1950's in those days not too many people . . . They are interested in the mayor. They are interested in the mayor; that has never quit. There are certain elements in town that support candidates more so than you would expect them to. You see the Recreation room, the United Cigar, and places like that that have things that are susceptible to suspicion. I don't think anybody has seen payoff on them, but if you get 500 free games on a machine, are you going to stand there for two weeks and play them? You should at least get a pack of cigarettes or something. That is small time stuff.

P: I want you to know while I was interviewing somebody, we were talking about what they called the boys. Your name came up later. This person told me that you were one of the few politicians these guys wouldn't mess with. I also remember you telling me once when we were in the car together and you went past the Recreation room you said, "In all the years that I have been in I never dealt with these guys," you said something like that.

S: I never did. I knew them through the stores and town. If you are sitting there downtown with a cup of coffee, they are sitting there, Mugsy, Greg. They are all sitting there.

P: How do you account for that? Why do you involve yourself like that? I am sure you probably have had opportunities to.

S: Background. I don't have any interest in it. It is a matter of conscience.

P: This person said you were afraid of him, in intelligence?

S: If you don't accept contributions from these people, that is their way of saying that they have no influence over you. Really, they don't. There are many others and I am sure of it that are not involved in that.

P: You are right. When the war ended and Chief Ross came back, what was that controversy about?

S: Two guys took the test. You take one of three. He was a veteran. The veterans went to bat for him and that is how he got the job. The other gentleman, who is now deceased, was not available.

P: The chief before Ross . . .

S: Matt McGowan.

P: McGowan had supposedly groomed this other person to be the chief?

S: I don't know that. All I know is there was a big argument there. This was when we had the Ohio Veterans of World War II. The chief was a member and he was looking for a job. He took the exam. There were two or three. You know how they do that. They have one out of the three. He was the only veteran. I think there were only two that took it. Anyhow, the other fellow wasn't a veteran. That is where the influence and pressure came from, the veteran organizations.

P: In your opinion, who was the most dynamic mayor that we have had, that you knew or might have served with and why?

S: I would say that two mayors I served with that did the most for the community would be Carmen DiChristofero and Edward Lenny.

Carmen DiChristofero was very cooperative with me. A lot of things happened when Carmen DiChristofero was mayor. Eastwood Mall, the "strip", and all of that stuff came in. There were things that had to be done to get them signed

to come in. There also had to be legal maneuvering and political maneuvering. Carmen was Republican and I was Democrat. Between the two ways to go,that is how it worked out. In order for Eastwood Mall to come in, there had to be some commitments made in advance for water. There had to be some commitments made for the widening of Route 422 of which the city accepted responsibility of an investment around $100,000. There had to be a commitment made on the septic tanks for the Sohio Station there to hold it until we got the sewers in up there. We had to have a mayor who was willing to say that.

We have had mayors in recent years that think annexation was the worst thing that ever happened in Niles. If we didn't have that strip out there, that is our industry. We have no industry in Niles. That is it. We have that General Electric. What else do we have? RMI is a Niles industry, but we don't get anything out of it except people work there and pay the taxes. All they do is drive on our streets and crack them up. That was that.

Lenny was a good mayor because he was able to keep things peaceful and get some projects going and get things done fairly well. They all become susceptible to too many years in office and get lazy. We all do.

P: You have probably heard people say that the Democratic party in Trumbull County and Niles was built because of your efforts with precinct committeemen in the early 1960's. Is that true? Did you help build the party?

S: I think the times build the party. I think the labor movement had a lot to do with it. I think the precinct organization was underestimated for the last twenty years. I think they are strong. I think you saw the other night that they supported the people that they put there even if they didn't like them. They don't want them coming back saying, "Hey, you put them there." They want to keep them there and hope that they will straighten right. If a guy makes one mistake, everybody jumps on him. You can't do that. If you notice, I think the big thing that helped the Democratic party is the endorsement procedure. I think that has made it strong, but a lot of people disagree with that.

How many calls did you get as a precinct committeman?

P: I got tired of them.

S: I am saying that they value it.

P: Yes, they do.

S: Remember how they used to say, "Heck, I am not even going to bother." You had one fellow that did that, incumbent treasurer, and he went down the drain third. Even though you get tired of people calling, you still wanted them to ask you or at least send you a letter.

P: You are right. I looked to see who did it. I almost kept track of it in my mind.

S: Right. I think the big thing about it is we have had good candidates. Violet Whitman brought credit to the party, Clare O'Brien. To some extent the commissioners did a fairly good job. All of the judges are there. They are all democrats except Tom Swift.

When I was in office starting in politics, credit to me just means it switched around. The ethnics are the people; you are voting the people in.

P: Why didn't you ever run for a higher office?

S: Family, raising a family. I did run once for probate court.

P: I mean at the state level or something like that?

S: I spent enough time away from home running locally. I think those guys in the state representative and state senator jobs have to be the world's worst jobs for the family. Could you imagine being gone four or five months? You will see what happens. You are down there and the lobbyists grab you, "Want a beer? Want to drink this and that and so on?" I don't think that is . . . I think the big jobs are good, guys like Tony Celebreeze and Celeste and those. Those state legislature jobs . . .

P: Do you have any further ambitions yet?

S: No.

P: You are satisfied where you are?

S: Yes.

P: I know your family is pretty proud of you.

S: Family? They just laugh because I am home all of the time. I am enjoying it. It is very important for me to do it right because of the friends in the party, the precinct committee people and all. I think they feel that it is a credit to them that I am doing a good job. If I was doing a bad job, they would be saying, "Gee whiz, what is he doing up there? It doesn't look good for us." I appreciate the hand that I got the other night after all the

storming I had to go through. When you come right back to it, it is the way you had to do it.

P: When John F. Kennedy came through Niles what can you tell me about what you remember?

S: I was in Warren. I was running the platform. You recall the Vindicator article where you saw me standing right next to him when he came into the platform in Warren. It was a good experience. I had met him before and since.

P: Where?

S: I met him in Youngstown when Mike Kirwan had him there when he was running early on before he declared. At that time, I was able just to talk to him very shortly for a minute and a half. The only reason why I got his attention was that I mentioned Alfred Snowball. That is how I did it. He stopped, "How do you know Al Snowball?" I told him that he was my neighbor and so on. "Where is he?" At that time I knew where he was and so on. It was just casual. Of course, we went to the inauguration. When he came through here, there was a crowd of 50,000, 60,000 or 70,000 people in that courthouse park when he spoke there.

P: How did you find him? Were you impressed with the guy? You had to be.

S: Oh, yes. It was the charisma. He just attracted people. When people come to something like that . . . The Kennedy High School kids were wearing nice outfits and stuff like that and St. Mary's. They were all dressed in green. Pestrak did a good job. He was the mayor then. Cickelli was the chairman, county chairman. In fact, that was his last hurrah. I was the first vice-chairman of the party. I ran the show up there until he got there and introduced everybody. He took over then. He didn't stay very long. He gave his speech and took off.

P: You were about his age at that time, weren't you?

S: Yes, exactly right. In 1960 I was 38. I think he was a couple of years older.

P: Judge, is there anything else that you might want to tell me for this?

S: No. I always have been attached to the community. I have lived here all of my life. I was born here. I wasn't born in a hospital. I was born in Niles. I have been here all of my life.

A couple things that I feel good about are the annexation program, the grade elimination, and of course the development that my brother and I have up here and all of the nice people it kept in town. We would have lost them. We have lost a lot since then. We kept doctors and lawyers here, industry people, electricians, the Macali's, Pallante's. If you go down the road you see all of the names of people, Dr. Williams, Dr. Gillette, Joe Smaltz, Dr. Skiffey, Jimmy Chieffo, his son. When you go through there, those people could have all gone somewhere else if we hadn't had my father's foresight.

P: Your father's?

S: Oh, yes. He saw this property. I was going to build on Orchard Avenue. He said, "Get in the car." He didn't drive. We took a drive here. He said, "See that land? It is all acreage. Find out who owns that. I will loan you the money." I said, "There is no road." The road ended down here where Woodcock's house is, about a half a block down. Don Brown used to live there.

P: I know where you mean.

S: It was dirt road. There wasn't a house back there. There wasn't anything across the street except for a park. "Build your house and after you build your house people will see it and then you put your road in." In those days, Jimmy DeJute put the road in. He was there at 6:00 in the morning screaming at those guys. That really has been nice.

P: I interviewed old Frank a few months before he died. He gave me a really good interview too. I had to pull it out of him a little bit, but he remembered a lot of things because of the construction.

S: He was a good guy.

P: What was he like when he was working? I kind of pictured him as a tough, tough guy, kind of a rough guy?

S: Jimmy was the boss. He would yell at them. They wouldn't pay attention. There was Jimmy, Frank, Joe and Anthony. They were four brothers. They are all gone now. Jimmy was the father of the doctor in Toledo. The son is a judge in Brian, Ohio or someplace. Frank is Frank DeJute's grandfather, the Tauro brothers. I don't know what happened to Anthony and Joe DeJute. There is another DeJute. That is Rose DeJute's father, the insurance. There was another brother. I think his name was Mike. There were five of them, but he died really young. Those guys were workers. You would hear Jimmy DeJute at 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning. We lived here at the time before the road was in. We still have a disconnected septic in the backyard.

P: Judge, I thank you very much.

S: That is okay.

END OF INTERVIEW