

1  
2 BY THE INTERVIEWER:

3 Q. We're talking to Raymond I. Hagler,  
4 October 21, 1975, who was born May 29 in 1900,  
5 right here in Salina and has lived all his life  
6 in Salina. He is at home.

7 What is the address here, Ray?

8 A. 241 North Penn Avenue.

9 Q. 241 North Penn Avenue, and most all his  
10 life has been spent on Penn Avenue and Oakdale.  
11 So, well, I would also make comment that in the  
12 house with us is Ray's marriage partner for some  
13 54 years next month, Hazel. All right. Ray, we  
14 know that you have been all your life in Salina,  
15 and I just thought to ask you a few minutes ago,  
16 would you like to tell us what you know of  
17 stories that your folks shared when they -- how  
18 long they were in Kansas and how life was for  
19 them that you learned as a boy?

20 A. That's fine, Glen, I would be very glad  
21 to tell you. My mother was born on Smoky Hill  
22 River down south of Bridgeport, Kansas, on  
23 August the 9th, 1873; and my father came out  
24 here about 1870. He was born in Carbondale,  
25 Illinois, in 1868. And around '70 or '71, along  
in there, he came out here. And my grandfather

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1 built a house out on what we call the Fifth  
2 Street Road which is right across from the  
3 present Bonnie Ridge, it's a large two story  
4 house that sits there now. My grandfather built  
5 that. My father spent his childhood there and  
6 he was a raiser of fine horses and furnished  
7 them for the H.D. Lee Company for many years.  
8 And my mother worked in the old Salina Daily  
9 Union and Journal when they combined here many  
10 years ago until her and my dad were married and  
11 established a home and then he was in various  
12 business after that.

13 Q. What businesses were they?

14 A. My dad run a coal yard for a good many  
15 years and then he was a produce inspector for  
16 the old Salina Produce Company, the R.A.  
17 (inaudible) and for an outfit in Torrington,  
18 Wyoming. He went around and inspected cars of  
19 fresh fruits and vegetables that had damage or  
20 were turned down by the people that shipped to  
21 the customers, and he would make adjustments on  
22 it and that was mostly what he done. He had the  
23 coal yard first and then the inspection business  
24 afterwards.

25 Q. Did they tell you when you were a child,

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did they relate any stories to you about any hardships?

A. Well, it was all hardships in those days. They didn't have to relate any. The whole thing was hardship all the way through. And, why, you could buy bread for a nickel. A nickel was awful hard to get. Eggs, ten cents a dozen. And if you worked for a dollar a day, you was making very good pay, and with the exception of the stuff that you could raise and live on the farm, why, the hardships were many in those days.

Q. Okay. So let's, with that background, Ray, let's talk a little bit about what Ray Hagler remembers of his home of Salina, born May 29th, 1900.

A. At 123 South Oakdale Avenue.

Q. Okay. How about as a youngster in grade school?

A. Oh, the Oakdale that I went to is not the present Oakdale. It was sitting over on the northeast corner. I finished six grades there. Then the old Central School set on South Seventh Street between the two schools that are there now, which weren't there at that time. And a

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1 while back Jimmy Geisendorf had a picture of the  
2 old Central School in the paper and the old  
3 timers here will remember that very well. And I  
4 finished the 6th grade there. I was five grades  
5 in Oakdale instead of six, and the 6th grade  
6 there. Then the first Salina High School set on  
7 the corner of Mulberry and Seventh. My two  
8 aunts graduated from that before Washington was  
9 built. Then we went to Washington and they  
10 established that school as a grammar school for  
11 7th and 8th grade. I went through both grades  
12 in that school after getting out of Central  
13 School. And then over to Washington High School  
14 that's been recently torn down. That's my  
15 history of my school here.

16 Q. All right. What was -- what did you do  
17 for fun as a lad?

18 A. Personally, I worked. I was  
19 unfortunate as people won't know how much, but  
20 my dad couldn't see.

21 Q. I see.

22 A. Not totally blind, but he couldn't read  
23 very much. He read a little. And they got  
24 better in later years when he was on his  
25 inspection trips. But he never could see very

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1 good and I never participated in any sports of  
2 any kind because I always had something else to  
3 do. And off record I could tell you some things,  
4 but I wouldn't put it on microphone. But we got  
5 along all right, we never wanted for anything.  
6 I took care of cows and everything was run by  
7 horses in those days. The doctors had horses  
8 for their buggies and all. And he and I  
9 together had three or four around here, and then  
10 I used to take the cows out and put them out in  
11 the daytime, get them back in at night. We  
12 always got to milk that way. And oh, just  
13 things -- while it sounds like a hardship today,  
14 it wasn't. We got along just fine. And if you  
15 had to do it now, it would be a hardship; yes,  
16 it would. But in those days because almost  
17 everyone has done something like that, Doc Lutz  
18 that lived or not the corner of Front and Gypsum  
19 had many horses because he used them all times  
20 of day and night, and we took care of them and  
21 done their work around there. And different  
22 things like that, that we could do and it worked  
23 out all right because you didn't need \$40.00 a  
24 day in those days, and you very seldom got  
25 \$40.00 a month. And I started to work for H.D.

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1 Lee Company here in 1916 and my pay was \$30.00 a  
2 month. So you see, that was about the base pay  
3 for an ordinary youngster starting to work in  
4 those days. And then up as high as 1935, I  
5 worked for Saline County for \$70 dollars a month.

6 Q. Just for a moment let's go back to 123  
7 South Oakdale, and then where did you move?

8 A. I'll tell you about that. We stayed at  
9 123 South Oakdale probably a year-and-a-half  
10 after I was born. Then 113 South Oakdale, it  
11 still sits there, I think Jack Lacy's got it,  
12 senior. And my dad built that, and then we  
13 moved in to that house from 123 and my sister  
14 was born there... Hazel?

15 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
16 discussion was had after which  
17 the following:)

18 My sister was born there in 1902 and I  
19 lived there until Hazel and I were married on  
20 the 23rd of November of 1921 and then I moved  
21 out of there then and see that left me, I  
22 suppose I lived there about 19 years, I think.

23 Q. Now you talk of taking the cows out and  
24 we think of that and see Oakdale where it is now.  
25 How far did you have to walk those cows before

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1 they were out?

2 A. Down Iron Avenue and over there, there  
3 was nothing, I could look east out of our 113  
4 North Oakdale and look out on the hill and the  
5 present house that Lee Marshall has now was a  
6 smaller structure and a man lived there that was  
7 originally a mail carrier, but he raised a lot  
8 of fruit in an orchard. And I could look right  
9 straight out there and there was one brick house  
10 on Kansas Avenue between our house and the hill.  
11 There was nothing in there, that was all country,  
12 everything. And all across Iron Avenue there on  
13 the north side of the road, and by the way there  
14 was no river bed then, behind our house, too.  
15 There was a wooden bridge across there. Well,  
16 you could pasture your cows anywhere in there.  
17 There was nothing over in here anywhere. This  
18 house that we live in here was built in 1910,  
19 and one of the very few was out here at that  
20 time. But everything was just country. There  
21 wasn't anything else out there.

22 Q. So Oakdale was on the east edge of town?

23 A. It was on the east edge of town. There  
24 were some more houses east on Iron and the house  
25 that sits on the corner of Iron and Kansas, now,

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1 my folks were married in that house in 1894.

2 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
3 discussion was had after which  
4 the following:)

5 Then see, they were married, my folks were  
6 married about six years before I happened along.  
7 I have a brother that's deceased. That 1894  
8 should be 1896.

9 Q. 1896.

10 Q. Okay. That's a wall plate, wedding  
11 present, on November 15, 1896.

12 A. That's from Anna Johannes, that grocery  
13 store that's on the corner down there was Lou  
14 Johannes' grocery store. And they were married  
15 just shortly, and Mrs. Johannes was a full  
16 cousin to my mother. My grandmother and Mrs.  
17 Johannes, the present Johannes people that are  
18 here, they were sisters. Some woman called me,  
19 you want to shut that off a second.

20 Q. No, that's all right.

21 A. Some lady called here the other day,  
22 Pat Whalen or something, anyhow. She had the  
23 whole deal and she wanted all the names of those  
24 people and there's a Mrs. Turner and Anna  
25 Johannes' mother and my mother's mother that

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1 were sisters. Well, it was a Catholic family  
2 and by the way, I don't want this on this record,  
3 shut that off there.

4 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
5 discussion was had after which  
6 the following:)

7 But my -- but her father married a  
8 Protestant woman and my mother's side of the  
9 family, they were never Catholics, she never  
10 went to the Catholic Church. But we have  
11 records that show that she was, all three of  
12 those younger girls at that time were baptized  
13 in the Catholic Church. There's a lot of funny  
14 people in the world.

15 Q. Ray, you remember, you were quite young,  
16 but do you remember the Great Flood early in the  
17 century?

18 A. I wonder why I didn't. We were living  
19 at 113 South Oakdale and my granddad lived  
20 across, there was a big slew in there at that  
21 time and he lived across on Penn Avenue on the  
22 alley, he had his horses and barn and everything.  
23 That water started in, oh, real fast on the  
24 morning of 1903, which was my birthday on May  
25 the 29th. They sat me in a high chair and you

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1 say kids that age can't remember. I could  
2 remember that if it was yesterday. They put me  
3 up in my high chair and put my egg and breakfast  
4 in front of me and the water started every place.  
5 And my dad hollered, well, here comes a wagon  
6 and four horses. So we grabbed everything we  
7 could and we drove up there and we got in that  
8 wagon and went over to Gypsum and started east  
9 on Gypsum. And water running through our house,  
10 oh, lordy, man, it was -- it was a terrible  
11 current. Then I don't remember too much till we  
12 got over on Gypsum going east and there was a  
13 lady -- Gypsum Street. A lady lived there with  
14 her aged mother and they got her out and while  
15 hoisting her up, she slipped or something and  
16 caught her on that thing that holds the box on  
17 the wagon. I can remember that, she was hanging  
18 down from that. Well, I don't remember anything  
19 more till we got to Ohio Street and turned south.  
20 It was a big hedge row in there. Of course  
21 there was no houses anywhere out there, except  
22 this one by (inaudible), so we turned south  
23 there to what is Greeley now and went to what is  
24 1120 Greeley now, a home lived in by Mrs. Noble  
25 Maybrier. And we stayed there for the duration

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1 of the 1903 flood. And I was by there the other  
2 day just to look, and there was a huge pine tree  
3 that stands in the yard and when I was ten years  
4 old I could jump and catch the bottom branch and  
5 pull myself up. It's up about 30 to 40 feet now.  
6 And the tree must be, well, that was 65 years  
7 ago. Well, that tree is 70, 75 years old. And  
8 Mrs. Maybrier owns that place, and there was  
9 nothing out there anywhere. You could look in  
10 to town to the north and there was one house on  
11 the corner of Gypsum and Ohio. It's the old  
12 Stack property and the Stack Plumbing Company,  
13 the old original man was the great grandfather  
14 of the young fellow that's got Stack Plumbing  
15 Company now, or Mrs. Stack. And that's the end.  
16 When the fellow took horses and rode over to the  
17 brick yard, there was an old brick yard over  
18 there and where Indian Rock Park is. That lake  
19 down in there was where they run a railroad down  
20 and took that stuff out to make the brick and  
21 haul it back up the hill. And then took the  
22 horses and the sacks and rode from 1120 Greeley  
23 over to the brick yard and everybody got a sack  
24 of coal and rode back. Now those two things I  
25 can remember very vividly. And then Ruby and I

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1 were out on the front yard the time and we  
2 played there. Now those, the other part of  
3 being out there in the flood until we moved back  
4 to the almost total wreck of everything. I  
5 don't remember much of, but those are very vivid  
6 in my memory and the old store that sits on the  
7 corner of Iron and Second Street over there now  
8 is the liquor store, half of it, I don't know  
9 what's the other half, that was T.M. Grocery and  
10 boy, it just washed right through there. 1903  
11 flood, while they will tell you that the water  
12 wasn't as high in places here as it was in  
13 '50, '51, they had a big one. '50-51 is when  
14 they had the big one. But there was nothing to  
15 obstruct it and it washed through with great  
16 force. An enormous amount of damage. And then  
17 we had a small one in 1905 I remember and then  
18 not till her and I lived over on South Oakdale  
19 and we had one in '41, '42 and '43. Not real  
20 bad, but they were bad, we kept them out of our  
21 cellar over there. Then, when was the last  
22 flood we had before they put the ditch in out  
23 here honey? In 1950 because the big cut off was  
24 not in here in 1950, no, it wasn't. And that  
25 was the last -- and it was a big one.

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1 Q. How long were you out at this, the  
2 white farmhouse, during the flood; do you  
3 remember?

4 A. Oh, it must have been ten days or more,  
5 wasn't it, Hazel? Ten days to two weeks. I  
6 would say the water stayed in here from a week  
7 to ten days and then we came home just as soon  
8 after and started to clean up and fix the wall  
9 that caved in in the basement and all of that.  
10 And then the last flood we had that came -- no,  
11 it wasn't the last one.

12 MRS. HAGLER: '51 was the last.

13 A. Yeah, but it wasn't the one that caved  
14 our wall in. That was the one when we were  
15 still over on -- when we bought this house, they  
16 had had to put a basement wall in the south end.  
17 Flood we had before we moved over here, which  
18 must have been '45 or '44, caved the south wall  
19 of this house and that had to be replaced. But  
20 the last big flood that we had here was in 1950,  
21 and that's the only time that there was any --  
22 ever any water in this cellar. Of course, the  
23 cellar wasn't here in 1903. And the reason I  
24 remember when this was, of course, my abstract  
25 shows me that, but at the same time I was going

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1 to Oakdale School and a stone mason, brick mason,  
2 named Ike Davis was building this house and he  
3 had a son, Oakley, that went to school with me,  
4 and after school we'd come down and watch him  
5 build this house. That was in 1910, so you know  
6 how old our house is. And there was -- I can  
7 remember just one house between here and the  
8 corner. It would be 209 now, the old, Fred  
9 George's dad built it, and now I think that was  
10 the only house in here, with exception of this  
11 one. And then they started building this block  
12 after that.

13 Q. Now something about the everyday life  
14 of the community, do you remember about how many  
15 people lived in Salina?

16 A. Oh, I was trying to remember the school  
17 census, this is something I want to show you,  
18 too. That's his wife that lives in town, is a  
19 sister to Mrs. Will Rodges a sister to this  
20 woman here. This was Bess Christian.

21 Q. She was your teacher?

22 A. She was our teacher, Bess Christian.

23 Q. And this is the old Oakdale School?

24 A. This is the old one that sat on the  
25 front of the lot out closer to where the new one

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1 is now back a little ways. It was on the north  
2 side of the alley because on Iron Avenue was a  
3 row of houses at that time. And the old school  
4 was way over on the corner.

5 Q. Okay. Now I notice here that about 45  
6 children in the one grade level?

7 A. That was a common deal in those days.  
8 It was a common deal. One time I remember we  
9 had over 50 in either that grade or the next one  
10 after that.

11 Q. Uh-huh.

12 A. And the majority of these people are  
13 gone. I was checking, I have a big sheet that a  
14 lady made out. The lady that made it out is  
15 gone now. Ruth Shaffer made it out, you know.  
16 And I was checking there and, oh, there's just  
17 enormous amount of those people. I don't  
18 suppose there's over, not much over a dozen left.

19 Q. What about the services of the city or  
20 the town or whatever it was called in those days.  
21 How about fire protection, did you have any fire  
22 protection?

23 A. Well, as you noticed, as I stated in  
24 there, up until this picture was taken or up  
25 about that time, it was all volunteer. And

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1 there was a few instances, you probably won't  
2 agree with me, the old fire house was on North  
3 Santa Fe about middle way of the block on the  
4 east side of the street. There was a fire wagon  
5 with hoses there and a great big round wheel  
6 reel with a hose on it. Well, as there was no  
7 fire department, we had in those days what we  
8 called hacks. They were forerunners of the  
9 taxi-cabs, and the fellows sat on the different  
10 corners with their horses waiting to pick up  
11 fares or to go someplace. Well, there was a  
12 bell on top of this fire station down there.  
13 And when the bell rang, the first hack that got  
14 down on North Santa Fe here to hookup the hose  
15 cart got \$5.00 and that's more than they made in  
16 some weeks. So everytime the fire bell rung,  
17 all the hacks just tore down there. And knowing  
18 kids like you do and like I do, now what  
19 happened many times, sneak up there and give  
20 that rope a pull. And I know of an instance, I  
21 wasn't personally involved in it, but there was  
22 an old fellow that sat on the corner and slept  
23 with his mouth open, and he'd go to sleep on  
24 that seat. And one day, coming home from school,  
25 the kids sneaked up and unhooked the tugs of his

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1 horses. Of course, they were standing there  
2 asleep, too. And let the tugs drop, you know,  
3 and fixed the neck yoke, then they slipped down  
4 the alley and rang the fire bell. Away went the  
5 horses and old Gus hanging. Gus went out there.  
6 If he had ever found out who done that, he'd  
7 have killed them, which I wouldn't have blamed  
8 him a bit. And, but, that's the way the fires  
9 were handled in those days. All volunteer, and  
10 as they would haul the cart to the fire,  
11 everybody would come out and lend a hand. And  
12 that was fixed or done away within about -- when  
13 was our first department with horses over on Ash  
14 Street? There was an old gentleman named Tom  
15 Anderson that drove a grocery wagon for John  
16 Gates and John Gates' grocery store is the 100  
17 block of West Iron. So we got a fire engine and  
18 wagon with three horses. They started out to be  
19 all white, but one of them died and they had the  
20 black one. And that -- they didn't have the  
21 distance to go in those days. East of Oakdale --  
22 well, Ohio Street was about it. But they would  
23 run out that far and it was located in the 100  
24 block of East Ash between Fifth and Santa Fe on  
25 the south side of the street. It's torn down

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1 now. And I took one of the first rides, I have  
2 always been a fire buff and been around stations  
3 and I knew Tom Anderson real well. So I took a  
4 ride up there with Tom Anderson and we went  
5 south on Fifth Street and as we went to make --  
6 it was a steel tired wagon and paving was brick  
7 and as we made the turn to go east, there were  
8 two horses and two buggies hitched over on a  
9 hitching post on that side, Haustenberg and  
10 Lockstrum Implement Company and of course that  
11 steel wheeled wagon just turned right around  
12 there and just cut those buggies right off those  
13 horses, going like that. I rode on it many  
14 times and hung around the fire station. They  
15 were always glad to get somebody to polish the  
16 harness or something like that. Then I would  
17 imagine in about, oh, it was in the paper here a  
18 while back, Jimmy Geisendorf, the time that  
19 Broadbeck was killed over here on the bridge. I  
20 was coming home from Oakdale or from Central  
21 School one afternoon and there was an old wooden  
22 bridge across the river there at Iron Avenue and  
23 Fourth Street at that time and a narrow wagon  
24 bridge, and Possum Miller was the driver of the  
25 car. It was an Old Mitchell, Broadbeck was the

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1 Chief. And as they come to go on that bridge, a  
2 girl with a buggy drove on that bridge and  
3 rather than hit the girl, there was a steel  
4 railing on the south side of Iron Avenue bridge,  
5 they turned the fire wagon and hit that and took  
6 Broadbeck's leg off and which he died. I  
7 believe I got a picture, if you got a little  
8 time. It won't take me a second. And that was  
9 the first paid fire department we had. And it  
10 hadn't been in operation very long before this  
11 happened, because I know in 1910 we still had  
12 the horses. And in fact, we used that one old  
13 Mitchell automobile in conjunction with the big  
14 hose wagon and fire engine that were drawn by  
15 horses and the chief would ride in that and get  
16 there and get things going until the horses got  
17 there. But the horses were paid fire department,  
18 not volunteer. And that says... September what?

19 Q. September 30, 1912.

20 A. 1912. Well, that was -- I don't  
21 suppose that was in operation a year before that  
22 accident happened. And it killed -- it tells  
23 you there the Chief died after that. And then  
24 we advanced, that stayed on East Ash there when  
25 it was entirely motorized after it got through

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1 the horses, until the fire station was built  
2 south of City Hall on Fifth Street. I don't  
3 suppose you were here then because the present  
4 fire station hadn't been over there more than  
5 what, eight, ten years, something like that.  
6 Well, anyhow, it moved from 100 block on West  
7 Ash over to the fire station and the City Hall  
8 was to the north where the police department was  
9 and the fire station was south and it stayed  
10 there till they tore it down and built the  
11 present fire station that we have there now. Of  
12 course, you know we got one out by the church.  
13 And the central fire station over here on West  
14 Elm and Jewell and Santa Fe, South Santa Fe, and  
15 in Schilling. That's the four departments we  
16 have now.

17 Q. You mentioned church, you are currently  
18 a member, you're a charter member of the Rolling  
19 Hills Congregational Church?

20 A. Yes, we are.

21 Q. What about the churches when you were a  
22 child, how many churches were there or what can  
23 you remember of church?

24 A. I think I can remember all the churches  
25 that that were here. I think you can when you

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1 came down here in 1913 even. Of course, the  
2 Presbyterian Church which is the old brick  
3 church across from the post office at the  
4 present time was the Presbyterian Church. And  
5 until -- and then they built the one they got  
6 now possibly, oh, must be pretty near 50 years  
7 ago because we never went to that other church  
8 after joining the Presbyterian. So it's been  
9 there 40, 45 years and there was the  
10 Presbyterian, the Methodist and the Christian;  
11 and the Christian had a little white church  
12 right south of the post office in what the  
13 parking lot is now there. But the Methodist,  
14 Presbyterian, Christian, Congregational,  
15 Catholic, Lutheran...

16 MRS. HAGLER: United Brethren was  
17 here when I came here.

18 A. United Brethren and Baptist.

19 MRS. HAGLER: Because that's where  
20 I went was United.

21 A. That's right. But I can't -- there  
22 might have been the -- I don't think that the  
23 Quakers or Mennonites or any of those people  
24 were up in here, at least at that time. But the  
25 ones I mentioned, I believe, are the nucleus of

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1 the churches that were here. I can't remember  
2 any more. Now the St. John's Baptist Church,  
3 which was colored, was on North Fifth Street,  
4 and they might have had another one, but that's  
5 the only one I remember of that. But if there  
6 were any other churches at that time, I can't  
7 remember what they were and I don't believe  
8 there were. Of course, the Seventh Day  
9 Adventist come later. And some of those; but  
10 the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Lutheran,  
11 the Baptist, the United Brethren and the  
12 Catholic, not over six, seven.

13 Q. You were baptized in a church that's no  
14 longer?

15 A. Oh, it's been down for many years. Now  
16 if you want to take a look at it, they won't let  
17 you take it out because I pretty near had to  
18 have an Act of Congress to get it, and I had it  
19 out to church one Sunday. But they're very  
20 against anything like that over here.

21 Q. That was the Plymouth Congregational  
22 Church?

23 A. Plymouth Congregational Church. And I  
24 can't remember our first pastor, I just can't.  
25 I can remember several afterwards, but I don't

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1 know who the -- but a fellow named Smedley that  
2 was the head of what was the United Power &  
3 Light Company at that time, he was the  
4 superintendent and the general and livery barn  
5 man, his son used to live next door to us.  
6 Isaac Snyder, he was one of the main goals there.  
7 But if there are any other churches in town, I  
8 didn't know of them. Of course, in later years,  
9 why they came in every denomination that you  
10 ever heard of almost. I was talking to someone  
11 the other day and I can't figure out who it was  
12 that said they belonged to the Mennonites down  
13 south. But there are wonderful people. And we  
14 had a tornado here in town about five years ago.  
15 They were all up here the next morning by  
16 daylight, 40 strong with their portable kitchens  
17 and their women with them and everything and  
18 they went right to work without any instructions  
19 from anybody or getting in anybody's way and  
20 worked there till the thing was cleaned up.

21 Q. Now let's get back. You said that you  
22 went, you had your first job as far as full time  
23 employment when you were 13 years old, 1916?

24 A. No, my first steady job out of school  
25 was 1916 with H.D. Lee. It's the old McCune

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1 Paper building now, the one on the corner, the  
2 big one. And by the way that burned, there was  
3 one there just like it, not quite so far back.  
4 It burned in 1904 and it was replaced with the  
5 one that is there now. And that was the H.D.  
6 Mercantile and the one on the south was the Lee  
7 Hardware Company. And it's called the Lee  
8 Company now and they still own it. But McCune  
9 Paper Company owns the one on the corner of Elm  
10 and Santa Fe.

11 Q. Is there any relationship between H.D.  
12 Lee and Lee Hardware?

13 A. Yeah, he owned both at one time. He  
14 owned them both and then it was split up and  
15 then Charles Swartz got to be the president and  
16 young Charles Swartz is still the president.  
17 And it was operated separately from the grocery  
18 house, all together separate. And I stayed  
19 there till 1928. Then I went with Kellogg  
20 Cereal Company out of Battle Creek, Michigan and  
21 stayed till about '32. And then I was with the  
22 Ridenour Baker. I went with them for a number --  
23 well, I went with them as long as they were in  
24 business and as the chain stores came on and  
25 eliminated the individual wholesalers, why those

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1 companies all closed up, including these,  
2 because the chain stores got to operating and  
3 had their own operations and the individual  
4 merchants and wholesalers couldn't exist.

5 Q. What did you do for H.D. Lee?

6 A. Well, I started in the coffee  
7 department. And there was assistant roaster for  
8 some time, and then worked in the taking care of  
9 orders and taking it down on the floor and then  
10 I had a small city territory here for a while,  
11 confections and candies and stuff in smaller  
12 grocery stores, salesman, yeah. Substitute on  
13 the road, about the last five or six years I was  
14 with them I done that. Then I went with  
15 Kellogg's.

16 Q. What did the business community look  
17 like? What can you remember of businesses on  
18 Santa Fe, for instance, or some of the larger  
19 warehouses?

20 A. Stiefel's, although it wasn't as tall  
21 as it is now, was one of the originals and  
22 across the street to the east the Salina  
23 Mercantile Company which was the Littowiches I  
24 don't know whether you ever heard of them or not.  
25 He was an attorney here and his sister lived

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1 down here, they're very wealthy, all of them. I  
2 think they're all dead and gone now. But  
3 Stiefel's, Salina Mercantile Company and  
4 Hayward's, Charlie Hayward were the three main  
5 stores on Santa Fe Avenue and down a little  
6 farther north was a grocery store run by an  
7 Austin which was Vet Austin, it was his great  
8 grandfather, and of course Austins are all gone  
9 now, I think except him. Then <sup>Bentz's</sup> Vince's father,  
10 yeah. We had the old store just across the  
11 tracks on North Ninth, right on that corner, B.  
12 <sup>Bentz</sup> Vances had it and then his son, we called him  
13 Gus, I forget what his name was, he had it until  
14 his death, oh, ten, 12 years ago and then  
15 Charlie Dodge, he was in there, wasn't he? He  
16 run a meat and grocery store down there.

17 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
18 discussion was had after which  
19 the following:)

20 A. Well, Oscar <sup>Bentz</sup> Vance that lives now in the  
21 700 block of Highland about two or three houses  
22 on that side of the street was the cousin of  
23 these others, and of course, this was in later  
24 years. Well, it was when I was working for  
25 Lee's, but this other was way back early. And

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1 Oscar <sup>Bentz</sup>Vance run a meat market right across  
2 catty-wampus from Lee's; there's an old frame  
3 building there and he was in there many years  
4 and done real well, retired wealthy. And Oscar  
5 now is about 83 or four, along in there. And of  
6 course, he wasn't there in the early days, but  
7 the <sup>Bentz</sup>Vances were. <sup>Bentz</sup>Vances were there in 1903,  
8 four, five along there, up to ten. But Oscar  
9 was down there, can you think of anybody else?  
10 Of course, the old Lamar Hotel was on the corner,  
11 do you remember that? It was on the corner with  
12 the Clayton, there's a big whole there now.  
13 Clayton up there. And across the street from  
14 the bus station was a candy factory and a plate  
15 glass window in the candy factory, if you got  
16 just so the sun hit it right in the afternoon,  
17 it had been scraped off many years ago, but it  
18 said J.C. Stevens, Wholesaler Liquors. Of  
19 course, that was a long time ago because the dry  
20 law hit Kansas, oh, way early in the century and  
21 it was against the law for liquor of any kind to  
22 be here. Well, of course, he went out of  
23 business. Then Bob Kimball or Bob's father  
24 started the candy factory. It was a four story  
25 deal right there on the corner.

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1 Q. When did he start that candy factory  
2 about?

3 A. Well, was the candy factory here when  
4 you come to town over on that corner? It was.  
5 She came here in 1913.

6 MRS. HAGLER: No, 1910.

7 A. No, you came here in 1913. You sure  
8 did. Well, maybe 1910. Well, that candy  
9 factory was built between 1910 and '13 and stood  
10 there, well, the bottom part of it yet is the  
11 old original candy factory, but they took the  
12 three stories off up above. Then the Kimballs  
13 all died and the candy factory quit. That was  
14 one of the old timers. I believe it stood empty  
15 for quite a while.

16 Q. The very early years we're talking  
17 about, let's talk 1913 and before that, do you  
18 remember, how about the farming community, did  
19 they come in any night, any given night to shop?

20 A. All the stores were open all the time.  
21 10:00 at night. And on North Fifth Street at  
22 113 where my Daddy had a coal yard, right north  
23 of him was a feedyard. That's what it was  
24 called, it was a big tin deal. The farmers  
25 would drive their horses to town and put them in

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1 the feedyard, they could unhitch them from the  
2 wagon if you wanted to and feed them and leave  
3 them in this feedyard until you was ready to go  
4 home and you come and hitched up and went on  
5 home. But farmers came to town. Saturday was  
6 the big day, of course. The barber shops were  
7 open until after midnight on Saturday night.  
8 But almost all groceries, maybe not the one on  
9 East Iron, but the uptown groceries were open  
10 every night for the people that came in later.  
11 But it was almost all, well, as I remember it  
12 when I was small, it was all horses. You can  
13 remember when all the delivery wagons were  
14 horses. And everybody delivered and a kid used  
15 to hook on to the back of the wagons with the  
16 sled and once in a while got their rope caught  
17 and couldn't get it and chase it for three miles.  
18 And then it gradually changed, I would say when  
19 I went down to Lee's, the old fellow that had  
20 the old Smith former truck with the Ford or the  
21 Ford with the chain drive to the back wheels.  
22 That was the only truck there was when I went  
23 there in 1916. Or '17, I guess it was. Well,  
24 anyhow, that was the only truck. The rest of  
25 them were horses. They had one three-horse team,

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1 one, four-horse team and a lot of two-horse  
2 teams for wagons and they hauled it. At first,  
3 had to haul the way down on North Ninth Street  
4 to Union Pacific people depot then the Union  
5 Pacific built one over here on Ash and Third  
6 where it sits now. And it was there long enough  
7 that we used to haul stuff from Lee's in 1928  
8 over to this one. John Buddenpole drove the  
9 three horse wagon. That was all transferred  
10 from the grocery house over to the depot and  
11 unloaded to put on the cars to go. Because you  
12 had L.C. Littowiches local freight at that time.  
13 Now there is L.C. any more. You can't ship L.C.  
14 on the railroad. They've got a piggy back deal  
15 now where they deliver it from. But if you  
16 don't have car load lots, it goes by these  
17 trucks, and, but, at that time you could load  
18 from here to Hays or Ellis all in one car and  
19 the train would stop at every station and unload.  
20 And her father spent 50 years on the railroad  
21 and her brother over 50 years. They were both  
22 engineers.

23 Q. Now what about carnivals or festivals,  
24 did the community ever come together?

25 A. We had what we called chautauquas, I

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1 don't know whether you ever heard of them or not.  
2 They were held in Oakdale Park, and while it had  
3 to be under a tent because they had nothing, and  
4 a lady that lived here a long time ago by the  
5 name of Claflin donated enough money to build a  
6 great big pavilion, Claflin Hall. And she built  
7 it over there, no floor in it, just the sides  
8 and the sand and just the top on it. And the  
9 old chautauquas were held here every year. And  
10 we got, oh, we got the pick of the crop. We had  
11 William Jennings Bryan and we had Colonel  
12 Funston when he came down here to the post. And  
13 we had John Philip Sousa several different times.  
14 And we had the top of entertainment at that  
15 chautauqua. Of course, there were little  
16 carnivals that come and went just privately  
17 operated. But that was the big deal and, boy,  
18 we used -- they used to put up tents and camp  
19 there the whole week of the chautauqua. And  
20 that was a big deal, that was. When the old  
21 convention haul was up, I used to be a stage  
22 hand and work in my younger years. Charlie  
23 Hagler was a electrician. We had grand opera  
24 then, oh, almost once a year, the bigger  
25 companies.

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1 Q. Where was this convention hall, what  
2 time period are we talking about now?

3 A. Well, it's on the corner of Walnut and  
4 Santa Fe, which was the old Nysner Store, that's  
5 where it set. And I can't tell you when it was  
6 built. It was built by the United Commercial  
7 Travelers because it was the big shield up there  
8 that said UTC.

9 MRS. HAGLER: It was here when I  
10 came here.

11 A. Yeah, it must have been built --

12 MRS. HAGLER: It was built before  
13 1910 anyway.

14 A. Well, around that time. Because it  
15 wasn't there when I was going to Central School,  
16 I don't believe, I think it was just built. And  
17 it stayed there until, oh, how long has it been  
18 down? Well, when they built Nysner Store, they  
19 tore it down and built that building that's  
20 there that Nysners moved in. Probably.

21 MRS. HAGLER: I graduated in 1921  
22 and right after that they tore it down. *no about 45-6*

23 A. They tore it down. Well, I'd say '22, '23,  
24 they tore it down.

25 Q. Now the chautauqua and the central

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1 opera house were --

2 A. Separate, the operas were held in the  
3 convention hall. One of them I think in the old  
4 museum, where the United Life Building stands  
5 now, I believe one there. But the majority of  
6 grand operas, all I remember because I worked, I  
7 was a stage hand, electrician, and was in the  
8 convention hall. Not at the chautauqua. The  
9 chautauqua was a summertime proposition, was  
10 held outdoors and the grand opera was generally  
11 in the winter in the convention hall.

12 Q. This was all in the early years?

13 A. Oh, yeah, yeah. That was, chautauqua  
14 was.

15 MRS. HAGLER: They had an open air  
16 dome that we used to have. The new theatre was  
17 built in that place.

18 A. No, no. The old air dome was on the  
19 corner of 7th and Ash, right over on the corner  
20 there, right -- that was the old air dome. And  
21 it was whole big seating outdoors and a dome  
22 over the stage and traveling companies would  
23 come here, show companies of all kinds, put on  
24 their shows there all through the summer and it  
25 was called the air dome and you could see drama.

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1 I never saw a movie there. It was all plays  
2 that I saw there.

3 Q. Now as a stage hand, do you remember --  
4 do you have any incidents with any of the cast?

5 A. You shut this off. I don't want this  
6 on there.

7 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
8 discussion was had, after which  
9 the following:)

10 A. The shows that came to convention hall  
11 in the early days was Rudy Valle and she was  
12 with Rudy Valle show by the way. And I remember  
13 Ginger Rogers and her mother, I conversed with  
14 both of them and had quite a visit with them.  
15 Supposedly, at that time she was 13 years old.  
16 She must have been older because there isn't  
17 that much difference between her age and mine.  
18 Because I wasn't married at that time. And  
19 anyhow they was real nice people. And then the  
20 all girl orchestra, I don't know whether people  
21 remember that or not.

22 Q. Phil Spatowney?

23 A. Phil Spatowney was there with his girls.  
24 And we had grand opera four or five years. We  
25 had some of the best shows on the road and we

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1 had vaudeville, too, and some of the head liners  
2 in later years were a lot of the people that  
3 came through there. And that was a very  
4 enjoyable part of my life. Show business is in  
5 different forms has been part of my life all the  
6 time.

7 Q. You had the chautauqua, you had the air  
8 dome, you had convention hall; were all these  
9 well attended?

10 A. Very much so. Very much so. And the  
11 only time that we got to see anything out, out  
12 of the travel log was Lyman H. Howe. Lyman H.  
13 Howe Travel Log came to convention hall once a  
14 year. I took you right after we were married,  
15 don't you remember? The travel log of different  
16 countries? That was prior to 1921, that's when  
17 we were married. And then the controversial  
18 shows that came, the Birth of a Nation stirred  
19 up quite a thing.

20 MRS. HAGLER: That was a movie at  
21 the convention hall movie theatre?

22 A. Lyman H. Howe was movies, that travel  
23 log movie. And while it was rated great in  
24 those days and was a great production.

25 Q. What did the folks think of Birth of a

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1 Nation?

2 A. Very much divided. Very much divided.  
3 Of course, our minority groups at that time were  
4 not near as large as they are now. But of  
5 course, they were probably against it. But it  
6 was a great production. Did you ever see it?  
7 It was a great production. But naturally the  
8 minority groups and the southerners were very,  
9 very much against it. And what was another  
10 great one in that time? Birth of a Nation,  
11 Lyman H. Howe? Can't you remember something  
12 that we went to there?

13 MRS. HAGLER: No.

14 A. And then we had organized baseball here  
15 back in...

16 Q. How far back did that go?

17 A. Organized baseball?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. Oh, her dad died in 1915 and he died at  
20 a baseball game and I'd say it went back 15  
21 years from that.

22 Q. About 1935 then?

23 A. No, her dad died in 1915.

24 MRS. HAGLER: The Bluejays, that  
25 was it?

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1           A.     Yeah, that's who he was watching when  
2 he died.

3                   MRS. HAGLER:   The Bluejays?

4           A.     The Bluejays, yeah. And we had the  
5 Millers and the Bluejays and, it started North  
6 Central Kansas League and it got to be something  
7 else. Jake Smith that runs the clothing store  
8 here and Bert Lamb was the two last guys that  
9 owned and managed the last organized baseball  
10 here. And that's been, well, this is '75, it's  
11 been 24 or five years ago. Her dad went to the  
12 baseball game and he didn't come home after the  
13 baseball game. He had a Chevrolet, small car.

14           Q.     Now when you were a young boy, was one  
15 of the sports that was played, did they play  
16 baseball?

17           A.     That was the main deal. Football was  
18 in some schools. I never saw a high school  
19 football game because it was played in 1910 to '16,  
20 but on a limited basis. But baseball was --  
21 there was many leagues of different kinds  
22 through here and professional, nonprofessional  
23 team. One of the teams we always waited every  
24 year for them to come was called the House of  
25 David, Religious Sect Organization. All the

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1 guys had to wear beards. And I forgot who it is  
2 now, Joe Garjola was telling us about it, one of  
3 the people that's in organized ball now couldn't  
4 grow a beard, so he got a false one and come out  
5 in that darned ballgame, but the House of David  
6 boys were all bearded and at that time as good  
7 as any professional team in the business. They  
8 were wonderful. Then the colored baseball at  
9 that time was the Kansas City...

10 Q. The Monarchs?

11 A. Kansas City Monarchs, was the chief  
12 colored baseball team in the nation and had they  
13 been allowed to, they could have beat a lot of  
14 major league teams at that time. They weren't  
15 permitted to.

16 Q. How long ago was that?

17 A. Well, when did Jackie Robinson come in  
18 baseball? It was just a few years -- of course  
19 Jackie Robinson was the first colored man in  
20 baseball.

21 Q. Well, then we'd be talking about the  
22 1930's.

23 A. Yeah, Satchel Page finally got to pitch  
24 for one or two major league teams before he got  
25 where he couldn't and nobody knew how old

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1 Satchel was because he's always 42, him and Jack  
2 Benny. Jack was 39 and Satchel was 42. But he  
3 got in the majors after, but I would say the  
4 Kansas City Monarchs were dissolved in the early '30's.

5 Q. You were married when the money crisis  
6 hit and times were hard. Could you tell us a  
7 little bit about that?

8 A. She'll cry and so will I. Well, it was  
9 terrible. We owned -- shall I tell it or shall  
10 I not? We owned a house on South Penn,  
11 mortgaged of course, heavy. And the crash hit.  
12 I didn't have a job, we couldn't hardly eat. I  
13 couldn't pay for the house. We had it in what  
14 was called the HOLC, Home Owners Loan  
15 Corporation. Naturally if you couldn't pay for  
16 it, you had to give it back. But when we gave  
17 it back, they come along with an \$1,800.00  
18 deficiency judgement. The house sold for  
19 \$1,800.00 less than we had, the mortgage was.  
20 So here they come with that \$1,800.00 deficiency  
21 judgement. So if you got a job they'd slap it  
22 on you and you'd lose your job. Well, that got  
23 to be bad and they got to closing the farmers  
24 out. All around here and just stealing their  
25 farms from them. Farmers got shot guns.

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Q. What year was this?

A. Well it happened in '29, and I'd say '29 or '30.

MRS. HAGLER: Oh, it was later than that.

A. That's when the crash hit, yeah.

MRS. HAGLER: Yeah, but that was later than that. You were working for W.O. Anderson?

A. No, no.

MRS. HAGLER: Wasn't that?

A. When the crash, huh-uh. Anyhow, the crash hit in '29. It was shortly after that say 18 months after that would be the middle, around '31 maybe, '30 to '31. Well, and then Franklin D., well before that, they took these farms here by the dozen. Kicked them right out. Of course after that got started the farmers took shot guns and if you come out there to sell them out you just was dead, that's all. They didn't want to let you do that. So Franklin D. Roosevelt, when he got in, said that foolishness has got to stop. We will not permit any more of that. If you take a man's home and his farm or his farm, that pays the bill. Forget about those

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1 deficiency judgements and they took our  
2 deficiency judgement and we didn't have to pay  
3 it. Of course, we didn't have the house any  
4 longer. But we weren't stuck with that. Why  
5 I'd have been many years paying that thing off,  
6 because you get a job and they come along with  
7 that detachment, why you'd lose your job. And,  
8 but people, I've got a son-in-law that's the  
9 most radical Republican I've ever met and he  
10 thinks that all Democrats should be shot in the  
11 morning, including me, and he thinks Roosevelt  
12 was terrible and he has an older brother out on  
13 the coast that changed from Republican to  
14 Democrat and he's sure mad at him, he's really  
15 mad. But the Democrats are the people that  
16 saved us.

17 Q. What did you do as a married couple?  
18 Did you have a family by that time?

19 A. No, our daughter was --

20 MRS. HAGLER: Yes, Jolene was born  
21 in 1925.

22 A. 1925, January 17, 1925, yeah, we had a  
23 family. It was tough sledding. But that was  
24 really -- but a lot of guys, oh, they sold some  
25 of those farms for deficiency judgement for five

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1 or six thousand dollars. A man could have never  
2 paid it back. And, but --

3 MRS. HAGLER: In 1929, you were  
4 working for Ridenour Bakers.

5 A. No, I wasn't. Think hard now.

6 MRS. HAGLER: Well, for Lee's then.

7 A. No, the one in between. Kellogg's out  
8 of Battle Creek, I left Lee's in '28 and went  
9 right with Kellogg's out of Battle Creek.

10 MRS. HAGLER: You were with them  
11 for quite a while.

12 A. And then Ridenour Baker after that, but  
13 in there I was with Kellogg. But I was out of a  
14 job a long time, you know that, a long time I  
15 didn't work. Because when 12:00 come, it just  
16 meant 12:00, it didn't mean noon. And the  
17 fellows, they put them to work digging ditches  
18 and everything and we lived on the corner of  
19 Johnstown and Columbia for a while and at noon  
20 those guys would open a sack to eat and a lot of  
21 them had potato peelings and that is all they  
22 had. Now that's the truth, I saw that right  
23 over there. And then they got so they dished  
24 flour out down at the fire department, the old  
25 fire department, the government sent in, they

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1 got some flour. But times were really rough  
2 then. They were really rough. And then they  
3 eased up. Then when the W.P.A. come on, you  
4 know that meant Work Progress Administration.  
5 They put everybody to work. I got a job with  
6 Saline County driving a truck hauling them out  
7 and back and hauling dirt or whatever was out  
8 there on a dump truck. But I worked for the  
9 county. I was never on W.P.A., never did we  
10 accept any charity. We got some help from our  
11 folks occasionally and not too much of that.  
12 But we never accepted charity from anyone.  
13 Because while I was hauling the charity people  
14 and I was getting paid by the county.

15 Q. The W.P.A. was considered charity?

16 A. Well, they worked. You couldn't  
17 exactly call it charity, no. No, it wasn't  
18 charity. It wasn't charity like some of the  
19 things they're doing now. And, boy, that food  
20 stamp thing is a rip off, that's the worst thing  
21 we've ever had. And, but, they worked. We was  
22 out, oh, we built roads and bridges and I turned  
23 a tractor over in the pond one day but, boy, I  
24 knew it was going and I left her before she went.  
25 I had a fresh fill, I was coming out and I had a

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1 small tractor with a scoop and a pull rope and I  
2 dumped the scoop and I got over too far to the  
3 edge and I could feel her go. I had to pull it  
4 out of the pond. But the W.P.A. really avoided  
5 a catastrophe among the people out of jobs, I  
6 won't say poverty stricken people, but nobody  
7 had a job. There just wasn't any jobs. Nobody  
8 could pay you if you worked for them. And then  
9 while the W.P.A. was in existence, I transferred  
10 from the road division of the county to the bind  
11 weed department. I drove a bind weed tractor  
12 for many years covering bind weed and getting  
13 rid of it. It overrun in this county at one  
14 time. And then I went from there, form the  
15 county to the post office.

16 Q. Tell me about how you got started with  
17 the post office. You have been a mailman a long  
18 time then, haven't you?

19 A. I started in '42 and left in '65.

20 Mrs. Hagler: You took an  
21 examination?

22 A. In 1938. It was that long and then I  
23 had to take another one. The time -- what do  
24 you call it -- oh, you know when, oh, what do  
25 you call it nowadays? When something's beyond

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1 that. Well anyhow, I took it in '38, but I was  
2 400th down or something because 4,000 took it  
3 and so then.

4 Mrs. Hagler: Then when the war  
5 started?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Mrs. Hagler: When the war  
8 started you became hired?

9 A. Yeah. Then I was with the county and  
10 the bindweed department when the war hit.

11 Mrs. Hagler: And they still had  
12 your name, they called you then, the Civil  
13 Service called you?

14 A. Pafford stopped by our house on the  
15 corner of Iron and Ohio that night, don't you  
16 remember? He was the postmaster. He said we're  
17 going to give another examination and we want  
18 the people on the other list that didn't have a  
19 chance to get in there and take it. I did and  
20 passed it. And then as the war hit, I got hired  
21 and then she got hired. She spent four years in  
22 the post office.

23 MRS. HAGLER: That was in the  
24 forties.

25 A. '42 or three. Yeah, along in there.

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1 Well anyhow, you started when the war started.  
2 You left when the war quit. You were there a  
3 long time. Then I stayed in the post office  
4 from either the latter part of '41 to '45 and  
5 then I retired.

6 MRS. HAGLER: We worked inside the  
7 post office.

8 A. I was in there, I carried mail for  
9 about 14 years, 13 or 14. I started work for  
10 the post office in its present location in June  
11 or in May of '42. And the war came on and Post  
12 Offices were built in Camp Phillips and at that  
13 time the Smoky Hill Air Base. James B. Clark  
14 who lives at 437 South Ninth opened the post  
15 office in Camp Phillips and there were two there  
16 at that time. The main one and the one we had.  
17 I went out with Jim. We were located right near  
18 the telephone company on the corner. And I was  
19 in that post office till it was discontinued and  
20 then transferred for a short time to the air  
21 base post office and then it was put on a  
22 permanent basis at the air base and then I came  
23 in to this office and finished my years in here.  
24 And carried mail from 1955 or 1954. I carried  
25 mail from 1954 to 1965 out on the route. I

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1 wasn't in the office any more.

2 Q. Where was your route?

3 A. Well, the swing route is, you have five.  
4 A man works five days a week and you carry mail  
5 six, so you were allotted five routes and  
6 everyday you carried a different route. Well, I  
7 was swing man for a long time, till 1955, and  
8 the war ended. Well, I swung on everything.  
9 Then this route right here was up for bid and I  
10 had seniority enough to get it and I got it.  
11 And I was on this route until I retired, through  
12 here out the Ohio and back. And I was on that  
13 foot route all those years. And we observed  
14 many interesting experiences on there, on the  
15 Camp Phillips.

16 Q. Why don't you tell me something about  
17 that?

18 A. Right to the west of us was an entire  
19 colored regiment. At that time they were  
20 segregated. They had their own PXs and  
21 everything. They had no association with the  
22 white troops at all. And their PX was right  
23 behind our post office. The PX for the rest of  
24 the base was up farther and was quite a trip, so  
25 they invited us over there and we -- everything

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1 we wanted we got from there. And by the way,  
2 when the rationing was on, I had to get every  
3 ticket that we had to have for shoes, sugar,  
4 gasoline and everything through them out there.  
5 I couldn't come to town and get it. Now why,  
6 but we had to do that. Well, one day Jim and I  
7 run out of gasoline tickets, so I went up to the  
8 HQ and said to the girls, "I have to have some  
9 gas tickets," and she said "well, you boys use  
10 too much gasoline, you can't have any more." I  
11 said, "Okay, that's all right." So I went back  
12 and we called up general headquarters and we got  
13 through to the general and we said, "there won't  
14 be any post office here tomorrow morning, it  
15 will be closed." He said, "why." And I said, "that  
16 girl over there has refused us gasoline tickets  
17 and we're not going to walk." He said, "get  
18 back over there right now." And I got enough  
19 gas tickets in both hands to last until the war  
20 was over. And we could go anywhere we wanted to.  
21 Boy, I guess he really tore into her. And we  
22 had one more incident of that. Something  
23 happened on the base, they weren't going to let  
24 any more cars in the base. Well, our post  
25 office was two miles away. We went up one

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1 morning, and the guard said put your cars here  
2 at the fence and walk on in and we said fooley on  
3 you, so we got in the car and come back to town  
4 and told our postmaster about that and he got on  
5 the phone and he come out and said get in your  
6 cars and go back out. And the guard said, "go  
7 on by, go on by." Drove right into the post  
8 office. But if I wanted a pair of shoes, I had  
9 to get tickets out there for them. And all the  
10 sugar and meat we got and everything come  
11 through the military. We never, her and I never  
12 had civilian ration tickets of any kind. Now  
13 why that was worked that way, I don't know. But  
14 it turned out better for us cause I know if you  
15 had that kind of trouble up here you'd have had  
16 a lot to go through. But all we had to do tell  
17 them out there that there wouldn't be any post  
18 office and there was. We never missed a minute,  
19 never missed a minute. And we were right on the  
20 west side, our work room really faced the west  
21 with the windows around here, but the sun come  
22 in here something terrible and Jim said, "can't  
23 we build some awnings on there?" I said, "yeah,  
24 let's do." So we scrounged around and got some  
25 lumber, I'll tell about that later and we built

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1 awnings on those windows. One day a guy with  
2 gold braid from his head to his foot come in and  
3 he said, "you'll have to get them awnings down."  
4 Jim said, "if you want them awnings down, you  
5 just go take them down yourself. Because we're  
6 running this Post Office, you're not, and we  
7 can't stand that heat and if you want them down  
8 you take them down and we won't guarantee you'll  
9 have a Post Office after that." Never heard  
10 another word about it. There were awnings there  
11 when the camp closed. There was a lot of vacant  
12 barracks across the street and they had wooden  
13 sidewalks every place. And oh, we were without  
14 fuel there for a long time, we pretty near froze  
15 to the death, Jim and I did. And one day a guy  
16 come in. He'd say, "somebody's taken our wooden  
17 sidewalks," he said, "you guys are here all the  
18 time looking across there." He said, "who took  
19 them?" We said, "we don't know who took the  
20 sidewalks, we don't know anything about it."  
21 And right behind us was a Catholic Church or a --  
22 yeah, it was at Catholic Church. And but our  
23 deal was with the priest, if you remember and we  
24 put our requisition for coal to keep from  
25 freezing to death in our post office. No, you

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1 boys can't have any coal, you will have to go  
2 through uptown or someplace. So we looked  
3 across there and they were dumping coal at that  
4 Catholic Church that you couldn't hardly see the  
5 church. Jim winked at me and I winked at me, so  
6 we gathered up a few nails kegs and we was out  
7 there till 10:00 every night. We accumulated a  
8 coal pile. I guess the pixies must have carried  
9 it over, I don't know, but anyhow we got coal.  
10 And one day a fellow come up to the window, I  
11 noticed a cross on him, he was dressed in a  
12 uniform and he said, "somebody's stealing our  
13 coal, do you know anything about it?" I said  
14 yeah, "I won't lie to you, we are." And he said,  
15 "I was sure you were." And he said, "I can't  
16 blame you because you guys have to wear over  
17 shoes out there in the daytime out there."  
18 Cracks in the floor. He said, "I was pretty  
19 sure that you were taking it." He said, "now  
20 listen don't take any more of it and tomorrow  
21 I'll have you some coal", and we never had any  
22 trouble getting coal. But I didn't lie to him  
23 and he told me he was Father so and so, Chaplin  
24 over there. He said, "you been taking our coal",  
25 and I said, "yeah we've been taking it because

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1 we can't stand here and they won't bring us any  
2 and we got to keep the office open and we  
3 figured if you run out of coal, why, you could  
4 get some more." He said, "yeah, I can. I can  
5 get you some. " And we never got any more  
6 trouble with the coal. And, but, the  
7 experiences were many out there. There's a lot  
8 of them I wouldn't give a dime for and a lot of  
9 them I wouldn't take a million for. But we had  
10 lots and lots of experiences out there. And one  
11 day the soldiers come in our place and lined up  
12 to get a drink and that was something. We had a  
13 fountain there. And that was -- just couldn't  
14 figure it out. And they didn't say nothing.  
15 The line just grew on and Jim and I drank, too.  
16 Pretty soon a guy come around and said, "we have  
17 got to shut your water." We said, "what's the  
18 deal?" He says, "it's contaminated and you'll  
19 all get sick and we all did." Jim and I got  
20 sick and the guys, they shut water off every  
21 other part of the camp and somebody found out  
22 the post office fountain was running and they  
23 just lined up there and I had a sticky feeling  
24 that there must have been something bad about it  
25 and contaminated water. But Jim and I didn't

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1 get enough to hurt us too bad. It made us sick.  
2 But a lot of the soldiers I guess got pretty  
3 sick. And they had to go without water until  
4 they got that filtering plant, it was pumped  
5 from the Smoky Hill River way down east at the  
6 sand company, way over there on the river, and  
7 it was supposed to be purified. Well, it is now.  
8 On South Fifth Street Road now going south  
9 there's a water thing.

10 MRS. HAGLER: It's really Ohio now.

11 A. Is it? Well anyhow, the government put  
12 in that soft water filter plant, the water  
13 problems were done. And boy the things we saw  
14 out there. They had one end of our Post Office  
15 shut off from us, it was a big empty building.  
16 It was to hold court marshals in. And some kid  
17 killed somebody out there and they held his  
18 court marshal in there and sentenced him to  
19 death, but Roosevelt commuted him. He wasn't  
20 hung, but they done it right there in our post  
21 office. But boy, I tell you, one day a fellow  
22 come in and oh, some men couldn't read and write.  
23 They had to have their addresses printed on  
24 their checks and have us address envelopes to  
25 their folks down in Georgia or Alabama or

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1 Louisiana. Most of the colored boys couldn't.  
2 We done a lot of work for them. A guy come in  
3 one day and he had two envelopes. Jim said, "what  
4 you got there?" He said, "well I got a letter  
5 from a sweetheart in this hand, got a letter  
6 from my wife in this hand and I got divorce  
7 proceedings in this letter here." Jimmy said,  
8 "what happened?" He said, "I got my wife's  
9 letter in my sweetheart's envelope and my sweetheart's  
10 letter in my wife's envelope." And that's what  
11 happened, now that's the truth. She remembers  
12 that. And there he was. Oh, he was in a  
13 terrible mess. And a lot of them were master  
14 seargants got on to that check business. And  
15 they would tell these ignorant colored boys that  
16 they would see the check got mailed. Check  
17 never got mailed. They stole it. Oh, they  
18 stole a lot. A lot got prison sentences out of  
19 it and the people kept writing up and wanting to  
20 know why they weren't getting their allotment  
21 checks. These guys that were helping them were  
22 stealing them. But the truth of the fact who  
23 done it, but of course, Jim and I just had to  
24 fix out their envelopes with the guy's X on a  
25 piece of paper in it and seal it, then we would

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1 address the envelopes where he told us to, we  
2 done a lot of that. Boy, it was just unbelievable  
3 the amount of people, of course, that was --  
4 that's been 33, 34 years ago. And I suppose  
5 illiteracy has tamed down since then. But boy  
6 those guys in the south, there wasn't one out of  
7 ten of them that could read. Not one out of ten.  
8 It was an experience there that was really  
9 something. And I never got so cold as I did one  
10 time. Everytime I see Jim, he gets in the  
11 hospital a lot of times, he's got emphysema, I  
12 go over there, he said, "are you still cold?" I  
13 said, "yeah I'm still cold." We went out there  
14 one summer afternoon dressed about like I am now.  
15 And boy a northerner blew up with the snow a  
16 coming and oh, man we didn't have enough clothes  
17 on to light a shotgun, just ordinary clothes and  
18 we started home in Jim's old Ford. Got out on  
19 the Burma Road about halfway in and it quit.  
20 Why I almost froze to death. I tell you I've  
21 never been so cold in my life, since or before.  
22 And everytime I see Jim he says, "you still cold?"  
23 Oh, it was --

24 Q. Your mail route, part of that's gone.

25 Can you tell us?

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1           A.     I had a mail route that started at the  
2 Union Pacific freight house on Second and Ash.  
3 I went, caught the businesses on Second Street  
4 there. Then I came back, went over on Front  
5 Street and went clear north to North and clear  
6 back up to Ash Street bridge and across the  
7 river, and all that now from Elm Street north  
8 clear down to the tracks is gone; it's all urban  
9 renewal, every bit of it. I had 356 houses I  
10 believe in there, all colored and Mexican, and  
11 we still know some awful nice people that lived  
12 there, friends of ours, both Mexican and colored.  
13 A colored lady died here a short time ago. Some  
14 colored folks from up there that moved up the  
15 street here, mention no names being still on  
16 tape, and I knew they were in trouble every  
17 where they went. And this old colored lady that  
18 talked so much of Hazel and our little  
19 granddaughter, we was out one afternoon and our  
20 little granddaughter got terribly sick and we  
21 was right there and I knew Mrs. Gaston so we  
22 just went up there and took Hazel and took Judy  
23 in there. She was only what, a year-and-a-half  
24 old or something, she was little. Well anyhow,  
25 we'd known this old colored lady for many years

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1 and a swell person, her husband retired from the  
2 Union Pacific car cleaner one thing or another,  
3 many years, he's still living. And these people  
4 moved in down the street and this old lady said,  
5 "do those people, called them by name, live down  
6 there," we said, "yeah." She said, honey, "if  
7 you got any gold in your mouth, you keep your  
8 mouth shut because if you don't they'll steal it."  
9 And they are, now they haven't caused us any  
10 trouble. I threatened to cut one's ears off and  
11 nail them on the barn and I've not had any  
12 trouble again. And they don't come up here at  
13 all. We had two little white dogs that both  
14 died, you've seen them, and those kids would  
15 come by here and they'd cross the street with  
16 those dogs inside the fence, wouldn't they?  
17 They were just deathly scared of those dogs.  
18 They wouldn't hurt anybody.

19 Q. What about your mail route, did you  
20 have any experiences in your mail route?

21 A. Oh, boy.

22 Q. You certainly did. Can you tell us  
23 about a few?

24 A. I was going out, I was swinging on the  
25 500 block of South College, oh, it's been more

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1 than 20 years ago. I looked up the street and I  
2 saw the milkman run down off of a porch and he  
3 had a wire basket with milk in it and he just  
4 dropped it and spilled the milk and he jumped in  
5 the truck and took off and I thought, well, boy,  
6 that dog must be bad. I better get my iron rod  
7 out here so I'll know what I'm doing. And I got  
8 up there and I heard something a moaning and a  
9 hollering. A lady was hollering help. She said,  
10 "help me, help me, I'm having a baby" and she  
11 was. So I just went next door, I didn't want  
12 any part of that. So I went next door and got  
13 the lady next door and then called the police  
14 department. She was taken care of all right.  
15 But that -- I saw him later, I said, "what in  
16 the world made you do a silly thing like that?"  
17 I said, "my goodness, that's just nature. She  
18 just misguessed was all." He said, "oh, boy, I  
19 don't know." He said, "I took one look and that  
20 was about it. That was it right there." Boy, I  
21 can just see him throwing that wire basket full  
22 of quarter bottles as he took out of there.  
23 Well, I thought dog because that was the main  
24 thing in my life. Boy, them are all dog bites.  
25 And in 25 years, I had 55 papers signed up where

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1 I went to the doctor to either get sewed up or  
2 something.

3 Q. 55 dog bites?

4 A. 55 dog bites in 25 years. I averaged a  
5 little over two a year. Then I had a lot of  
6 stitches and old Shaffer up there, he used to  
7 get a big kick out of it. He'd rip me open and  
8 take something, I don't know what and pour it in  
9 there and I'd hit the ceiling.

10 MRS. HAGLER: He kept giving these  
11 tetanus shots until he got allergic to it.

12 A. And I'd just go out there, he said, "what's  
13 the matter, are you nervous?" It made me so mad.  
14 But one day he said, "say, you know what," and I  
15 said, "what?" He said, "you're getting bit so  
16 many times, so immune, the next dog bites you,  
17 he's going to die, you ain't." And I've had  
18 about as many dog bites as anybody. And I've  
19 had a few, I put a few of them away, too, about  
20 11 in one year. I had an iron rod about that  
21 big and I could take my sack and use it like a  
22 bull fighter does a cape and I could get them  
23 around there and that's all she wrote then. I  
24 missed one day and hit my leg, though. But I  
25 got back to the post office one day and Carl

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1 Weberg, Postmaster, Assistant Postmaster, said,  
2 "there's a lady in the office wants to see you."  
3 So I went in there. She had a broom, had the  
4 brush part and two parts of the handle in her  
5 hand and she said, "you broke this on my dog."  
6 And I said, "that's exactly what I done." She  
7 said, "I want a new broom." I said, "well, if  
8 you force the issue here with them and make me  
9 buy you a new broom, your dog had no business  
10 being loose. I've got a perfect right to put  
11 the mail in your box and I shouldn't be attacked  
12 while I'm doing it. Now your broom was standing  
13 there and I picked it up and I whacked him over  
14 the head and broke your broom. Now you better  
15 forget it." So she did. And she never come  
16 back again. But then another called up, I don't  
17 know who out on West Grand, "tell the mailman to  
18 come out and bury our dog," she said. I told  
19 Carl, I said, "nothing doing." "I'm not going  
20 out and bury nobody's dog." And he was a Scotty  
21 and come out in the street and got me, not on  
22 her property, on public property. I said, "that  
23 dog attacked me on public property and I hit him  
24 with a brick and he died."

25 Q. So after retiring as a postman, you

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1 worked as a school crossing guard?

2 A. Four years. I was at -- I started in '69  
3 on the corner of Iron Avenue and Wisconsin. The  
4 following year the people, the kids either  
5 finished that school or the people moved away  
6 and as I went ahead, a person left, they  
7 discontinued that crossing and I moved over to  
8 Gypsum and Indiana and I was there three years  
9 until they discontinued all crossmen, crossing  
10 men and established lights. I see some yelling  
11 about it, somebody got hit. Did you see that, a  
12 child got hit the other night out there at one  
13 of them crossing where there was both lights and  
14 flag, but I guess, my kids never disobeyed me,  
15 boy they better not, I'll tell you for sure.  
16 But a lot of the boys were wishy-washy and as  
17 the kids dashed across they dashed across. When  
18 a kid dashed across on me, I got him by the  
19 collar and I marched him right up to the school  
20 and I had a guy up there that could really beat  
21 them, too, and boy they never done that on me  
22 any more. When I said you stay there, they  
23 stayed, because I didn't -- I never got a child  
24 bumped, I never got one hurt in the four years I  
25 was there. But I was nicknamed Iron Pants,

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1 Sergeant Carter and a few other things. But I  
2 never got anyone hurt. Piles of Christmas  
3 presents and they just seemed to think the world  
4 of me but if I said you stay on that crossing,  
5 they stayed and I never -- I pretty near got it  
6 one morning. I thought I'd get fired over it.  
7 I started across and I was facing the east, had  
8 my back to the west and the kids were in front  
9 of me. I had both flags out. All of a sudden  
10 the kids started yelling, holding their hands up  
11 and do like that and I turned around right into  
12 the front of an automobile. She was right up  
13 against me and when I turned around I was up  
14 against the radiator, which she should have  
15 stopped across the street. And boy I laid out  
16 on her because I am that way. I said, "where  
17 did you get your driver's license, Montgomery  
18 Wards?" She said, "I'm going to turn you in for  
19 that." I said, "you just go ahead." I said, "you  
20 just go ahead and you're going to have warrants  
21 against you that you can't pile in the back seat."  
22 I said, "you better just forget it and don't do  
23 it any more." And she forgot it and didn't do  
24 it any more. But boy I'd have sacked her up  
25 because she violated every rule in the book and

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1 pretty near hit me.

2 Q. Ray, you had as many years in Salina as  
3 there are in the 20th century. 75 years?

4 A. I arrived here on the turn of the  
5 century.

6 Q. You've gone through floods and fires.

7 A. Lots of big fires. And sickness and  
8 droughts. Hard times pretty near finished me.

9 MRS. HAGLER: Dust storms.

10 Q. What about the dust storms?

11 A. Out by Roosevelt school, we couldn't  
12 hardly find our way back home from the school up  
13 there. Man, I tell you, it was something. It  
14 was just unbelievable, that's all. You might be  
15 interested in this. He stayed with me till he  
16 died over here on Oakdale Avenue. There was  
17 nobody bothered me when he was there, I'll tell  
18 you for sure.

19 Q. That was the dog that followed you on  
20 your mail route?

21 A. Always.

22 MRS. HAGLER: The dog had a heart  
23 attack.

24 A. No, strychnine.

25 MRS. HAGLER: Oh, he acted like

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1 he had a heart attack.

2 A. I know he did. I'm going through these  
3 pictures here. I'll let you see them pretty  
4 soon. This actually happened. I'm trying to  
5 find the dust storm picture.

6 Q. These are pictures from?

7 A. Out in Western Kansas.

8 (WHEREUPON an off the record  
9 discussion was had after which  
10 the following:)

11 A. I don't know where these dust storm  
12 pictures are. Here's our fellows when they were  
13 little. They're both married and have children  
14 now. I can't think where in the world those --  
15 I had them someplace. Out around Scott City and  
16 out through there it was just perfectly black.

17 Q. What was it like here in Salina?

18 A. Well, like I tell you, this is the  
19 truth, it started up and she said you better go  
20 down and get Shirley Mae there at the school and  
21 when I got down there it hit and we couldn't  
22 hardly see to walk from Oakdale School to 229  
23 South Penn. And I was out to Hays one day, I  
24 was traveling out there and the old Brunswick  
25 Hotel was on South Main Street and we sat in the

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1 lobby of that hotel and there was a Standard Oil  
2 filling station across the street and we  
3 couldn't see the Standard Oil filling station  
4 all that day. And we had to put cloths over the  
5 tables in the dining room and reach underneath  
6 and the air and they had it shut up and  
7 everything, the air was so full of dirt.

8 MRS. HAGLER: The dust was so bad  
9 in the house don't you know, we would turn on  
10 the electric light and it was just dim.

11 A. Just dim and you couldn't keep it out.  
12 There wasn't anyway to keep it out. And if you  
13 drove your car at all during that you had to  
14 take a wet towel and tie it over the air cleaner.  
15 You couldn't go very far because pretty soon it  
16 would all mat up and shut off your air and the  
17 engine would quit and then you would have to get  
18 out and either wash it off or take it off or  
19 something like that. And it's unbelievable  
20 that's the reason I would like to have you see  
21 these pictures. I don't know, but it showed  
22 that dust coming in and it was just black like  
23 midnight, just exactly like that. And I just  
24 got Shirley Mae home and the thing hit and if I  
25 hadn't done that I don't know what we would have

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1 done. Oh, I'd have stayed here and found her of  
2 course. But man, I'm telling you, people that  
3 were not here at that time have no conception of  
4 the terrible and the disaster of the thing.  
5 Many many places in Western Kansas that there  
6 used to be post fences and wire fences, all gone.  
7 Just drifted straight across at the mound and  
8 you couldn't see fences for miles. And of  
9 course my merchants all went broke and the job  
10 blowed up and it was sure terrible, I'll tell  
11 you. But in a way, we brought it on ourselves  
12 because that was all pasture land at one time,  
13 all grazing country. Great cattle country. And  
14 wheat went up from 25 cents a bushel to \$2.00.  
15 Well everybody wanted to get rich overnight. So  
16 they brought in the plows from every where and  
17 they plowed up all that grass. And that's when  
18 it happened. The terrific winds come and just --  
19 and now of course our pasture lands are mostly  
20 back to grass now. A lot of wheat land of  
21 course. But not in the proportion it was at  
22 that time. Oh, just looking back over the  
23 things. She can remember same as I do. We had  
24 a lot of good times, we knew a lot of good folks  
25 and all that. But the guys think they're having

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1 a tough time now, foohey. I'm glad he's going  
2 to change the food stamp deal. The people with  
3 low income should get the food stamps, that's  
4 what they should get. But here, if your in debt  
5 up to your eyebrows and making eight to ten  
6 thousand dollars a year, you can get food stamps.  
7 If you get a very low income and you don't owe anybody  
8 or interest to the banks or rent or anything,  
9 you don't get them. It's just too bad buster,  
10 you can't have any and that isn't right. That  
11 is not right.

12 Q. Ray, you're 75 years in Salina and how  
13 would you sum up all of it, would you change  
14 anything of all that's happened to you?

15 A. Well, I would have tried to made it  
16 easier on my parents when I was young, if I  
17 could. I worked. I never indulged in athletics  
18 or anything. I was working when I was in school  
19 and I worked when I got out of school and I  
20 worked during the noon hours delivering packages.  
21 And I'm not hollering or blaming anybody,  
22 because my father was practically blind. But I  
23 really was the main source of livelihood  
24 from ten years old on. If I could change it, I  
25 would change it so my folks wouldn't have such a

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1 hard time. I got by all right. I always get by.  
2 I watch out for me first, as you probably know  
3 and so does she. And her with me, of course.  
4 But I would have liked to have it had things so  
5 it wouldn't have been quite so tough. And there  
6 were kids that went to college from here when I  
7 was young, of course that was a no-no for me.  
8 And I didn't get to finish high school because  
9 the war came along and had to quit then. But  
10 all in all, I wouldn't trade Salina, Kansas for  
11 anything, anything on earth, I don't think. I  
12 think it's great.

13 Q. Thank you Ray.

14 A. I think it's great.  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25