

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

The Youngstown Telegram Project

The Youngstown Telegram

O.H. 121

EDWARD G. MANNING

Interviewed

by

Jeffrey Scott Suchanek

on

March 20, 1981

EDWARD G. MANNING

Edward G. Manning was born on March 20, 1913, in Youngstown, Ohio, the son of Michael and Mary Manning. Having grown up on Youngstown's North Side, Edward has lived there his entire life and is very knowledgeable in local history. A graduate of Rayen School, Mr. Manning has many reminiscences of Youngstown during the "Roaring Twenties" and the Great Depression. During the Depression, Edward found part-time employment with the now defunct Youngstown Telegram newspaper in the Circulation Department. After that paper rolled its last edition, Mr. Manning found similar employment with the Telegram's chief competitor, the Youngstown Vindicator. He worked for the Vindicator from July, 1936 to 1938. He later worked for the United States Post Office (1941-1947) and the General Fire Proofing Business Equipment Company (1947-1975). Upon his retirement, Edward became involved with the North Side Coalition and the East Wick Park Neighborhood Club, groups whose goal is to revitalize the city. He also is continuing his education at Youngstown State University. Mr. Manning's interests include reading, history, and political science, and is a well known figure at the Youngstown State University's History Club's weekly meetings.

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INTERVIEWEE: EDWARD G. MANNING
INTERVIEWER: Jeffrey Scott Suchanek
SUBJECT: The Youngstown Telegram
DATE: March 20, 1981

S: This is an interview with Edward G. Manning for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, Youngstown Telegram Project by Jeffrey Scott Suchanek. This interview is being conducted at Mr. Manning's home at 1440 Kensington Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio at 10:30 a.m., March 20, 1981.

Mr. Manning, tell us something about your background, your education, your family, when and where you were born.

M: I was born in Youngstown, Ohio, March 20, 1913, born and raised on the North Side, attended St. Edwards, McKinley, Hayes, and Rayen schools where I graduated in 1933.

S: Can you tell us something about your family?

M: My parents were born in Ireland and they came here at the turn of the century. And my father worked for the Valley Mill, which at that time was owned by the Wick Brothers. The Valley Mill was located at Willow and Valley Street on the lower East Side. It was founded in 1867 and ceased operations in 1913. Later the Republic Iron and Steel took over the property. Then later, when the Sheet and Tube was built, he went to work at the Puddle Mill at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube. The Puddle Mill made wrought iron and was used for pipes. It was long lasting but steel was cheaper to produce. Then later he worked in the Puddle Mill

at A.M. Byers in Girard, Ohio.

S: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

M: Oh yes, there's five of us altogether. My brother Bill is the vice president of the Southern California Safe Company. He's vice president in charge of sales. The company is located in California, Montebello, California. And he's two years younger than I am. Then, I have another sister living in Garden Grove, California, the youngest one. I'm residing now, with my sister Helen and I have another brother. John Manning who's residing here in Youngstown at 462 Alameda Avenue. And that's the extent of the family. Of course, the parents are deceased.

S: Mr. Manning, describe your neighborhood where you grew up, the ethnic makeup of it, what type of activities you took part in.

M: This neighborhood would be called, at the time when we moved in here from Smokey Hollow in 1916, it was what you'd call an old line American neighborhood which we'd call today as WASP, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant. Of course, now, the neighborhood was opened up when McKinley School was opened up around 1909 and the neighborhood, as you can see, is old. It has changed quite a bit. People aren't as neighborly as they used to be and of course, that's true of all neighborhoods.

I belong to the North Side Coalition, North Side Strategy Area and our purpose now is to try and rehabilitate the neighborhood. The Federal Government has got a program going where they will give low interest loans to people to rehabilitate their property and that's a very good thing. A good many of the neighbors are going along with that and I think the neighborhood will be revitalized.

S: Mr. Manning, think back to the time when you were growing up. What was Youngstown like during the "Roaring Twenties?" Can you describe as you visualize in your mind, Youngstown during the 1920's?

M: Yes. Youngstown, at that time, it was the steel center. It was second in steel production. Pittsburgh was first, but Youngstown was called the "Ruhr of America." The Sheet and Tube was the biggest employer. The Republic Iron and Steel was next. Then we had any number of fabricating plants here, the Truscon Steel on the North Side, and we have the General Fireproofing

Company. Commercial Shearing was just a new plant in 1920. And along side of it was the old Block Gas Mantle Company, which was founded in October 1908 and suspended operations in 1928. The building was destroyed by fire in 1936. Its president was Otto Kauffman. They used to make about twelve million gas mantles annually which were sold nationally. They were located on Logan Avenue and employed about four hundred girls and had a payroll of \$200,000. But then as electric lights replaced the gas mantle so that was an end to an industry. Of course, all I know now, is what I read in the history books and talk to the people. A gentleman the other day was saying that four hundred girls worked there. Of course, as you can see, gas mantles was a light work and naturally, it wasn't. . . But Youngstown, at that time, was what they call a heavy industry town.

S: Were there a lot of theaters?

M: Oh yes, there was plenty of theaters. Youngstown was a very good show town. In 1927 there was three theaters that had vaudeville and it was on a circuit. The Place Theater, The RKO, Keith Alby Circuit and then they had the Park Theater and we also had the State Theater. Of course, people would go there and then another thing at the Park Theater a lot of times they had those Broadway Musicals that would come every so often and they were highly advertised and they got big play. Of course, we had the Stambaugh Auditorium where you'd bring various orchestras and prominent speakers there. During the 1920's, I noticed the YMCA would bring prominent speakers there on Sunday afternoon, the YMCA Forum.

S: Would you say Youngstown, in the 1920's during the "flapper" era, was a bustling town? It was an exciting town?

M: Youngstown was a very exciting town, yes. At that time, Pennsylvania had the blue laws no(business on Sunday), and there was no shows allowed to be shown in Pennsylvania so they used to come over here to Youngstown and the theaters and the restaurants and the candy stores, confectioneries and everything did a land office business as a result of that.

S: What were the major department stores at that time?

M: At that time it was McKelvey's and Strouss'. They were the two biggest stores in town. Then there was others.

Then you had stores on East Federal Street. Back at that time, all of the stores were owned by local people. That was before the change. If you go into any of those stores on East Federal or West Federal, if you wanted to talk to the owner, you could talk to McKelvey. Lucius McKelvey was president and treasurer of the G. M. McKelvey Company at 210 West Federal Street. Emery McKelvey was vice president. And then you'd go down to Strouss and Hirshberg Company and Bernard Hirshberg and Isaac Strouss were in their stores in the 1920's. Strouss and Hirshberg's store was founded by Bernard Hirshberg and Isaac Strouss. Later, Clarence Strouss took over after Bernard Hirshberg and Isaac Strouss died. And the same way with Stambaugh's. At Stambaugh Thompson, if you wanted to talk to one of the Thompsons, they were there. And you go up to the Cavanaugh Hardware at 274 West Federal, the Cavanaugh men were working on the floor. So it was different in those days. It's the same way with the stores on East Federal Street. Mose Rosenbaum's clothing store was down there and Sam Rosenbaum across the street in his store. Mr. Jacob Baunshaft was owner of Reliable Clothing Company. They were all there. The owners were in the store and the Harr Tailoring Company, you could talk to those men. And Abe Harr, same way with Rose of the Rose and Sons or Hartzells at Hartzell's, you could always talk. The same way with Joe Lustig at Lustig's Shoe Store. You could talk to the owners. They were right on the floor there.

And I think, personally, that's the reason we didn't need any consumer's organizations then because you were actually dealing with the owners then. Today it's a different ballgame altogether. You're dealing with these corporations, chain stores that are owned by multi-nationals and I'd say that's one of the reasons you need so many consumer's union organizations now.

S: In other words, what you're saying is there was more pride in people's work?

M: I'd say that was it. The workers took pride in their work and then furthermore, these merchants, their owners, their stores were family owned and when the truck driver brought that merchandise, they'd open it and if it wasn't good they'd say to the driver, "Take it back," and that was their quality control. That expression wasn't there, but they practiced it. Those people then knew the market. It was the same way in the grocery stores. You were dealing with the owners of the stores.

S: Were there more corner type markets at the time?

M: Oh, very much so. There was corner groceries all over through Youngstown. And then furthermore, you had the confectioneries too. Kids could go in and buy that penny candy in various stores. Just existed just to sell candy and magazines and things like that and still, they made a living on it. And then another thing, you had tailoring shops and bakeries all over the city then. And drug stores were . . . well, there was plenty of them on the North Side. If you want to name them, there was the Wilbur L. Duncan Drug Store at Elm and Rayen. Then further up you have the one at 210 Scott Street in the block. Then there was another drug store, Goodman Brothers, Albert and Emanuel had a drug store at Elm and Madison and then another block away you had Walter Zimmerman's Parkview Pharmacy. And Goodman Brothers had another drug store at Elm and Bissell. Charles Linn and Ralph Yengling had one at Thornton and Elm and then further out they had the Benita Drug at Elm and Benita. Now that was in the 1920's. You had drug stores all over. You could say the same thing about gas stations. They were plentiful too.

S: Can you remember any of the corner grocery stores that you went into?

M: Yes, I had the Waldman's Store at 140 S. Kensington and Bissel, had Goodridge Store at 86 Thornton and Bryson, had the Sackville's Store at 1503 Elm and Thornton. You also had Ralph T. Hamilton's Grocery 1359 Elm, then you had the Martin C. Raupple's Butcher Shop, 1357 Elm Street. Another thing, speaking of butcher shops, a lot of times there was butcher shops all over the city and that's all they sold was just meat. They could make a living at that. Another thing, there were neighborhood bakeries. Today when you buy a loaf of bread, it just seems that it all tastes the same. Everything seems to be standardized and homogenized, especially with bread and everything else.

And then, another thing, in the 1920's farmers used to come in with horse and wagons. You could see the clay. The clay would be on the wheels. You could easily see that they didn't have modern roads like we have today. And they would be selling their wares. Pork, and chickens and rabbits, anything you wanted to buy. They'd churn their own butter; and fruits and vegetables. And then, of course, milk was delivered to the homes in those days. Now, it's different. They're going out to

the super markets and buying it now. A large number of dairies were making . . . sometimes five and six trucks would be delivering milk on the same street. Then finally, they all just went out of business. Now, I think, one company in town is delivering milk because most of the people are going to the stores to buy that now.

S: Would these merchants allow you to get provisions and supplies and food on credit?

M: Oh yes, very much so, and that was one of the things that was the cause of their downfall because when the people didn't have any money, they'd go to the corner grocery stores and then, as the chain stores came in here in the middle 1920's, they would, naturally, sell the goods, merchandise, cheaper. And then when they had the money, the people would go into the chain stores. Finally, the chain stores just put the corner grocery out because the corner groceries were not only giving credit, but they were delivering groceries on top of that. Now I know, one merchant told me, Mr. Jacob Smulovitz at 1718 Elm, told me one time that he'd have people call him up at a quarter to twelve and say, "Deliver me a loaf of bread and a quart of milk." And he'd have to get in his truck or send one of his employees out to deliver two small items. And now with the chain stores, there's no such thing as that.

S: Mr. Manning, describe as you went into one of these corner markets, describe what you saw as soon as you went inside the door. What was there to see?

M: Some of them were different, like they had pickles there. There would be open barrels. And of course, you got that friendly, "Hello there! How are you. How's the family," or something like that. And the grocer knew everybody. But today, it's very impersonal. And then another thing, they didn't carry the thousands of items that they carry today. I remember when I was a kid, they sold nutmeg and you'd have to buy it in bulk and take it home and grind it. Now, if you go into a store, it's already ground for you. The same way with coffee. A lot of them used to have the coffee grinders there and you could smell the aroma. Well, that aroma actually promoted the sales, the same way with the pickles and things like that. But now the Health Department has got laws that everything like that has got to be covered. So. what the companies do now is to have those pickles in glass jars so that they catch your eye, but it was a lot better then when you could go in and

smell the pickles and different things like that. It's all covered up now, I guess that's the health laws. After all, they're on the books for our protection. Things are much better and safer now.

I remember one time, I went in one store and they'd have salt mackerel. They'd open up a box and then it was there if you wanted it and of course people would be breathing on it and dust would be settling on it. You never see that in a store anymore.

S: Mr. Manning, were there a lot of automobiles in Youngstown during the 1920's? Were there streetcars, railroads? Were railroads important in Youngstown during the 1920's.

M: The major mode of transportation in the early 1920's I'd say would be the streetcar. The automobiles were just coming into vogue, and travel from city to city, definitely, it was the railroads. People didn't drive from here to Detroit or New York. If they did drive from here to New York in an automobile, it was a rarity. It was the railroads. And then another thing, when people would go to Cleveland or Pittsburgh or Detroit, the relatives and friends would go down and see them off and buy candy for them and everything else and fruit and oh, different things, magazines on their trip. And then when they would come back, it was the same thing. That's why the railroad stations had such large waiting rooms, if you notice.

The Erie Terminal was down there at Commerce and 107 North Phelps and then the Baltimore & Ohio was at 530 Mahoning Avenue just west of Spring Common.

The major mode of people to get to work, they had the Youngstown Railway here and then they also had the Southern Cars that went out down as far as, I think, Negley, Ohio. But anyway, the people from Boardman, a lot of them would come in on that Youngstown and Southern, that was it.

S: Were these streetcars connected from city to city? Could you go from Youngstown to, say, Warren on a streetcar?

M: Yes, you could go from here to Sharon too, Warren and Salem and East Liverpool. And then, at one time, they say the publisher of the Vindicator, Mr. Maag, when he was in the state legislature, that he used to go from here to Columbus on a streetcar, but you'd have to take

and change off all the time. It wasn't no direct route. And then, in the early days, a person could go from New York as far as Wisconsin on a streetcar providing, there would be a lot of layovers. That's how they had a network of streetcar lines. I know, when I was in camp, K of C Camp up there in Ravenna, Ohio, we came back on a streetcar from Ravenna. I think there was streetcars going from here to Salem, Ohio too.

S: Did you ever ride a streetcar?

M: Well, yes, oh I rode the streetcars regularly.

S: How much was the fare?

M: At times it was different. I remember, in the 1920's there, it was around 8 cents, then it went to 10 cents, and then if you bought a transfer, it was a penny. It was 10 cents for a long time. Then when the busses replaced the streetcars, the bus fare, I know for a long time was 10 cents.

S: To what do you attribute the streetcars being phased out, the mass transportation such as that? Was that a phenomenon that happened after the Second World War?

M: It started before the Second World War. The streetcars were phased out, they claim that streetcars impeded traffic. You couldn't pass up a streetcar. Anyway, it was just impeding traffic. Then they went to busses. But then most of the men used to take the busses to work. And then, of course, the automobile started. The workers, as the income increased, they started buying automobiles. And then, after the Second World War, that's when they all switched to automobiles. That's what caused the demise of the busses.

S: Okay Mr. Manning, what do you remember about Municipale Judge Joe Heffernan and his campaign?

M: He was the first Catholic that was elected mayor. It was a three way race and he went out and got the ethnic groups to vote for him. That was the first time that they could say they elected a mayor. Of course, had there been a two way race, I don't think Judge Heffernan could have made it.

S: Do you remember the other two gentlemen who were running at the time?

- M: Two men: Frank Vogan and Art Williams. Art Williams came in second and Vogan was third.
- S: Did Judge Heffernan have any specific platform that you can remember?
- M: No, I don't know of any particular platform. He was an excellent public speaker. They claim he was one of the first candidates to make use of the radio. He was highly intelligent. He did a lot of reading. They claim he made a lot of votes by using the radio.
- S: The Ku Klux Klan in Youngstown, was it an open organization? Did they hide behind their white sheets? I mean, was it a fashion to belong to the Klan in the 1920's?
- M: Well, it was. A lot of them thought, from what I heard of it and read of it, it was the best thing. It was something to belong to the Klan. They used to have their parades. They had them parades out there on, I think, Bears Den Road. And then they had, leading up to Wick Park one time, they burned a firey cross up there.
- S: Did you see that?
- M: No, I talked to fellows that were up there. I didn't actually see it. But we went up there the next day and we saw where the cross had fallen and where it burned the grass. So, it was quite evident that they were there, that what we heard was true.
- S: Do you know whether any of your neighbors were members of the Klan?
- M: No, no. As far as I am concerned, I don't know of any neighbors that belonged to the Klan, no.
- S: Okay, Mr. Manning, how did you get involved in the newspaper business? How did you get your start?
- M: I delivered the papers and I used to sell Saturday Evening Post. And when I was in high school I needed some extra money and I just got a job working for the Telegram, that was all.
- S: Can you remember the day you got hired? You just went in and asked for a job and . . . ?
- M: No, a fellow by the name of Tom Hall, the District Manager, he just wanted someone just to do some promotion

work and that's what I did. See, in those days, the newspapers were competitors and they wanted to try and get as many subscriptions as they could. They used to give prizes to the boys, take them on trips. They just wanted to give prizes and get as many orders as they could, new subscribers.

S: So you were in the Circulation Department?

M: Always, just in the Circulation.

S: What year was that?

M: Oh, I think it was around 1931.

S: During your years with the Telegram in the Circulation Department, how did the Depression affect the newspaper business?

M: It hurt the newspaper business greatly because, the newspapers get all their revenue from advertising and their advertising dropped down. The paper at that time was 18 cents a week. Some people were raising Cain. They wanted to know why--prices were dropping and they were wondering why the price of the newspaper wasn't dropping. But, of course the publishers would say, "Most of our revenue comes from advertising and the advertising, we're taking an awful beating on that." So, no way could they cut the price of the paper because the 3 cents at that time, didn't even pay for the cost of production. They claimed, at that time it cost 7 cents to print a newspaper. I don't know what it is today, but that's what the publishers would tell us.

S: Where was the Youngstown Telegram located?

M: At Wood and Phelps Street.

S: What was next to or on the same street as you went to work everyday? What businesses were there? Can you remember that?

M: No. We didn't have to go down there, my job was just to go around the North Side. People would quit the paper and we had to go around and find out why. Checking up, a lot of times people would quit because the service wasn't good. Well, we'd go and talk to them and say, "We'll talk to the newsboy and try and get them to improve the service," in order to keep the subscriber.

S: So, actually, you didn't really have an office down there?

M: No, no. In fact, I just worked part-time after high school.

S: Now, at that time there were two major newspapers in Youngstown?

M: Right.

S: The Telegram and the Vindicator.

M: That's right.

S: What was the Telegram's political affiliation?

M: At that time it was supposed to have been a Republican paper. Generally speaking, people thought it was-- although Scripps-Howard owned it, but they were independent. They could pick any side. And then another thing, speaking of newspapers, at that time the [Cleveland] Plain Dealer and Cleveland Press and all those out-of-town papers came in, Pittsburgh papers, they had quite a few readers here too.

S: Did that hurt the circulation of all the local papers?

M: No, I didn't say it was, because people then did more reading than what they're doing today. And people would buy the Plain Dealer in the morning. A lot of times people would take both papers, the Vindicator and the Telegram. Another thing, if you'd go into a home at night, a man would answer the door. He'd come, he'd have the newspaper in his hand. He was reading it. Today it's altogether different, they're watching television. Some people don't buy papers anymore.

S: Did the Telegram run one edition everyday or did they have a city and home editions?

M: They had an edition in the morning called the Noon Edition and then they used to run the Columbian Edition. They had the Trumbull Edition and that rolled right off the press around eleven thirty and then they had the Home Edition and then they used to run the Stock Edition. People that were interested in stocks, they called it Stocks and Sports Edition. The newsboys would go and deliver their regular papers and then the Stock Edition was pink, the front page. And then a lot of people would buy that. And of course, you've got to realize that in the 1920's the only way people could get their sports news or any news was through the newspaper and that's why the circulation was high. They depended on

the newspaper. Today you can see. There's radio and television and newspapers have just--I hate to say it--but they've taken a back seat.

S: Going back for just a minute, Mr. Manning, can you remember when the stock market crashed?

M: Yes, I do, definitely.

S: What effect did that have on Youngstown? Was there a general panic? Do you remember businesses closing down or banks going out of business?

M: No, not all of a sudden. The business it hurt first was, naturally, the stock market. People stayed away from that, because they took an awful beating. I think it was October 30, 1929 is when the stocks crashed. No, things didn't come to a standstill. But then later on, I heard a man who owned a moving and storage company, I think the man's name was Fisher, Fisher and Gilder, he said they had a lot of merchandise to deliver and machinery, and they got orders to cancel it. He said he didn't know what happened. Nobody knew. Everybody was stunned. They didn't know what happened. And they said, "Oh, it's just temporary," and they kept on trying to kid themselves. But then, finally, it just kept getting worse and worse. But people were trying to convince themselves that it was just a temporary affair. But now we can look back and look over the figures and everything and here it lasted for a long time. Now, historians are saying the Depression was worldwide. And now they give you reasons why. It started in the early 1920's. Some blamed it on the war debts and others blamed it on excessive speculation, which I think was the cause of it. There was people buying stocks that shouldn't have been buying them. They could buy stock for 10 cents on the dollar.

I know we had people wanting to buy the Stock Edition of the paper. Oh, they thought they wanted it, but still, a lot of them had a hard time paying for their paper. Then the banks closed, I think about two years later. That's really when it hurt because I know one grocer in our neighborhood, a corner grocer, he said a lot of people that hadn't been in the store for years came in asking for credit. Because the banks were closed, they didn't have any money to go and shop at the chain stores so they wanted him to give them credit. So we're hearing all kinds of stories like that.

S: What grocer was that? Do you remember?

M: No, I don't remember.

S: That was during the Hoover administration?

M: Definitely, yes. That was Hoover, yes.

S: Now when, F.D.R., Franklin Delano Roosevelt came in, were there any NRA projects or WPA projects here in Youngstown?

M: Oh yes, yes. Oh, very many. Yes, Youngstown had their fair share of them. They had men building roads and closing mine shafts. A lot of workers from this neighborhood had to go out there and work on the Youngstown Airport out there. A lot of them were working at Mill Creek Park and they were working building roads. Yes, they were doing all kinds of work all over the city. In fact, one WPA project is down on Spring Street. It's the American Legion Home. I think it's that red brick building there. I think the number is 36 Spring Street.

Now, you mentioned the NRA. That shortened the hours. There was a limit on hours minimum and wages. And I noticed a lot of the workers liked that because it cut their hours down and they got pay increases. When Roosevelt went in, he gave the people new hope. They had something to look forward to and he straightened out the banks, as we all know. And then that was one thing that got this started and then there's the NRA come in, allowed the workers to organize in these mills and then the unions started and of course, that cut their hours and increased their pay, that's what they wanted.

S: Do you remember listening to Roosevelt's speeches on the radio?

M: Very much so, and he was an excellent speaker. His radio voice, as one professor of public speech said, "He was the master." He could convince anybody. I don't care who you were. Nobody could come near him as a speaker. He was the champ, the best.

S: Now, you mentioned some of the banks were closed around here. Do you remember any particular bank that closed?

M: Oh, yes. The Dollar Bank, The City Trust. As a matter of fact, they were all closed I understand. They were in pretty bad shape, yes the banks closed. And then they opened, but another thing that they were doing at that time was selling--a lot of times people would have bank books and they were selling the bank books. If they

had five thousand dollars in the bank, they would go and sell the bank book. Some of these people were buying up bank books. Some for as little as 20 cents on the dollar or whatever it was. Some would be 10 cents on the dollar. And then, it was pure and legal, so the one that bought the bank book, when the banks opened up then they got the five thousand dollars.

S: Now, how did the Depression affect your family? Was your father out of work?

M: He was working part-time. He was working for the city. Everybody was in the same boat so you just took it in a matter of stride. There was always somebody that was worse off than we were.

S: Do you remember any of the soup lines or bread lines?

M: Oh yes, they had a soup line down there at St. Columba Church Hall at Hazel and Wood. I remember people going in there. Thank God we weren't on the line. Then George L. Oles, Oles' Market, used to give bread away. Of course, bread was 10 cents a loaf, three loaves for a quarter. If anyone wanted to buy it, it was pretty reasonable, but he was giving free bread away.

S: Oles you said?

M: Oles' Market. Yes, he was the mayor at one time, George L. Oles.

S: Getting back to the Youngstown Telegram now, who were the largest advertisers?

M: McKelvey's and Strouss'.

S: Would the paper solicit advertising?

M: Oh yes, they had their own advertising solicitors, definitely, yes. They had one man who took care of national advertising and they also used to have classified salesmen too, just going around, just soliciting classified advertising. And as I understand it, they had a man that was in charge of theater advertising. And the stores, that was called display advertising.

S: Was there much competition between the Vindicator and the Telegram for advertising?

M: Definitely, yes. That's why the newspapers were always trying to get the new subscriptions so the paper with

the largest amount of subscribers would naturally be favored by the advertisers. Because, just like you, if you wanted to put a product on the market or sell something, a paper had, say, 35,000 and your competitor only had 30,000, naturally you'd advertise in the paper with the most circulation, get the most coverage.

S: Now, the Vindicator was affiliated with what political party?

M: The Democratic Party.

S: Do you think the political affiliation had any affect on the circulation?

M: Absolutely. A lot of people would tell us. They'd say, "We take the Vindicator because it's a Democratic paper." And one of the things about the Scripps-Howard Paper, when Sam McClure sold the Telegram, he was dyed in the wool Republican. The Telegram, owned by Scripps-Howard, it was a chain, 26 papers. The main editorials were written in New York, and a lot of times they were favoring the Democrats. What they were doing was alienating a lot of their subscribers here. And they'd quit the paper and take the Vindicator.

S: So, in other words, Scripps-Howard wasn't necessarily affiliated with the Republican Party.

M: No. That's why they caused so much trouble here because most of the Republicans were taking the Telegram because it was a Republican paper. And then, they came out in 1932 and supported Al Smith for the nomination and a lot of Republicans quit on account of that. And then later on when they supported Roosevelt, that was their doom. They lost many subscribers when they supported Roosevelt. And of course, the Vindicator editorials were written locally and they knew just about what the people would accept, whereas the Telegram, as I said before . . . And then another thing, the big argument against the Telegram, what was against it, they called it "chain journalism" and they said it was no good because the editorials were canned editorials, written in New York for the 26 papers, which was the truth, whereas the Vindicator was locally owned. If a person would quit the Telegram and take the Vindicator, then that would be, actually, two subscribers for the Vindicator. When you lose one, it's just the same way with a politician losing a vote. It goes over, that makes it two votes. Then it was actually two subscribers for the Vindicator. But what hurt the Telegram was the fact that it was chain

journalism and then they were supporting Democrats, especially Roosevelt. They lost many subscribers right here on the North Side.

S: What impact do you think the two newspapers in Youngstown had on election results?

M: That's hard to assess because sometimes a newspaper would back . . . I know one time when Judge Mark Moore ran for Mayor, both newspapers supported his opponent, James Jones, but still, Judge Mark Moore won. Then another time, we had a judge here, Judge Mullholland and both newspapers supported his opponent, Ford Agee and Judge Peter Mullholland won. But still a politician always wants newspaper support, but then a lot of times, there was a case where Mark Moore won in spite of newspaper opposition and so did Judge Mullholland win in spite of newspaper opposition.

S: Okay, Ed, we were talking about the impact the newspapers had on political results. Do you think that people who subscribe to, say, the Telegram or the Vindicator would have been more likely to vote for whoever those papers endorsed?

M: Yes and no. Sometimes people would say, "Whoever the newspapers are for, I'm against." And then others would naturally. . . It's pretty hard to assess something like that. And it's the same way today. Of course, you got to realize in those days, in the 1920's people did go to political meetings. They paid more attention. There was more activity. Today, with television, it has changed everything. People don't want to leave their homes now. I know once, when Mark Moore ran for mayor, they had a big rally up at Hayes School and it was packed. Now, here we're going into a campaign now. Whether you could get those people to go to a rally like that now I don't know. It's a question. The candidates depend on television. You figure they go right into their homes. But you still learn more by going to a political rally. And then you learn much more by reading the newspaper than you do by paying attention to the TV, much more. Your newspaper reporting is much more in depth. They go into detail and you just learn more, that's all.

S: Was there an emphasis on "scooping" the Vindicator?

M: Oh, definitely. That was the main thing a reporter had to know. He wanted to "scoop" the opposition all of the time. Get information the other paper didn't get. But today, with these one newspaper towns they don't have to do that.

And no way can the newspapers "scoop" the television stations because you've got the television giving you live coverage now. So, the newspapers just have to sit back. Of course, I will say this, the newspaper is still more accurate because they have more time. They have more time to check out their facts. The newspapers had deadlines to make. The reporters, say, had to get down there by two o'clock. They might have had an hour to check those facts. Here the TVs are altogether different. It's a different type of interview now. You see the reporters, talking to these people coming out of a Board of Education meeting or out of the city hall or out of the Courthouse. Well, you're talking to the man, then you can take it for what it's worth. But then you don't have what you call the reporters evaluation of the situation. I like both, but the newspapers are better I'd say.

S: Now you said the Telegram had a national slant to it. Is that one of the reasons you feel that the Telegram began losing its circulation?

M: Yes, oh yes, definitely because I know for a fact that it's just a matter of record because they lost good substantial subscribers like when they supported Al Smith and they alienated a lot of their readers. Then later on, when Roosevelt got the nomination they come out for him and here these people were all old line Republicans and they just didn't like that at all.

S: Were there many women reporters with the Telegram?

M: Yes. One was Ester Hamilton. She was a very good reporter, an exceptionally good reporter. Then on top of that she used to promote--during the Depression she started that Alias Santa Claus Club to get money for baskets of groceries so that families would have it for Christmas. And that continued on for years even after she worked for the Vindicator. Yes, she was a very good reporter, competent reporter. Then another thing, she knew all the old local families and she had a nose for news and she could really write. I'd say she was an exceptionally good reporter.

S: Was there a stigma attached to women reporters at this time?

M: No, I would not say so.

S: Okay, Mr. Manning, how did one get from, say, being a man on the street to being a reporter? Was there any kind of a hierarchy you had to follow?

M: No. From what I know of it, a reporter started in and they, then I understand, they used to get so much money for every inch that was published. There was no unions then. In other words, the publishers could set the rules. And if they found they had a nose for news that's how they learned. It was on the job training, no journalism school. That's what they would do. They'd go around and write. If they liked newspaper work, they. . . The eight hour day, they didn't know what that was. Like on elections then, they would work, start work at 6:30 at night when those polls would close and they'd be working till 3 or 4 o'clock the next morning. Then they expected you back at 9 o'clock to go to work. So there was no unions in those days, but fellows did it for the love of the work. But then finally, the unions got in there and they cut those hours down. But now, on election night, they don't have to stay around like they did because with these voting machines now at 8:30 they know who is practically elected.

S: Let's talk a little bit about the unions. When the unions came in were the employees really for that?

M: I would say, yes. Yes, because the pay was low and then the hours were long and I'd say, yes the men voted for it.

S: Were there any union troubles after the union came in, any strikes?

M: There was no union in the Telegram, only the mechanical unions. I don't think the reporters ever joined a union there. But then, in the merger, [with the Vindicator] they joined a union then.

S: How much money did you make, Ed?

M: Oh boy, don't mention that. It was part-time work and I was making four dollars a week after school. That's all it was.

S: And how many hours a day would you work?

M: About 2 or 3 hours.

S: What was your job, just to go around and ask people . . . ?

M: What we'd do is, people would quit the paper and you had to go around and ask them why and try to talk them into keep on taking it. That was all. Or then, if you got a new subscription I think they used to give us 50 cents

for a new subscription. A lot of times you'd see a moving van in front of a house, you'd go up and ask them to take the paper,

S: Were people pretty receptive?

M: Very receptive yes. I've always found the people on the North Side very receptive where I worked. You approach people. You know what I mean. You approach them in a nice gentlemanly. . . All salesmen learn to do that.

S: Who did you report to?

M: I just had to report to the District Manager that was all.

S: Who was that?

M: His name was Tom Hall.

S: Did you report down at the Telegram?

M: No, we didn't have to go down there. We would go down there to pick up our pay or something like that, that was all. We didn't have to report down there.

S: Do you know if many members of the Telegram staff were college educated?

M: I don't know. I know the circulation employees, the full time workers, I don't think any of them were. I don't know.

S: Do you think a college education was a prerequisite for being a reporter?

M: At that time, I don't think so, no. It would have helped, but I don't think it was a prerequisite. I imagine men in the bookkeeping department, I imagine they were college graduates. They were accountants so I had to say they would.

S: Were the customers billed weekly, monthly, or yearly?

M: The newspapers were sold to the newsboys and they used to go around and collect once a week. And they were just like young merchants. That's what they were called. And if the people didn't pay them, then that cut into their profits. What we used to do is, a lot of times the customer would owe the boy money and we'd have to go around and try and get it for him. But that's the way it was.

The newsboy went out. He was a merchant selling the papers. He was responsible.

S: Was there a lot of people owing money for the paper during the Depression?

M: Yes, that's true. Newsboys did lose a lot of money, Yes, that's right. People owed them. We used to tell them to cut them off. But a lot of the newsboys would feel sorry for people. They would listen to their parents, "Oh well, don't cut them off." Yes, a lot of the newsboys lost money, definitely,

S: Would you say circulation was more out in, say, the North Side, the East Side, the West Side, or were more papers sold in Youngstown itself on the street corners with the newsboys hocking them?

M: It was mostly home delivery, home delivery, yes.

S: Do you remember if there were the newsboys standing on the street corner in Youngstown at all?

M: There was downtown. They used to hock newspapers downtown, but the bulk of the papers were home delivered. That's what they want, home delivery.

S: Were there any newspaper wars?

M: That all depends what you mean by war. As far as cutting prices, no, but they used to have contests for the carriers, take them to Washington or Niagara Falls or the World's Fair in Chicago. And carriers would get out and solicit new subscriptions. Take them to Washington D.C, or Indianapolis to the auto races down there on Memorial Day. Of course, that cost the publishers money to have a promotion like that. But then there was always the newspaper trying to beat the other newspaper. Now, a good example is when Irene Schroder and Glen Dagg killed a Pennsylvania State Trooper. That was of course, naturally there was competition and the newspapers, the Telegram especially, played that up. And the trial was in New Castle. And anyway, they electrocuted Irene Schroder. Gifford Pinchot was the governor of Pennsylvania and they thought he would give her a reprieve and there was no such thing. She was going to be electrocuted at 7 o'clock in the morning, so what happened was, the Telegram sent a man down to Harrisburg where the electrocution took place and they had an open line from Harrisburg to Youngstown, from about 6:30 to 7 o'clock Anyway, and when she was pronounced dead, the man at the

reporters desk gave signals to the circulation men to start selling the papers. And here, the papers had been run off the press at 6:30 in the morning. You know, "Irene Schroder Dies," but they held the paper up till they made sure that she was dead. They didn't wait for that to come over the teletype. That might have been 5 or 10 minutes later. That's what competition is. Then all the kids had the papers under their arms ready to go and when that hankerchief was dropped they all took off. And those cars took off. You'd think it was the Indianapolis Speedway the way those autos were going. The cars and trucks sped away. There was about 8 or 9 of them and they were all ready to go and it was just like the start of the Indianapolis races. They went out to the North Side, South Side and all the surrounding towns. So that's the way they worked it.

S: How about "yellow journalism," was that practiced by either of the papers?

M: It all depends on what you call "yellow journalism." Now, like the Telegram was always exposing things that went on in the City Hall and the Courthouse. And there was some trouble at the Mahoning Valley Sanitary District. Some people thought that was good journalism and other people thought it was, you say, "yellow journalism." It all depends on whose ox is being gored. And they were after, oh, different things going on in City Hall. Well then the Telegram used to lose subscribers, city workers would quit the paper, quit the Telegram because they didn't like that. Then other people would say, "That's good for them printing news like that." So it all depends what you call "yellow journalism" Some people called it the truth and said it was good and then others didn't like it. So it's like anything else, it's just a matter of opinion.

S: You mentioned the cars before, did they have printing on the side like you see today, what they have on the orange Vindicator trucks?

M: No. Those cars were owned by the district managers and they got a car allowance, but their name wasn't on the automobile. It was their personal car, own cars. The Telegram had ten trucks.

S: Did the Vindicator and the Telegram attack one another?

M: Oh yes, in their editorials. Yes, they used to go after one another. Yes, they attacked one another.

S: Can you remember any special issue?

M: I remember that on the Mahoning Valley Sanitary District, the Telegram took one side and the Vindicator took another and they were throwing barbs back and forth. There was different issues that used to come up and they would take sides. And the Telegram was always after lower electric rates. Of course, some say the Vindicator stuck up for Ohio Edison, while, of course, that was just a matter of opinion. But then they were always fighting each other in the editorial, yes. That was typical of all newspapers all over the country at that time.

S: How much did the Telegram rely on the wire services? What kind of wire services did they use?

M: They had their own wires, Scripps-Howard owned the United Press, and the Vindicator had the Associated Press.

S: In your opinion, was one service better than the other?

M: No, I'd say they were both good. They both gave good coverage I would say.

S: Was there a Sunday edition of the Telegram?

M: No, years ago there was, but that was long - maybe 70 years ago. No, it was just a daily paper.

S: Did the Vindicator have a Sunday edition?

M: Oh, yes they had a Sunday edition.

S: So they had a monopoly on at least one day.

M: Yes, but then there was a lot of Plain Dealers sold here, a lot of New York Times, and a lot of Pittsburgh Press and Sun Telegraphs. They used to call them the foreign papers then, but I don't know why, but they were just actually out-of-town papers. That's when the people would do a lot of reading on Sunday. But today those days are over. It's not like that today.

S: Did the paper carry legal news?

M: Yes. Now, if you were a businessman you would have to buy the Daily Legal News to get everything.

S: You mentioned the story on that woman who was executed in Pennsylvania. Can you remember any other big stories that the Telegram maybe "scooped" the Vindicator or was that

kind of like a common occurrence for each one to "scoop" the other?

M: A lot of times it was an even-steven. A lot of times the Vindicator would probably "scoop" the Telegram. Now, I remember in the early 1920's, people didn't know who won the World Series game until the newsboys went down the street hollering, "Washington Senators Won," or something like that. They had to depend on newspapers, and because the newsboys went down the street hollering, "World Series," that created interest and everybody was talking about the World Series. Today, it's piped right into your home and nobody talks about the World Series. Did you ever notice that today you don't hear anyone talk?

S: Yes.

M: Because they already know about it. Those newsboys actually did stir interest . . . And another thing, they used to generate interest on a prize fight. That's what they would wait for. Like when Tunney and Dempsey fought. Although you got that one the radio, but still, people would want to buy the newspaper too, to read about it. Kids would be selling those papers till 9 or 10 or 11 o'clock at night.

S: Do you know how far the Telegram circulation went? Did people in Sharon buy it? Did people in Warren buy it. Did it go that far, the trading area?

M: Yes, it was sold up there, but the Warren Tribune and the Sharon Herald, naturally . . . It's hard to sell an Ohio paper in Pennsylvania. I know they had a branch up there in Warren, the Telegram. They sold a lot of them in Niles. Percentage wise, they sold more in Niles and then, naturally, Girard and Hubbard and Columbiana County is all Telegram and Vindicator down there.

S: Was Youngstown large enough to support two newspapers?

M: No, that's what the argument was. They said, Youngstown, no way, when they called us into a meeting, they said that they couldn't support it. Youngstown could not support two papers. The Vindicator ended up with more advertising than the Telegram. And the circulation, I understand, if they had all the advertising the Vindicator had, they still couldn't stay in business. No, Youngstown could not, at that time, support two papers.

S: Do you remember the day that you heard the Telegram was going to fold? Do you remember that day?

- M: Oh yes. I wasn't a bit surprised, because I could tell the way the circulation was dropping.
- S: Did they just call you on the phone or just . . .
- M: No, no, we knew about it. You didn't have to read, you all knew. They didn't call you or anything. Incidentally, they didn't use the phones then like they do now.
- S: Did you know anybody that worked down in the office in the Telegram, anybody from the North Side here that worked down there that you knew?
- M: There was a man by the name of Arthur Todd. He was a political editor. He lives up here on Florencedale. I knew him.
- S: Do you know what the impact of the Telegram folding had? The impression I get about the newspaper business is watching these old Adolph Menjou movies and it seems like it was a really exciting atmosphere inside a news-room or a newspaper office.
- M: That was the wrong . . . The newspaper men have been trying to down play that. Newspapers don't operate that way. The movie version of the newspaper is altogether wrong with running around and that's the movie version. But no, no they don't do that. They're just like any other office. They're congenial and walking around trying to do their work right. A lot of people get the idea, they see those movies and they think they're running around. No, that's not the case. Newspaper reporters are trying to down play the Humphrey Bogart and Adolf Menjou movies like Front Page. No, that isn't right.
- S: Did the Telegram do it's own printing? Did it have its own printing machines?
- M: Oh yes, Linotype machines. Yes, they had their own Linotype machines.
- S: Was there any difference in the size of the columns that the Telegram used or the size of the print that the Telegram used than the Vindicator?
- M: It was about the same. Some people used to say the Telegram was easier to read and other people would say the Vindicator. So it was a matter of opinion.
- S: How about emphasis on photographs or illustrations?

- M: It was about the same. There again, we got people that would swear by the Telegram, then other people would stick up for the Vindicator. It's just what people get used to.
- S: How about the relationship today? Are there more photographs in the papers today than there were back then?
- M: No. There was more then I'd say. What hurts the newspapers today is television. Now take the funnies, the kids today don't have to read the funnies. Why? Because they see the movies and they watch the cartoons and they got something free which we had to pay for or go to the movies to see years ago. So that's why, the comics, you don't hear the kids talking about comics anymore. And during the 1920's and 1930's, until television, kids would be reading Dick Tracey or Barney Google or Mutt and Jeff or something or the Katzenjammer Kids, but now, that's all gone. They forgot about it because you got all that on television.
- S: Do you remember listening to the Green Hornet or anything like that?
- M: On the radio?
- S: Yes.
- M: Not very much. I didn't care for that.
- S: Who was the editor of the Telegram while you were working for them?
- M: Felix Bruner and then later it was Lowell Leake.
- S: After the paper folded, what did they do with all the machinery?
- M: Some say it was sold to a newspaper in Mexico. Well, a lot of it was, I think, because when the Vindicator went into the new building, they went and bought new machinery.
- S: Explain why the Telegram folded. Were they bought out by the Vindicator?
- M: Some say it was a merger. I don't know. I've heard different stories and you don't know who to believe. Scripps-Howard still owns non-voting stock in it, in the Vindicator. So some say it was a merger and some say it was taken over. You don't know.

S: Now, you went from working for the Telegram to working for the Vindicator. Did that happen just overnight?

M: Yes, they just hired me, yes. They kept a lot of the Telegram workers.

S: Was that, do you think, part of the agreement maybe?

M: No, no. They hired the ones they wanted to.

S: You said you could give me an estimate of what you thought the circulation was for the Telegram before it folded.

M: I don't have any idea. I think it was maybe 24,000. I think you'll find out.

S: Was the Vindicator more widely circulated?

M: The Vindicator, at that time, published their figure on on July 2nd. They said they had 43,251. They used to print it up in the left hand ear of the paper everyday. And the Telegram didn't want to print theirs because it was way down.

S: What year did the Telegram go under?

M: It was July 2, 1936 was their last day of publication.

S: So, you just immediately went to work for the Vindicator?

M: Yes.

S: Was there any difference in your duties?

M: We had to work Sunday. That was the hard part about it. Had to work the Sunday paper. You work six days and then work seven, it's a lot harder.

S: Did you see any different attitude on the way the business was run or was it run basically the same way?

M: Basically the same, out to get circulation, more readers.

S: Then you had the same duties as you had before?

M: Oh, absolutely, yes.

S: Of course, after the Telegram folded, probably not many people were apt to drop their subscription so was it more, your duties, getting new subscribers?

M: There was a lot of people taking both papers. That was circulation there that you couldn't count, only take one paper then instead of taking two. Of course, that actually helped the advertisers because they didn't have to be paying for double coverage. You could just see, if you were an advertiser and here you'd be paying for double coverage. This way, the Vindicator took over, you're just paying for single coverage.

S: What is your opinion on the future of newspapers today?

M: From what I've read of it, I think they're headed for trouble and I don't like to see it because the Los Angeles Times made a survey and they found out that people between the age of 18 and 28 are not reading. They're not buying newspapers. And I talked to one news dealer and he said, "The same thing here. Everybody who comes up to the news stand to buy a paper is in that age group between 65 and 80." I said, "Don't you sell any to any young people?" He said, "No." That's what the Los Angeles Times survey said. Now, in the next ten years, that's going to be 38 years of age and they're really worried about it.

Now I noticed the New York Times, the paper that's sold here in Youngstown is their national edition. It's not the New York Edition. It's printed in Chicago. And they've raised the price and they've cut the sports section down and they've cut the general news section down. So, they've lost circulation as a result of that. And it's too bad that the newspapers are going the way they are because you can get so much information out of it. But, if it helps a college student, I don't care if he's a history student, because, after all, it brings you up to date. And you don't get that on the television. It just will be a sad day if anything happens to the newspapers in this country.

Another thing about the newspapers, if I want to go back to the Vindicator or the Telegram and find out something that happened 50 or 60 years ago, I can do that. But what can you do with a television set? You can't go to any television station and say, "Well, I'd like to see your old reels." Now you can go down to the Maag Library, the New York Times goes back to 1851, the London Times goes back to, I think, 1768 or something. I have the figures there, I could find it out. But you can't do that with television news or radio. So that's why I say that I hope the newspapers. . . I don't want to see anything happen to them because it will be a sad day in this country if anything happens to the newspapers.

S: Okay, I'd like to thank you for this interview.

M: I want to thank you for coming here. I enjoyed it.

END OF INTERVIEW