

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Niles Project

Personal Experience

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JOSEPH KROK

Interviewed

by

Marcelle Wilson

on

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W: This is an interview with Joseph Krok for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Niles Project, by Marcelle Wilson, on October 30, 1994, at 55 North Osborne, at 2 30

What was your childhood like as you were growing up in Niles?

K: That is the trouble. I cannot hear you too well

W: Maybe you would like to get a table that would be closer. What was your childhood like as you were growing up in Niles?

K: It was kind of rough for me because I lived through most of the hard times. My parents were in East Youngstown. They worked in the steel mills. That was a short period of employment. He worked from three months to maybe a whole year. When they got started here the big steel strike came. I was so young I do not remember. I remember my father, when we finally moved to Niles, walking from the west end of Niles to the East end of Warren to the steel mill to provide financial help for us. During the Depression, at one time I had to drive my dad in 1929 to Sharon to one of the steel mills. That one was called Sharon Steel. Then we hit the Depression during the year of 1929. My father was out of work for quite a long time.

After it was over my brothers and I finally got some work. That is when things started to look much brighter for all of us. Then we finally were able to be on our own and take care of all our bills. I do not know whether you know it or not, but I had five brothers. We were without an automobile for a good number of years. When we first got our one car we just wrecked it. It was just one of those things that we did not know anything about a car. It was a 1923 Dodge automobile.

Let us go back to my childhood. In Niles we lived on the east end in a pretty tough Italian neighborhood. Our place was fenced in. They had double gates so the horse and buggy could come back and haul coal or whatever we needed for the barn. There was a two story barn there. The front house was a big, two story home. It had a hand pump there for water that was in back of the two story building. We had a little one story house with no water, no electricity, no plumbing whatsoever. We had to carry all of our water. It had an old coal furnace with two bedrooms, a coal stove in the kitchen. We all had gardens.

W: How many of your brothers were in that house, all of them?

K: Eddie was not there. I was born in Europe. Mom brought me here and we were brought by the ship named The Carpathia. That is the ship that tried to pick up survivors from the Titanic. It must have been 1912. Where was I?

W: You mentioned about the big gardens that everyone had.

- K So, I was born in Europe. The other brothers were born in Niles. Gay, as we call him -- he does not like that name -- John, Louie. Wait, I got this all wrong. The brothers were born on the east end of Niles. Eddie is the only one that is born on Emma Street. That is on the west end of Niles. In Niles on Park Avenue, it was a rough neighborhood. You could not hardly dare go out on the street because the Italian boys were always roaming the streets. If you had anything worthwhile you did not have it long when you went out on the sidewalk. We finally built a home on Emma Street. My father got in financial shape to be able to build our own home. That was a home that was built by the China Shop. They made cups and dishes, things of that sort.
- W How many rooms were in that house on Emma?
- K Six. We were digging for a garden. We would dig up these old, white pottery. It was more or less like a land filling. The pottery or their old molds, they would take out and dump, maybe a foot or so deep. Then they put top soil on it. We were digging our basement. We used to walk from East Park Avenue. We would watch them dig. When we were refilling the foundation to the basement we would find these molds and made cups and dishes. We tried to save them, but the young children eventually destroyed them because we used them as chalk [laughter]. We would scribble throughout the whole sidewalk.
- W How did your family come to Niles? Did they have friends or relatives that said, "Come over, there is work."?
- K My father had his brother here in Youngstown and that is how we came over to this country. Actually, my father came here first. It was about a year later when Mom brought me over. I was eight months old at the time. There was a steel mill being built in Niles. That is how we moved from East Youngstown, as they called it then. Most of the east end was all foreigners, Italians, Czechs, Pollacks. I do not know what else. There was almost everybody down at that end.
- W Were there a lot of Hungarians like your family?
- K Well, I would say about twenty families, right around there where we lived. The others were, like I said, Italian. They had the Niles Fire Brick Company on that end of town. Most of the Italians worked there. There were poor families all around us. There were a few business people there that had little family stores that we used to go to. the Hungarian Butcher Shop and Meat Market, grocery stores. A hardware store we had to go into town. They had a Hungarian Jew. We used to play marbles on the dirt street in front of our house on Emma Street. We could not afford some toys, so we would try to make a football out of old socks and clothing. That is true. There was a little brown piece of wood tapered on both ends that must have been about five inches long or so. We would call it the bat. It was a little stick that was kind of whittled down to a point. We would

hit the one end of the shorter piece. It was like baseball. We would have to hit it while it was in the air. There was guys down there to catch it. We did not have teams. It was individually. If I caught the ball, I would get to bat. What do they call that, a follow up? It was some other name.

W: It is like baseball, right?

K: Yes, but not as teams, as individuals

W: Yes, you would rotate

K: We had to be very careful not to get hit with the little piece of wood that was batted that you did not get hit in the face. They are very sharp and dirty. Later on one of the boys that lived on Hyatt Street, his father was a brick layer. We had bats and balls. Mits came later

W: Did you play much football or was baseball much popular?

K: We were not allowed to play football. There was no such thing as football then, I mean for us. We could not even afford a baseball. Like I said, this other boy, George Maddox, he would bring over the ball and bat. They were precious. When we were through he took them back home. We would have to wait for him any time we wanted to play ball or anything of that sort. Mostly all the kids around brought their own equipment. Football, we would try to play it later on. Mom saw how filthy and dirty we would get and banged up here and there. She forbade us to play football. I never played as a team in baseball. It was always individual. In front of our house used to be the gathering place for the neighborhood kids to play. There was empty lots on the other side of the street and on both sides of us. We had more or less the run of that area.

W: Did anyone else live in your house besides you and your brothers and parents? Did you ever take in borders?

K: Yes, Mom did, but it never panned out. It was always for short periods of time. I do not know why. I guess us kids used to make too much noise. Naturally, we would get up in the morning. We want this and that and Mom would have to get up early. There was a lot of noise around there. They probably could not sleep

W: Where did you go to school?

K: St. Stephen's school. It was a nice little school at that time. Then it got so crowded we had to move for seventh and eighth grade, to what used to be the auditorium. That was a good part of my life

W: Happy times?

- K: Yes, happier times. Most of the time they came down harder mostly because we could not stay in the house. We were always trying to be outside. In back of us there were four empty lots. Later on we tried to play baseball there until the police came and chased us [laughter]. We were not allowed to play in those three lots. We were forbidden.
- W: Did you walk home from school every day to get your lunch?
- K: Walk, yes we did walk. Hot or cold, it did not make any difference. Rain or shine. I remember one time coming home from school. It must have been awful cold, I mean extremely cold. When we got home Mom never even took our clothes off outside of our shoes. We had to put our foot in the oven to thaw us out. No kidding.
- W: I believe you.
- K: If we had a pencil, they were precious to us. Same with paper. We would be going downtown to these stores. I do not know what you would call them, sheet of paper that they correspond on. We almost always did homework.
- W: Was paper and pencils expensive back then or you were just too poor to buy them?
- K: Too poor to buy them. Well, they were not expensive. In a way they were expensive compared to today. You could get pencils free almost any place you go. They did not give you any free pencils then. You had to buy every pencil. That was a joy for us on Saturday's, my father would take us to the old Stafford Theater where they run two or three reel moving pictures. They were not the pictures you see today. They run a reel and then you would wait five, ten, fifteen minutes before they put the other reel on. That was usually on a Saturday afternoon. Then on Sundays, later on in life when we were somewhat older, -- going to school age, around the second or third grade -- the other joy was to go downtown, I think it is Ginaries, a little ice cream parlor. We would sit at the wrought iron round table with these cast iron chairs. We would get these sundaes. After a walk there and back. There is no riding.
- W: You never took the bus or the train or anything?
- K: Later on, that is much later. Then going back to that little house on Park Avenue. We could not wait after school started. Sometime in November, they would deliver us a huge cardboard box. At first we did not know what it was all about. Later on we found out that was a Christmas gift from my aunt in Youngstown. Mom would store it up in the storage basement. It was almost a crawling space. It was just under the roof. It got to be where we got braver and

braver Towards the end we would actually sneak up there and open the box to get a peak inside My aunt was really good to us in that respect We would ride the street car from Niles to Youngstown, near Wilson Avenue there in Youngstown I do not know what other streets went out there I forget We would go to St. Stephen's Church The streetcar ran up past that It seemed forever after we got off the bus -- I mean an old street car -- walk eight or ten blocks or a little more, maybe, up the hill to my uncles' and aunts' house We would have our dinner there It was dinner for us because that was a big meal then Then we would spend the afternoon and walk again, back to the street car line, take it downtown and come to Niles Usually it was a good day. That would not happen to often as I remember My dad would not take us most of the time. It was with mom and I went The other boys would stay home. I went up to my uncles more often than anybody else

W. How much did it cost to ride the street car?

K I do not have any idea We did not know what the value of money was at all All we knew was we could not buy things At Christmas time we all went up to my uncles and we had another big feast there. That is not actually Christmas day, but around Christmas season because in the old days they believed in celebrating three days of Christmas. The first day you stayed home, the second day you went to church, the third day you visited with your town folks That is the way it used to be.

W What kind of gifts did you get for Christmas when you were little?

K All I remember is three things I do not remember too much of [what] my brothers [got]. I had a little sand toy that had a funnel, a fairer that you put your sand in It filled a little car that was on an incline It would go down the incline when it was filled It would travel down. When it hit the bottom it triggered off something and dumped the sand out After the sand was dumped the convey would return the little car to be loaded with sand again. The other thing was I used to have my concrete little blocks that you made the face of the buildings. Like I said, my aunt did not buy junk I do not remember the other kids too much about those This block thing, I treasured quite a bit I spent an awful lot of time building Later on she sent us, on Emma Street, a wind up train with a circle of track and two cars Me and my brothers used to spend quite a bit of time with that. That was three things that I remember very well The other toys, we had like cowboy hats At one time we had some kind of a wind up toy The way I remember was a horse and mule would pull this little buggy with a driver sitting in the buggy That was one of the things. That was a tin toy

W. Did your father ever make you toys?

K: No, not that kind of toys We took roller skates and would take the two front

wheels and the two rear wheels apart from the rest of the frame We would split them and nail them to a board that we used to stand on It had an upright kind of a handle That was like a scooter We had an awful lot of fun. Another thing I remember, my folks at one time brought us a wagon We would take it to the grocery store. That is the last we saw of it

W Somebody stole it?

K It disappeared just that quick. That is why I say, we could never go out on the street with anything We had an old hand wind Victrola, one of the big upright ones. I think we wore it out We used to play it day and night, every chance we had.

W What kind of music did you listen to on it?

K First it was all Hungarian My dad and uncles would get together and have a party The way I remember, it mostly was if there was a christening or baptism, some kind of anniversary or some sort, they would come over to our house and my father would order beer I do not know whether it was wine or whiskey They had some drinks They would celebrate. They usually stayed a better part of the day because they would come in the morning and start having a good old time, which you could not blame them I still remember, slightly I think it was a one horse buggy that used to deliver kegs of beer That I just faintly remember because, like I said, we were not allowed to go out of the gate unless one of the parents were with us.

W How many of your brothers completed high school?

K Four. Dave went I never went to high school Dave went for a few years and went out for football He got the uniform. When he brought it home, Mom wanted to know what that was all about. She found out and talked with some of the other friends and relatives. Anyway, he was supposed to take the uniform back to the school He hid it with one of the neighbors. He would come home without the uniform, but she knew he played football because he was kind of roughed up a little bit Mom said, "That is it, if you do not, every day I am going to give you a lickin' " Mom and Pop was pretty good to us unless we got them angry. Mom would give us a little slap here and there We usually behaved, but when Dad had to give us punishment, sometimes he went a little bit too far Maybe that made us better kids

W. Did any of your brothers go to college?

K No We had to support the family. You did not have a lot of extra time We had chores to do around the house Mom and Pop always had something to do, chop wood, work in the garden, help Mom with the cooking, carry the coal in, go

out and pump the water, things of that sort, always. We did not have it like today. Kids go here and come home, "Hi, Mom. Bye, Mom. I am going to see my friend." You did not do that. You stayed home. If you wanted to go, you had to ask permission and you were usually set a time to return home. Not like today, "I will see you, Mom. Maybe I will be home tonight." Some even tell you that. When we lived on Emma Street we were not allowed after dark off our front porch. We got an awful scolding. One time we went down the street and there was a girl. I remember the girl. I do not remember if she had a brother. There was a male or some sort around her. How they ever found out they had a Victrola with records that was not a wind up. We were a little bit late coming home. From then on we made sure there was no getting off that front porch. We were penalized. They did not ground us, they penalized us. You were not allowed to do this. You were told what had to be done. As far as that goes, when it comes down to it, we used to try to crochet, sew buttons and all that kind of stuff. Mom kept us busy.

W Was there a lot of crime in your neighborhood?

K That is hard to say. What they used to call the black hand, an Italian organization, there was a disturbance in the back of our home. The way I understood it was whatever happened, the man ran across the backyard, jumped our fence on the one side and went along the fence. From then on we had to stay still and not breathe or say a word because we did not know what was going on. One time we went to visit neighbors from Park Avenue on Grant Street. The way I remember was two loud explosions from a gun. My father and mom and friends were playing cards. When that happened we were told immediately to get under the table. They put all the lights out and we sat in the dark for what seemed to me forever. It might have been about an hour or so. The only way they would let us go was if the father of that family would make sure that we all got back home safely. If it was just Mom and Dad, they were afraid for us children.

Even though it was safe, it was dangerous to be out on the street then. They disemboweled a guy on the corner somewhere near that same corner at one time. The man walked right up the street through a yard and disappeared. We think he went to New York for a good number of years. People almost forgot about it. He finally returned to Niles. He revealed who the man was that did this.

Other little disturbances. Some of it was not too serious. Those two instances I remember, especially that one with the gun fire. I do not know if you want to come up to date a little bit. Talking about the Ku Klux. We had what was supposed to be a Halloween parade of some sort. There was a few people dressed in the Klan outfits. Somehow in the fall they had the Ku Klux Klan downtown and they had a big parade.

W The Klan had a big parade?



K: The Klan had the parade. This was all Klan I do not know if it was the same time or not The one later time we went down to watch What they called Central Park, the old high school used to be there They tore that down and made a park Some of them marched around into the park and made a circle. Inside the circle they had a cross which they lit Kids I call them We used to watch as the Klansman were holding hands. Nobody could break in. You would get down on the ground and watch through the Klan's feet to see what was going on All of a sudden somebody shot off a gun Boy did we scramble. We ran under a railroad track and hid under a bridge We were afraid to move. It more or less quieted all down We finally got on home. We were afraid to tell Mom I must have been an early teen I was afraid to tell Mom what happened.

About a year or so later the Klans were supposed to have a big rally of some sort and come off North Road and march down through the town in Niles It just so happened that most of the east end got prepared and armed and went down to there They made a line to barricade these people from going into town. They did not want no Ku Klux Klan in town They had hatchets, picks, shovels, any weapon they had with a handle on it. That morning we were not allowed to leave our yard We could go swimming and all that before that That morning we were not allowed to leave our yard The rest of the town folks knew about this and what was going to happen All I know was it was completely silent. You could not hear an automobile move From what I gather people in town were opposed to the Ku Klux Klan parade From what I gather even people from New York had train loads of these people, mostly Italians The police and sheriff finally told them to step off this train and sent the train back to New York. For some reason or other, I do not know how it erupted, we had the state militia I do not know what time, early evening or late at night, they took over the town We were going to church and we were told nobody stands around on the street You come, go into church and that was it. You come out and you did not talk to anybody and went straight home They were in control

W How long did they stay in Niles?

K I think they stayed three days By that time everything was quiet The very next day some that were supposed to stay turned around I do not know who or why, but they were already sent back We did not need any reinforcements Then about the second day and some of the third day almost all of them were gone We had marshall law

W Was the Klan against just blacks or immigrants?

K No, it was just black. Blacks could not stay in Niles When they did see a black, when my father was working in one of the mills they had the blacks working in the mills, but they came from Warren, most of them It was the way they lived When they saw a colored guy downtown he was told, "Mister, we do not want to see you in town after dark " That was strict rules for a good number of years.

Finally, I do not know which company or who, there was like a hotel on the east end of town, a boarding house. For some reason or other, whatever company it was they brought two families into that building, they were protected. The town folks had to put up with it. Finally they were told, I should not use the word, but you know what I mean. "You do not stay in town after dark. You go back to that place and stay." It came to where they went to work and came back home. Then later on they tried to get around, but it was too late for them to do anything. They did not have any strength. You do not see any in Niles even now.

W. That is true.

K. What else?

W. Where did your family go to church?

K. St. Stephen's in Niles. St. Stephen's Hungarian Church in Youngstown, that is where we would travel to go at least once a month. Finally, when we were enrolled in St. Stephen's in Niles we naturally switched as Catholics and had to go to mass there. My father finally switched to it in later years. For one time we used to go to two different churches.

W. What did your father do for a living? I know he worked in some of the steel mills.

K. In the old country he was an apprentice to our Mason worker of some sort who made these ovens where you bake bread. It is a big, round thing. Why he did not pursue that in this country, I have no idea. I still think it was the union. You had to be apprenticed to a certain amount and learn the trade here. Naturally, you had to work in the steel mills. I do not know if he started out as a laborer or what. I could not tell you that. He sheared the steel.

W. Did he ever work at the Niles Fire Brick?

K. Yes, I was just coming up to that. I worked in the steel mill. Anyway, he was unemployed for some reason. They needed some help down at the fire brick. Some friends were telling him about it so he went down and applied for a job. So he worked at the Fire Brick attending the kilns. People do not know it or do not realize it. Niles Fire Brick used to make fire bricks that used to be sent all around the world. You might even find some of them today. These were special bricks that lined furnaces. A big locomotive fire box would be lined with brick. When you made steel, the bigger furnaces had to be lined with brick. Almost anything that was run more or less by steam, at that time, with high degree temperature, was almost always lined with brick. The reason was if you made a fire, the outside steam shell would not melt and collapse. With the fire brick, it somehow could stand the heat and protect the outside shell of your locomotives. Finally he had to retire.

W: Did anyone in your family belong to a local social club like the Elks or the Eagles, or maybe a Hungarian club?

K: Oh yes, Hungarian clubs. They had different names for them. How would I know. I know they belonged to the Youngstown Club, but for whatever names that had I do not remember. St. Stephen's Hungarian Club, they had that. I knew a lot of Hungarians that belonged to that club. It got to be where we would hold dances at the Italian Hall, Romanian Hall, McKinley Theater. St. Stephen's owned that at one time or another. The theater closed up. The building was empty for quite a number of years. St. Stephen's somehow made a bid and bought it. They tore up the basketball and a dance floor. The theaters came back and they re-bought. They lost their auditorium. That is the only one my parents belonged to.

W: What were some of your typical meals like as you were growing up? Were they mainly Hungarian meals, Hungarian dishes?

K: Sure, strictly Hungarian. My dad would have to go out in the country and pick apples. We had some Hungarian friends out in the country. My father would pick a piglet out of the litter somehow. The farmer would raise that pig for us. Whatever it was, 200 or 300 pounds. In the fall my father would stab him in the heart. I remember. We knew it was coming because my dad had a grinding stone and he would sit on the seat and use the peddler and the big old stone started turning. He would sharpen and test it, sharpen and test it. When he thought it was ready he would start on the next one. We had two or three of those knives. He would put it in his coat pocket or else wrap it up and put it under the arm. We would go out in the country. Sometimes they never called the pig or tried to feed the pig to have it come to the trough so he could get at the pig. Usually they let it out roaming and go out there and say, "That is your pig." My father watched it go around and around. He would say, "Okay, fella," just in case the pig got away from him. He would take it and grab it by the leg, turn it over, one stab with the knife was usually it.

There was one time I guess he did not go deep enough or whatever it was. The pig tried to get away. [I] held the pig down and my dad finally finished him off. Was it lime water or something like that? Some kind of water that they had to put in. Had a little fire, burned all the hair off it, and kept scraping the skin until it got almost white. Then the farmer would deliver it for us. My father put it down the basement on a big table. There he would really butcher it up. He would take the shoulders out and split it. The one thing we never had was pork chops.

W: No?

K: It was almost always the better meat went into the sausage. We would have the

regular sausage and the rice pudding. Every part of the pig was used up. Every single part, even the intestines. My mother would rinse it and clean it. We would have to stuff it. That is the way they made their sausage. My father made the thick bacon because that is what they were after. Thick white bacon. In the winter time, or sometime after, it was all pured. In the winter time with the old coal furnace my father would take about six or eight inches long and two or three inches wide, as thick as it came and put it on a stick. He would take it and put it in the fire and get all the grease and put it on garlic bread. That was good. Outdoors it was better because you would make a fire in there. I do not know how other people were, but for us it was something to look forward to and enjoy. Not only the eating part, but to be around the fire and the smell of the garlic with the bacon grease and all that.

The other good part of my life was when it came in the fall and we would make good old homemade wine. We would get the white grapes by the box full. Sometimes they were that long and that round. They were not the green ones. They had the color and they were really ripe. He would send them upstairs and we used to eat those grapes until we got sick. They were Swedish sugar. The others you would crush them, naturally. They would ferment. The first time that I remember more than anything when we lived on Emma Street, two of his friends were washing their feet. I thought, "What are these guys washing their feet for?" Here they stomped the grapes. We could not afford a press to press the juice out of the grapes so they would stomp. It all depended on how many grapes my dad bought. I know one time we had three big barrels in a row in the back -- two big ones and one small one. That is all we could fit in there. Where it all went, I do not know. My dad had a few friends. After they got through pressing the grapes we would soak that in water again. Then he would repress that and that was the weaker wine. We would get that.

W: Did you have that for dinner?

K: Well, mostly yes. Occasionally in the evening. The other thing that I remember on wine is when we were sick, that is what they would heat up. They would give you castor oil and whatever else and that. That is one of the luxuries we used to get in the winter if we were sick. Other fruit we would get from the farmer was apples, pears, plums, or something like that. The oranges, that was a luxury to us.

The other thing, payday. My dad worked at some kind of a general store close to the meat market and grocery store, like a hardware store. We would go to pay our bill because then they trusted everybody. Very few people paid in cash. You would go there and, "My dad wants this, my dad wants that." Payday came and we would go pay the bill and we would get a bag full of candy, like this. I am telling you there must have been four or five dollars worth in it. Then the candy was ten or twenty a penny. To him it was nothing. We would have that and I remember Pop mostly. They would take it and hide it in the cupboard, up on a shelf. We were too small, or not smart enough. We did not have the

intelligence or even were afraid to try to get on a chair and try to reach for it. We would have got slapped all over the place. Those are some of the more enjoyable parts of our growing up. I only remember having a doctor at our house two times in my life. The time it came, I do not know, but most of the time if we were sick we were confined to bed until we were better.

W Did your mom use home remedies?

K Yes, they tried everything. My mom, one time, I do not know what happened to me. Some of the superstitious stuff she tried to pull on us. When we grew older we told her, "Mom, that is a lot of malarkey." You could not blame the people because that is the way they were taught in the old country. Over there they were the same when they came over here. The women would go to these big halls or whatever it is. You had beans to shell. If you did not have enough help in your family, so what did they do? They would either go to the person's house that had a big enough house. The women would get together and they would be all shelling the bean or whatever it is. It was always something. They never actually rested.

In fact, the way my mom tells me is, if you were pregnant and still out in the field doing your work as much as you can, the older women watched and if they saw that you were too tired they would tell you, "Go sit inside." When your color and stuff came back you were back out there. Then it seemed to me from what I heard, even if you could not do any work you went out with the woman and you had your baby sometimes right in the field. The rest of the women would take care of you. Usually in the group there was a midwife or somebody like that to take care of the women. The men had chores to do, too. In the evenings they would usually go down there and do their drinking.

W What happened when a family member died, a relative, or a close friend?

K I do not remember too much of that because, as far as I know, nobody that I could really say passed away. I went to a couple places that the body was laid out. When we lived on Park Avenue my mom and pop would go to whatever it is. There was a Hungarian funeral and they had this priest from St. Stephen's from Youngstown come down. As far as being at the funeral home, most all were buried from the house. Who took care of the body as far as preparing it, I do not know. I do not know a thing about it. I know that somebody did it at home because I heard Mom say, "Oh yes, they scrub him down and give him a good bath and get him all prepared." They could not very well dress him in his work clothes. If they could not afford some kind of a jacket or something and pants, they would have to go out and borrow from the neighbors so they would look presentable in the coffin.

W Do you remember what some things cost when you were growing up, like in your teens. gasoline, milk?

K I know I have a little sign down the basement in my training room that says 26 cents a gallon. Right after the Depression, you were working for 25 cents an hour. It went up around 30 cents. When I went down to work in the manufacturing plant, they were paying 40 cents an hour. I was there a month. They regulated what they had today, minimum wage. I do not know what they were called. Anyway, we got a two cent raise after a month there, but that was mandatory because that covered the whole country. I know you could buy cigarettes for ten, fifteen cents a pack. As far as meat goes, I went to the meat market. I am trying to remember what a pound of bologna cost.

W. What were some of the jobs you held?

K First of all, I worked on a little plant that made the containers. They made the big blocks of ice. I do not know what they call them now. I know I worked at a pottery. I was on what they called the mold runner. I take the two molds off a shelf. There was a man there, they called him the jigger. I do not know if he pumped it or molded it. I forget how that worked. Some still had the pump. I think his was electric, but it seemed to me that he was always standing. Anyway, he would take this one off and shove the other one right in. He would put a tool down there and shaped the inside. The outside was in the mold. When he got through he would put them on a little shelf. It was my duty to take those two and take them, I picked the molds up and put my hand in. The cups would be a little loose. I would take the cups out and turn the cups and put them on a big wide board. They were partially dried to go into the firing furnace, or kilns, as they called it.

W Did you listen to the radio?

K Where?

W At home as you were growing up, old radio shows.

K Yes, we first got our radio. When we were on Emma Street my mom got her first vacuum cleaner, her first washing machine. By that time three of us were working. Little by little, we could afford an automobile. Until then we used to have old junkers.

W. Do you know anybody else I should ask to talk to about growing up in Niles?

K. Older fellows, I do not know any. I do not know if he will remember or not, Steve Hallick. He lived up on Ohio Avenue or someplace behind the park.

W In Niles?

K. Yes. There is an electrician, what the heck is his name? Joe Geo, something.

of that sort

W Is he in Niles, too?

K Yes, he lives by Steve up there Is there an Ohio Avenue there, too?

W There might be I am not all that familiar with Niles.

K That other plant that I was telling you about that was annexed by their helper That was way up at the end of Hunter Street, way up in the boon docks That is where they killed the policeman at one time He ran on a dope peddler and they somehow lured him out there and he shot them Who else? I think Steve is younger than me So is Joe

W If you think of anybody you could always call me and let me know if you remember anybody else

End of Interview