

VOICES OF LANSING: AN ORAL HISTORY

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Lansing, Michigan

HENRY A. RENIGER

Transcript of an Oral History Interview

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Henry A. (Hank) Reniger, Jr.

## PREFACE

This transcript is the product of an interview conducted July 3, 1990, for the Lansing Public Library Oral History Project, by Geneva Kebler Wiskemann.

Signed, dated agreements of release and biographical information accompany the original cassette.

Transcribed by Patricia Siggers  
Lansing, Michigan

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VOICES OF LANSING  
Oral History Project

10 HENRY A. RENIGER, JR.

12 HR: I'm a deviate when it comes to machinery like this.

GW: You, -- a deviate? < Laughter >

14 HR: I'm at a total loss here. We've got a VCR at home.  
I spent two years figuring out how to get the thing  
16 to flashing the time. Damned if I can even get it to  
do anything else.

18 GW: Oh, I love that!

HR: I can't even set the clock, so the clock --

20 GW: Well, but you can do other things, though, Hank.

HR: It's kind of like Shirl's grandfather, though; never  
22 could trust anything but the horse, on the farm. So  
you and I are at that same transition in life, but  
24 it's unusual.

GW: This is Tuesday, July 3rd, 1990, and it's a hot day;  
26 hot and humid out there, Hank -- even in here. I'm  
with Hank Reniger (Henry A., Jr.) What's the "A"  
28 stand for, Hank?

HR: Austin.

30 GW: Austin? Was that a family name?

HR: No, that came after one of our chief political  
32 officers of the State of Michigan at the time, which  
was back in the early twenties. Everybody in our  
34 family has had a name -- My dad also had Austin, of  
course, so that would have been the pickup back in  
36 the 1890's.

GW: That's interesting. Today, Hank, we're going to be  
38 talking just about (if we could stick to our agenda)  
on the Reniger Construction Company, which back in  
40 1989 was given a certificate as a Centennial Michigan  
Business?

42 HR: Yes.

GW: And you got Reniger Construction Day that year, I  
44 think in June, from the City of Lansing. Other  
people are going to be interviewing you because of  
46 your broad associations with the community, so let's  
think today just about your life in the Company.  
48 I've been to the library, the public library, where  
you deposited so much of your material with the  
50 Historical Society of Greater Lansing that has their  
holdings there; so I know a little bit about your  
52 company, and I've heard about Reniger as long as I've  
been around this Greater Lansing area. You were a  
54 long family of builders.

HR: Yes.

56 GW: Your family started in --

HR: Grandfather actually started back in 1895, in the  
58 town of Olivet. We have here in the archives, for  
example, the first big home of Olivet, Michigan, that  
60 Grandfather designed and built, that had indoor  
plumbing complete with a bathtub (running water).  
62 The house was moved -- (It's still in existence,  
still standing; it's used as a large apartment house  
64 in Olivet today) -- when they expanded the campus.

A little sidelight there to construction is that  
66 back at the turn of the century, the builder was the  
architect and the engineer. There was no such thing  
68 as an engineering profession, or an architect, as you  
know him today.

70 GW: He was a builder-architect by experience.

HR: The best thing I could say is that Thomas Jefferson,  
72 George Washington -- all of their histories that you  
run across -- you'll find that they are all Master  
74 Builders. That meant that they were an architect,  
engineer, and builder.

76 GW: They did it all.

HR: Right, and it was only from 1910 on, that they have  
78 created what we call the -- what we call -- monopoly  
of the engineering profession, where they went off  
80 and set up their own profession. Then it was

(believe it or not) in the years of the Depression  
82 before we ever really got solidified with the  
architects' profession. You see, they're all very  
84 new, and of course you know, with Ruth down at the  
Engineers Museum --

86 GW: Ruth Armitage, that runs the Michigan Surveying  
Museum.

88 HR: Right. That was also -- Well, basically, Max  
Reniger (my uncle) graduated from U of M back in the  
90 early twenties as an engineer and also as a surveyor.  
Now if a person graduates as a civil engineer, he  
92 automatically is a land surveyor, because that's the  
first step.

94 Usually today, -- if you remember when we had  
Bill Berryman (remember Berryman that used to be the  
96 County Surveyor?) They would usually become a  
surveyor somewhere while they were still going to  
98 school before they got their degrees in Engineering,  
to the final state of it. So this is why today  
100 things are so changed from what I grew up with.

GW: Your grandfather was Orea? Is that the way you said  
102 that, O-r-e-a?

HR: Orea, or Orrie. In fact, it was the basic history,  
104 that I'm using in some parts here: It was Doug

Reniger's wife, Gerry Jacklin Reniger, who has put  
106 together both the Reniger and the Messenger books.

GW: Your grandmother was a --

108 HR: No, the Jacklin was Doug Reniger's wife. That's  
Max's daughter-in-law.

110 GW: Max was your uncle.

HR: Yes. This book right here is the one that she did on  
112 the Messengers, and that's the same book on the  
Renigers.

114 GW: Oh, so you have two genealogies published?

HR: Yes, that she has been the author of.

116 GW: And Doug's relation to you is --

HR: Cousin.

118 GW: He's Max's boy.

HR: Right, and he's the owner of Douglas Steel today.

120 GW: So you kind of kept it in the family, didn't you,  
Hank?

122 HR: Right, and he's -- Today we kid, because he's  
retired, and all they're doing is running up and down  
124 the Mississippi and the Missouri and the others, and  
they're on a houseboat; where the rest of us stay  
126 around here and try to grub history out.

< Laughter >

128 GW: Your grandfather was O. J., and then Henry, and then  
Henry A. I noted in the material at the library that  
130 you started working in the business at sixteen?

HR: Actually, I started working at age eight, sorting  
132 nails. You've got to remember now, those of our age  
vintage -- (I love to use the word "vintage"; because  
134 it's prime, you know, to me.) -- We were allowed, if  
you worked for your father, you could start work at  
136 any age that was safe. This is why many farm kids  
were actually on the farm tractor at age eight or  
138 nine. If you were brought up on a farm, you know  
exactly what I mean.

140 Our yards; we owned all the property on  
Pennsylvania Avenue where Hadaco Drive and all that  
142 area is now, and oh, about two city blocks in there  
all along the railroad. Reniger Yards; and that's  
144 all in the book there, all those pictures.

GW: I saw that there.

146 HR: We had our own sidings in there that would hold eight  
to twelve railroad cars.

148 GW: Someday, Hank, we ought to sit down with a tape  
recorder and look at those pictures, and have you  
150 talk about those pictures.

HR: We could put it on a video type. Back here I've got  
152 -- I'll just show you one so you've got an idea,



because you've probably seen them before and  
154 forgotten all about them. I'm offering all of the  
pictures to East Lansing and to Lansing, like your  
156 two groups. Let them fight over who gets which  
pictures of all the work.

158 GW: What is this volume of pictures that you've brought  
in from your back room?

160 HR: This is the Civic Center and many, many other  
buildings.

162 GW: This is a volume at least two inches thick of glossy  
8 X 10 prints by Leavenworth Photo.

164 HR: I've got about eight or ten of those.

GW: My, the Leavenworth's took pictures of everything.

166 HR: And then they lost everything in that big flood back  
in the sixties, you remember.

168 GW: They lost a lot.

HR: Yes, and they came over here and used all of mine in  
170 order to rephotograph, to replenish their supply.

GW: Now your ten volumes of these photographs are  
172 duplicates, or are they -- ?

HR: These are the originals.

174 GW: These are the originals, but the ten volumes; do they  
dup -- or are they just one -- ?

176 HR: No, no. They're all different.

GW: All different?

178 HR: Yes. All I can tell you is I've got to have somebody  
go through them, because they're so screwed up. See,  
180 there's all those on the Civic Center construction.

GW: Oh, my word, Hank!

182 HR: You're talking my life! This is what I'm saying, is  
that from the day that I was born, I was climbing the  
184 caissons of the Hotel Olds -- of the Bank of Lansing  
Building. And of all my awards that I've received in  
186 my lifetime, my dad received, Grandfather -- that  
you're talking the life of three people, in the sense  
188 of it's all photographed.

I've got the complete construction of Eastern  
190 High School, Pattengill, Walter French, West Junior;  
all of them.

192 GW: You've got a wonderful family archive and corporate  
archive here.

194 HR: Yes, and there's no one in my family that's going to  
be around. They're all gone.

196 GW: Did you have children, Hank?

HR: Yes, I've got two in California and one in Maine.  
198 They want nothing to do with Michigan. They call it  
the Rust Belt. They're all out where they can make a  
200 decent living, you know, which you can't blame them.

Now what have we got here?

202 GW: That's Pattengill Junior High School.

HR: This is all the construction way back --

204 GW: From the bare ground up. Isn't that something?

HR: See, this is why I want them to be somewhere where  
206 they're safe, and it's no place but the Archives for  
them, in both towns.

208 GW: I think the State Archives is your best place.

HR: This is what I want you people over there to tell,  
210 because we'll put it wherever. That's the old  
Reniger Office over on Cedar Street. Incidentally,  
212 the new Lansing Center -- two thirds of it is on  
Reniger property, because at one time Renigers owned  
214 that whole area, as well as all of Mill Street.

< Laughter > That's Verlinden, isn't it?

216 GW: No, this is Olivet School, 1921.

HR: O. K. So many look alike.

218 GW: Oh, Hank, this is a wonderful record!

HR: This is what I mean, is that there's no one else has  
220 it.

GW: And so organized; very few corporations would have  
222 it.

HR: I would say it's because of a loving grandfather and  
224 a father who taught me from the very beginning.

So I've got this all set up, however you want to  
226 give it.

GW: Well, I just thought we'd talk informally. I may  
228 come back again and talk another time.

HR: Oh, have you got it on now?

230 GW: Yes; but you started at eight years old sorting  
nails, so you know an eight-penny from a six-penny.

232 HR: Back in the old days of construction, they never  
threw anything away. It was all saved. For example,  
234 when they would build a large wall, I got into it  
during the clean up days of Holmes Street School,  
236 Allen Street School, many of the other schools at  
that time. Maple, the one over here, or Walnut; all  
238 those schools I remember as a kid, sitting in the  
corner staying out of trouble.

240 Then when the men would clean up at the end of a  
job, everything was dumped into just kegs. Remember  
242 we had kegs in those days. They weren't wooden  
boxes, or cardboard.

244 They would all come into the warehouse, and they  
always knew that during summer vacation I would be  
246 there. So they would come in -- one of the laborers  
-- I'd be sitting in the middle of a concrete floor  
248 which was probably the size of this room.

GW: This room is -- ?

250 HR: Is 25 by about 60 in this part. I'd be in the middle  
of that, and they would come in, and they'd dump all

252           these kegs. They would have everything; nuts, bolts,  
washers, every kind of a nail imaginable. It was my  
254           job at five cents an hour to sort out all those into  
piles and then put them back into new kegs, so that  
256           when the men went out into the warehouse; when they  
would go to a new job -- when they'd grab that one  
258           ten-penny's or finish or whatever, number six's,  
whatever size nut, bolt, washer -- they could go to  
260           that, and they would know that they would all be  
right, because that was my job of sorting. They  
262           would save that work for me all winter.

GW: Took you all summer to do it, didn't it?

264 HR: Yes, except during hay fever time. That's when I  
would have to go north, because of allergies. That's  
266           another whole story, my days in Grayling, and the  
history of Grayling back when it was a twelve hour  
268           drive from Lansing.

GW: That's another tape, isn't it?

270 HR: That's another whole story. That's all been  
documented, and those are all at the Museum at the  
272           State now. In fact, that's one of the papers that  
I've written, out of the eight different papers that  
274           you've got over there.

          Getting back on the construction, I was probably  
276           the youngest and the first person to master the new

art of arc welding. I was certified as an arc welder  
278 at the age of thirteen. Today, people think it's  
unbelievable, but this is the way you could work; and  
280 I worked with our master mechanic, who is Sanford  
Albro (Sandy Albro), who came to work for Renigers  
282 when they came to Lansing in the 1916-17 period. His  
life -- he was a boiler, a steam engineer, and he  
284 operated threshing machines (which have been around  
when you were a kid) working the area.

286 GW: Old traction engine type.

HR: Right. So he came to town and became Renigers'  
288 Master Mechanic. He was an inventor. Many things  
today that were used in Lansing were invented in  
290 Renigers' machine shop. At the age of thirteen I  
manufactured, myself, all of the special bolts that  
292 held all of the seats in the new Gladmer Theater, in  
the East Lansing High School auditorium, the new  
294 auditorium at MAC, and there was one other --  
Northtown Theater.

296 What I'm talking about is the bolts. You know  
how the floors in your theaters always have a slope,  
298 and then before they pour the floor, all the bolts  
would be set so when they come along with all the  
300 chairs, they just set them down on the bolts that are  
in the concrete and bolt them down. Those all have

302 to be engineered and made to certain lengths, and  
then they're fit with all the chair with the harness  
304 that holds the bolt in place when it's poured. So  
that was one of the jobs that I would do.

306 GW: You liked it, didn't you?

HR: It was a love. That's all I knew.

308 GW: It wasn't a burden that you went to work with your  
father; you liked that.

310 HR: Yes. Another thing, a little side operation, our big  
machine shop was located next to the Grand Trunk. I  
312 don't know if you were in town back in the -- The  
two that are in my railroad book (we talked about my  
314 two favorite engines) were the streamlined Grand  
Trunk Passenger engines. I could set my watch, and I  
316 knew I had ten minutes to quitting time when the one  
was the Eastbound or the Westbound. I was always  
318 allowed, even when I was sitting in the warehouse, I  
could get up and run to the tracks when one of those  
320 trains went through, when I was eight.

GW: You were close to the tracks there.

322 HR: Right next to it; main line, right on it. That's why  
we had our own siding. Before that, I was allowed at  
324 a very early age -- I think maybe five or six years  
old, we would all go to Potter Park and spend the  
326 day. We were on Climax Street, so we were very

close. In fact, we were about five blocks from the  
328 yard. Climax Street, you know, was just south of  
Main Street before they tore it out for the new  
330 ditch.

GW: Yes, < Laugh > -496.

332 HR: Right. But my whole life was around that; and I  
learned to drive. You see, back in those days at age  
334 fourteen or fifteen, you could get your driver's  
license. I think it was younger on the farm, but  
336 then you see, I had my chauffeur's license at sixteen  
to drive any kind of a truck. So when we were  
338 building the -- Renigers went into the Ryon-Bohn  
Plant. You're familiar with that, I think.

340 GW: Yes. I think that was R-y-o-n and then B-o-h-n, and  
for years before I saw that in print, I heard it  
342 spoken quickly as Rinebone. People said it  
"Rinebone," when it was Ryon-Bohn.

344 HR: Yes. Well, you knew where it was. O. K. That was  
the big factory that was built during World War I for  
346 canon and tank production. It was all the factories  
across the railroad track from Fisher Body, which  
348 during the war it was the GM Forge.

GW: Out in that Verlinden --

350 HR: Yes, over there, which would have been outside of the  
city, or (I think that's in Lansing Township) just



352 over across the track behind. Incidentally, the  
Morris-Pancost Farm; that would be Morris, the one  
354 that was principal at Lansing Tech. Before that, all  
the Pancost family grew up there on that farm, which  
356 is just across the track on Michigan Avenue. So it  
was the old Pancost Farm; today it's all set in all  
358 that housing in there.

Basically, at the age of sixteen, I was  
360 graduated into driving the trucks all summer. Then  
when the war came along, while I was still in high  
362 school, I went on a short schooling schedule and put  
in hours driving construction trucks and delivering  
364 supplies to all of our jobs.

GW: When you say a short schedule, it was sort of like  
366 maybe five hours in school?

HR: Yes. You could say probably in my -- all my training  
368 -- I could not get a training in college. I had to  
take it all. My degrees from Michigan State came in  
370 the Ag Department. That's the only place you could  
get the type of construction that I've had, because I  
372 did not go to an engineering school. The only thing  
they taught out here was Automotive: You couldn't  
374 take the other forms like you can today.

376 GW: So you must have been early when you enrolled at  
Michigan State? How old were you, about eighteen -  
seventeen?

378 HR: Oh, yes. I can give you another little bit of a back  
behind that, which is another phase, if you want it  
380 on construction. That was that Dad was very  
prominent with the State of Michigan, and with the  
382 National Guard, and with the State Police. Remember  
we were a small town. Acting Captain Lyons, who was  
384 the number two man of the Michigan State Police  
Force, would take trips. (They're all dead, so I can  
386 tell it now.) Cap Lyons -- We had our fishing camp  
up on the river on the Au Sable.

388 I don't know if you've read my stories on  
Grayling or not, but this is a very famous place.  
390 Otto Eckert, Claude Erickson, Albert Elsesser; all  
these prominent trout fishermen, fly fishermen from  
392 Lansing, all had spent time at Reniger Camp.  
Remember the boat that goes in the new museum if they  
394 ever get the top floors built?

GW: Yes. < Laugh >

396 HR: That's the boat right there, the typical ones like we  
were fishing out of. Then the flycase over there for  
398 the trout flies, those are typical of -- In 1936 Dad  
had forty of those made and handed them out as

400 Christmas presents to all the presidents of all the  
corporations.

402 GW: Shadow boxes full of flies?

HR: Yes, so basically, Lansing was a small town.  
404 Everyone knew everyone else. I actually hunted and  
fished with the presidents of Oldsmobile, Motor  
406 Wheel, Melling. As a kid; my dad was on the board of  
directors of five of the corporations. He was  
408 vice-president, secretary of Lansing Stamping  
Company. He was secretary-treasurer of Lawrence  
410 Baking Company.

It was a big family in town: They trusted you.  
412 If there was anything done at Motor Wheel, Harper --  
one of them would call, and one of us would run over  
414 there and go ahead and do the work. It was that type  
of confidence and faith. Not the way it is today.

416 GW: The competition was not so great.

HR: Well there wasn't any, because you had trust, and  
418 that's the way construction was in those days.  
Construction today, in the last twenty years or so --  
420 We don't even call it construction any longer. Today  
they're wheeler-dealer from motor brokers.

422 GW: Back in those times, did you have as many problems  
with construction as now? We have so many accidents.

424 HR: None. You saw the paper; the fabulous new State  
Museum, with all the problems. The reason you're  
426 having the problems is because there's no one  
responsible. The collapse of Breslin was  
428 incompetency.

GW: Oh, we've had some historic calamities here in the  
430 last five years.

HR: Right. No, let's go back to my day in the business,  
432 which you could say really started in 1937. I  
designed my first building, which I got written up  
434 nationally for. It was Melling Forging.

GW: Was that your first building?

436 HR: Mine! They said, "My, God, how old are you?"  
Because you don't tell them that at that age you are  
438 allowed to do it. Another thing I was in, do you  
want to talk disaster, which construction -- ?

440 GW: Sure, anything you want to talk about, Hank.

HR: I can probably take these by steps here.

442 GW: You don't have to go by any form at all: Just talk  
about what you want to talk about. I think it's  
444 important.

HR: We'll hit those buildings first. My first disaster  
446 -- I mean my first experience in a disaster; I had  
just completed my training in arc welding and  
448 acetylene. Sandy Albro, Master Mechanic, had built

up the first known-in-existence mobile welding and  
450 cutting outfit, with a four wheel trailer. We'd pull  
it behind a large pickup truck. It had everything on  
452 it that was imaginable for either cutting steel,  
welding, the whole works.

454 GW: A real mobile unit.

HR: It was the very first one. In fact, it was hand-made  
456 in our own shop, and I'd puttered with him. This is  
the kind of a way that you had an opportunity to grow  
458 up if you had the parents like I did. You had the  
same thing if you < unclear > If you wanted to, you  
460 could learn anything. There was nothing that I  
wasn't allowed to do or attempt.

462 GW: That was a wonderful philosophy that you grew up in.

HR: I probably should preface that first so to give you a  
464 little bit of an idea what I'm getting at -- is that  
I climbed around the caissons of the building of the  
466 Bank of Lansing. Now the caissons were like you've  
been reading, like in this new one in Detroit, where  
468 they go way down to bedrock. That was a great  
beginning. I was climbing around down in those with  
470 my dad, and I was no more than six or seven years old  
then. My mother about had a heart attack when she  
472 found me in the middle on a walkway when we were

building the North Lansing Dam across the street  
474 here.

GW: She found you on the walkway?

476 HR: I was out in the middle, on what they call one of  
these runways that they'd wheel these concrete  
478 buggies back and forth on. Couldn't find me, and  
here I was when she yelled. She had a voice that  
480 sort of echoed and bellowed, and you could hear her  
all around the area, and it was on a Saturday or  
482 Sunday afternoon.

GW: Hen-ry? < Laugh > Where are you?

484 HR: Yes; so here I am way out in the middle, thinking  
nothing, but this is the way I grew up. But that dam  
486 over here, now there's something: Somebody should  
get Claude Erickson before he's beyond, because he  
488 designed that dam and it's known as the "Little  
Hoover." He designed this dam here. It's a  
490 miniature replica of the Hoover Dam. That's why they  
call it Lansing's Little Hoover. That was built in  
492 1935.

Getting back on the other part; that was kind of  
494 how I got into all these things. I was able to do  
work in the shop. Bear in mind also, in those days  
496 you didn't just call some supplier and have it  
delivered. You remember the book on the railroads

498           where the number of railroad cars -- I mentioned in  
              there that we had delivery either on Mill Street or  
500           on Pennsylvania at the yard. Everything -- the steel  
              came in in bulk. We had our own cutting bins and  
502           everything out in the yard, so it was all cut and  
              wheeled into the shop.

504   GW: Railroad delivery.

          HR: Yes, but I mean bulk. This wasn't stuff < unclear >.

506           This was the rebars came in, forty foot lengths, or  
              sixty; whatever we needed.

508   GW: What's a rebar?

          HR: Reinforcement steel.

510   GW: O.K. I know what that looks like.

          HR: O.K. All of our steel came in and was measured, cut  
512           in the yard, into our machine shop. Remember the  
              machine shop that was down on Mill Street? O.K.,  
514           that was what we had moved there from Pennsylvania.  
              We had all the overhead pulleys and the belts and  
516           everything. It ran off the belts up at the top,  
              because of one motor, in those days.

518           My job: I had learned to thread. Then I was  
              blacksmithing. I had learned to blacksmith where I  
520           could take a piece of three-quarter inch steel, heat  
              it in the forge, bend it, shape it, sharpen the  
522           points like you see the fellows with the jackhammer

out here breaking concrete today. That's an art of  
524 sharpening those tools, and that's another  
blacksmithing job. I didn't master those like I did  
526 some of the other things, but at least I was capable  
of doing it. This is why I've been turned loose with  
528 making all of the seat bracket bolts for all those  
auditoriums that Reniger had going that one summer.  
530 That was '36, '37, '38, years.

You had to make your own drawings. This is  
532 where I got my knack of being a designer, of making  
my own drawings.

534 GW: It's too bad, really, that you went to Michigan  
State. Is it too bad that you went there instead of  
536 some place like M.I.T.?

HR: My problem was (and I'm not afraid to admit it), I  
538 would have flunked out of any engineering school  
because of my math.

540 GW: Oh, math was difficult for you?

HR: I never could master math. < Laughter > No, I mean  
542 the kind of math -- No, I can take a whole list of  
figures like this and add them up in my head without  
544 an adding machine, but I cannot do calculus, trig.,  
and all those other exotic ones that you had to do in  
546 school. But I did get my certificate at Michigan  
State. Incidentally, if you wanted a builder's



548 course, like today you've got all the house builders  
that graduate with the three/four year Michigan State  
550 Builders Course -- Back when I was at State, you got  
it all in the Ag Department, the School of  
552 Agriculture, in the Horticulture Department, and our  
experience was designing greenhouses and floral shops  
554 -- of which I still have my drawings, the original  
tracings.

556 GW: Oh, my. Well, you still have the drawings for your  
grandfather's Green House in Olivet (the Green  
558 Family).

HR: Right, and so many things like that. Now that tray  
560 over there, all those shelves, are loaded with  
tracings that go all the way back to the twenties.

562 GW: All the furniture in here is beautifully matched.

HR: It's all the original.

564 GW: I notice that you have your grandfather's desk yet.

HR: Yes. That's the one thing I had here, and that --  
566 that's the rocking -- the chair that I would sit in  
his lap, face his desk, and Teddy Roosevelt above.

568 GW: And it's still like that today. That's why you call  
this the Franklin Avenue Museum, isn't it?

570 HR: Right. Everything around here, you see, there's some  
heritage to it. Incidentally, when we moved to Mill  
572 Street we had to go modern, so everything here was

put in storage. It was not taken out of storage  
574 until we moved down here.

GW: Until you came here, to 317 - ?

576 HR: Yes; and this desk, this conference table, and many  
things of that nature that have been entrusted to us.

578 GW: We're here at 317 East Grand River, and you bought  
this property from the North Lansing Community  
580 Association. I was active with them.

HR: Right, -- and that was in 1970.

582 GW: When we ended up selling it.

HR: Right.

584 GW: And you have improved it.

HR: We put the new front on it, brought it back, and that  
586 again gets into another whole phase, because I spent  
all my years on the Riverwalk. I remember my first  
588 appointment there was by Ralph Crego, and < unclear >  
we've researched -- we're packrats. You mentioned  
590 the books like Bartholomew; we've got 'em all here.  
In fact, this map to your right, that's East Lansing,  
592 1910, the only known existing map.

GW: Michigan Agricultural College Campus Community, 1910.  
594 Incorporated, 1907, East Lansing City.

HR: Yes. But that's the oldest, and East Lansing itself  
596 has nothing older than 1913. Now how we got that is

598           that Shirl and I, both being antique buffs and  
          historians --

        GW: Shirl's your wife.

600 HR: Right. This came out -- The maiden sister, or the  
          daughter of the engineer there, Chase Newman, who was  
602           one of the Fathers of East Lansing, the forming of  
          the community the town; he was head of Engineering at  
604           Michigan State at the time. These were all his  
          hobbies, of preparing all these maps. Now that is  
606           the only one in existence. The Newman sister (you  
          may have run across her in some of the years) was the  
608           maiden one, and the other was Doris Fitzpatrick, if  
          you ever ran across her in any of your -- Now  
610           they're all like Shirl working at the library. I  
          mean they're all volunteer type. Miss Newman called  
612           Shirl one day back about twenty years ago, and said:  
          "We have one of Father's oldest maps (I will only  
614           give it to someone like you and Hank, because I know  
          you'll keep it and won't sell it), that was nailed  
616           to the studs in the garage ever since he'd made it."  
          This is basically how we've been able to acquire such  
618           abundant knowledge of the Greater Lansing area.

        GW: You were part of it; people knew you and respected  
620           your attention.

HR: It was open. So I guess we got through the part of  
622 the nails; we got through the designing; I received  
-- My Hall of Fame awards came about, the first  
624 project being at Melling (tongue-in-cheek). Then I  
had a lot of others that I did a lot of design work  
626 at Atlas Drop Forge. Another phase would be during  
World War II; that under my eyes and my bad leg, I  
628 was wore out. Therefore I put in a full schedule at  
Michigan State, and I also worked a sixty-hour week  
630 at Fisher Body in the Engineering Department.

GW: How did you damage your leg, Hank?

632 HR: Auto accident with my mother way back in 1940.

GW: Oh, really? You think that was the beginning of your  
634 back problem?

HR: No, my back problem came about with our middle son  
636 when we were on Mickey Mouse Hill in East Lansing,  
tobogganing. When you talk to an orthopedic man,  
638 he'd say, "That damned toboggan is the worst thing  
you can ever be on." Everything all builds up; bad  
640 eyes and the whole thing. We're too old to have ever  
been treated like our kids were, with the modern  
642 medicines, so we're really the last product of your  
problems, my problems. Our kids had the same thing,  
644 but they're perfect because they had learned about  
it.

646 GW: [They] had better care. May I ask you if your father  
was a particular devotee of Teddy Roosevelt?

648 HR: Grandfather; yes. Grandfather, O. J. Reniger, if you  
think of the Renigers being the Republicans of Ingham  
650 County; it was 1916, that O. J. Reniger was the  
Democratic Mayor of Marshall. < Laugh > Really,  
652 Teddy Roosevelt was the rebel. He was not a true  
Republican in the sense we think of today.

654 GW: Formed his own Bull Moose Party.

HR: Yes; and we always, all of our lives have been what  
656 you would call Independents, or very liberal  
Republicans. There's another tale, when we go back  
658 to our days of politicking, when we used to hit every  
little hamlet in Ingham County in campaigning days.

660 Another side issue; do you remember the  
Republican -- We were the "badders," back when Chuck  
662 Chamberlain got in. There was some other name for  
us, not like the Bull Moose; there was some other  
664 name for us.

GW: Well, sometimes they called them Young Turks.

666 HR: Turks; that was it! We were the Turks, and Shirley  
and I were the youngest Turks. There was Chuck  
668 Fratcher, and you've got to remember this; there's  
Bob Refior, and all these other people, who would  
670 have been ten years older than us. And all the

672 people who were in Ingham County that really -- My  
dad wouldn't speak to me for two months after that,  
674 because we were the ones that got Kit Clardy out of  
Congress. Remember when Clardy got in, and he was in  
one term, and he was defeated by Chamberlain? It was  
676 our gangs that did it.

GW: Your father wouldn't speak to you?

678 HR: Wouldn't speak to me, because we had no RIGHT to  
upset him: A man was deserving of more than one term  
680 in Congress. Shirley and I, -- but I'm jumping  
around too much.

682 GW: Oh, that's alright. It's fun.

HR: Anyway B. J., our middle one, was the Ingham County  
684 Chairman of the Students for Wallace, so you see our  
family is -- We have more tongue-in-cheek of  
686 politics of Lansing, because people say, "Well,  
you're Republican; you've got to be." Well, hell no,  
688 we're not. We're Independents. Shirl and I just --  
we didn't sleep the night Rockefeller was beaten out  
690 of it by the one that lost. (I can't even remember  
his name now,) -- well, for the presidency of the  
692 United States back there when Rockefeller ran. Many  
things of that type of politics; this is why I've had  
694 such a close relationship with the governor's office.

696 Except today, because the one we've got now is not  
anything what you and I would think of.

698 Getting back to those early days of training,  
this is how we got into our Disaster Corps. The  
Disaster Corps was -- I still carry my special pass  
700 from both -- We had a pass from both F.B.I. and the  
Michigan State Police, of which I still carry my  
702 State Police even though it's expired because there  
was fingerprints, and it was like a regular I.D. for  
704 entrance into anywhere.

We were hellions, like all kids were in high  
706 school. This was a day back there in the forties,  
and the principal's office calls. The teacher said  
708 "Hank, you're to go to the principal's office." She  
was one of these stern-type teachers and < unclear >  
710 and I thought, "What have I done now?" So I get to  
the principal's office, and they say: "Your dad's  
712 called. There's been a disaster in Lansing, and he  
wants you to run home, grab your mother's car, get  
714 down to the yard. The truck will be waiting with the  
cutting trailers; the whole works will be waiting for  
716 you.

So I went from high school home, got the car,  
718 got down there, took that over there, and that's when  
-- Remember the little newsboy and one customer at

720           the depot were killed when the freight train went  
              through the depot, just before the passenger train?

722   GW: Took the end out of the depot, didn't it?

          HR: Right, and it killed the people. All the stuff we  
724           had on that four-wheel trailer; we were able to go in  
              there, and within hours, we had that opened up so  
726           they could remove anyone that was in there. I can't  
              even remember the whole story.

728           Then my second major disaster was the one that  
              you lived through, and that was the State Office  
730           Building Fire.

          GW: Yes, I was working there at that time; 1951.

732   HR: Yes, and Phil Albers received national acclaim and a  
              national award for the construction cranes that we  
734           used. No one said it could be done, and it was Phil  
              Albers and Sandy Albro again, our mechanic, and  
736           myself: We're the ones that toggled up that crane.

          GW: Albers was Fire Chief.

738   HR: I'm talking about Phil Albers who was Fire Marshall.

          GW: Fire Marshall, excuse me.

740   HR: Then he went on to get -- well, the new Firebird;  
              this new Firebird Firetruck you know, that we got?  
742           It was copied off the designs that we toggled up for  
              fighting that building. That's all in those  
744           looseleaf books that they've got over at the library



746           too; all those pictures.   That's a whole different  
phase.

748           Then at the North Lansing Fire here, I was in on  
all this.   B. J., our middle son, who at that time  
750           was in junior high, a hulking ox of a kid -- He  
could pass for as big as me anytime.   In the trunk of  
752           my car, I always carried two complete fire-fighting  
uniforms.   I mean I had the boots, I had the hats, I  
754           had the coats and the whole works.   So here's B. J.  
and I -- we had to park clear over on Saginaw and  
756           walk because of this whole disaster area.   Using my  
passes, we got in and we were walking --   In fact, it  
758           was comical because we had the East Lansing Chief of  
the Fire Department, who was also at that time  
760           Scoutmaster.   We walked in to the command post, at  
which I'd < unclear >.   I worked with Albers and  
762           these others all on how to prevent disasters:   When a  
fire started, how could you prevent it next time, or  
764           how to best fight it.   All of a sudden the Chief  
looks around and he makes a < unclear > "B. J.!   What  
766           in the hell are you doing in here?"   Here's this kid,  
just in junior high, but he had the same kind of a  
768           lifetime that I've had.   I followed my dad to the  
same kind of places.

770 GW: You're saying that you offered your children the same  
kind of opportunity to learn?

HR: They all had it, yes.

772 GW: So they learned about danger, but they learned about  
safety, too?

774 HR: Yes, and remember that my three boys all grew up  
during our days at Mill Street. We took over and  
776 managed the buildings and did everything: the new  
roofs, the repairs. Now B. J., our middle son, if he  
778 were here today he would be a member of the  
carpenter's union, because his old trade was in the  
780 carpenter trade.

GW: Did the other boys follow the business?

782 HR: No. Well, B. J. was in business for three years  
until the bottom went out, and that's when he packed  
784 up and went to Maine. John had always been what we  
call our little brain. John graduated from Miami of  
786 Ohio. He was the one that held all the local  
swimming records, for years.

788

< Tape 1, Side 2 >

790 HR: I think what's been fun and where you and I enjoy  
each other so much is that we both have led such --  
792 In other words, from the day that we retired; had to,  
or just did, we've never taken off and just

794            hibernated somewhere like so many people do. We've  
              kept busy. In fact, I've been busier in the last  
796            five years, and probably I think, that same sparkle  
              in your eyes that I had in mine back in '85, when we  
798            started in on the Sesquicentennial activities --  
              three years of the most loving years of my life.

800                        This is really what got me into doing what I'm  
              doing today. I'd done it before we got into all  
802            that, but we'd always been afraid because we were not  
              'a professional' so to say. How many times were you  
804            looked down their nose by people who were in history,  
              or here and there, and you had no business being in  
806            it because you weren't trained for it?

              GW: Well, I was in it; I was part of the historical  
808            community.

              HR: I mean we weren't supposed to be doing anything of  
810            that nature because we weren't "trained". We didn't  
              have the degrees, I should say.

812            GW: Lay people have always (in Michigan) contributed  
              tremendously. Probably they are more recorded, and  
814            the results of their collections and their energies  
              are more respected and used today, than some of the  
816            so-called 'professionals' that have gone by the  
              wayside.

818 HR: You hit it on the head with that, because you said  
"recorded." I'm talking about the written. There's  
820 a big difference, because I had three of my dear  
friends who were at the University give me Billy  
822 Hell, because I had no business writing a history of  
the railroad in Ingham County because I did not have  
824 the proper credentials. I'm serious! It's been  
tongue-in-cheek; we've had more fun! Then the worst  
826 part of it is now, to be lecturing to these same  
people over there at the docent things at the new  
828 State Museum. You can see, your background and mine;  
we're in the nitty-gritty. We were the laborers, the  
830 troops. We never got the publicity. I mean, we  
didn't care anyway for that, but the point was that  
832 all of a sudden we are now appearing. We are now  
lecturing to those people who have retired. You see  
834 what I mean?

GW: You can go in and lecture to their classes.

836 HR: That's what I've been doing. That's how I rewrote  
the one on the Plank Road. I never really thought,  
838 because why they wanted that so badly; and it was  
because when you go through the first hundred years,  
840 you've got that first part on the Plank Road there.  
All the times I've ran by it, I never really stopped  
842 to think. If nothing more, we have given those

docents a little bit more information. When somebody  
844 asks them about the Plank Road, really, what is it?  
They've got all those files that we put together and  
846 papers, and as long as we've got it, we should have  
it out.

848 GW: This is at the new State Museum, where you did so  
much work, and you had your railroad diorama? That  
850 was a beautiful exhibit at Christmastime, Hank.

HR: Yes, but did you notice that the City of Lansing  
852 won't even recognize it was there? It wasn't in the  
newspapers anywhere.

854 GW: Probably the weakest part of their program right now,  
is their public relations. Good things go on there  
856 every day that I miss out on. I met a charming man  
yesterday who told me he was in town singing with a  
858 barbershop quartet. I said, "If I had known about  
it, I'd have gone down." But it's hard to get the  
860 news out to people.

HR: But it's out statewide. When I look back and see  
862 that -- They've got a good press release department  
there. It's just that Lansing, The State Journal  
864 will not pick it up. That's the problem.

GW: But locally, well, there's an awful lot going on (in  
866 their defense).

HR: You and I though, let's face it; we're both so set in  
868 our way of Lansing (going back), but O.K., we got --

GW: There was one thing I wanted to ask you about. I  
870 noticed there was one building that was the Red Cross  
Building, and it said, "Fee \$1.00." What did you do,  
872 build it for free?

HR: No, when you're talking fee, you're talking about  
874 your profit. O.K., it was free, but legally you have  
to collect a fee of \$1.00.

876 GW: Like a will.

HR: It's time and material. That's the way you build a  
878 building, on a time and material basis. They pay for  
all expenses, but there's no profit. Your profit is  
880 that \$1.00.

GW: And that was one of those buildings. That was  
882 interesting.

HR: We had many, many others the same way: All of the  
884 work that we did over at the Community Nursery, and  
like Camp Kroliaks, the old Scouting Camp. It was  
886 down by Jackson.

GW: I never heard that. Say that name again?

888 HR: Kroliaks. That was the one that the Renigers and  
Christman gave much on, way, way back in the 1920's.

890 GW: No longer a property?

HR: Oh, yes. Same as, if you've read the paper recently  
892 of a Girl Scout Camp up by Clare and Harrison; that  
was all built by three local contractors and started  
894 for the girls in Lansing. Same as Mystic Lake up by  
Clare, for the Y. That was all again was Reniger's,  
896 Christman, and some other prominent contractors in  
the area.

898 You see we've always, during the days you had a  
good profit, but you turned around and you gave it  
900 back to your community. It's not the way they build  
today. Your directors, your owners; I should say the  
902 directors of -- One other honorary thing for our  
family is that Shirley Reniger, my wife, was the  
904 first dear little lady to be on the Board of  
Directors of the YMCA. You notice I said the Y-M,  
906 because she was the number two person at Camp Pa-Wa-  
Pi out at Williamston, if you're familiar with that.  
908 I'd say in the family we've got many, many things  
that were "firsts."

910 GW: You're truly involved with the community.

HR: Do you remember F. A. McCartney? Floyd McCartney?  
912 Well, Floyd McCartney was the manager of Equitable  
Life in Lansing, and Jim McCartney is his son that  
914 was my age, that always got the bylines out of  
Washington -- Jim McCartney. Mac was also one of the

916 trustees of People's Church, and Shirl and I sat down  
with him: This is philosophy now. We sat down with  
918 him back when we were first married. Everybody was  
dunning you at the time you know, your pledges here  
920 and your pledges there. He said, "Well, what  
everybody should do, they should take a percentage of  
922 their income and split it up to where they feel  
comfortable with it." Basically, that's why we never  
924 became millionaires. We've been comfortable, but you  
still devoted a better than a quarter of your  
926 endeavors and time to the church or to the community.  
That's where it is.

928 GW: You have no regret about that either, do you?

HR: Oh, it's delightful.

930 I think we probably can jump back here on this a  
little bit -- would be the construction as we know it  
932 today.

GW: There was money in 1927. Twenty-seven was a good  
934 year. Twenty-eight and twenty-nine, you said that  
you were doing in excess of a million dollars a year  
936 business. Of course '29, the Depression began, and  
'30 -- you were still holding your own.

938 HR: Yes, but that's when we got the contract for the Bank  
of Lansing that took eight years to complete, because



940 as they got money, then they would do another part of  
it.

942 GW: Did it gradually, when they could afford to pay for  
it.

944 HR: Yes, or when they have a tenant. See, the trouble  
with that building, it was all done on the exterior  
946 but nothing inside. As a floor was rented [when] you  
found a tenant, then you went in and did the work.  
948 That's how it took us a total of -- Actually, the  
last tenant moved into the Bank of Lansing during  
950 World War II, so you can see it was a period of ten  
years that that building had vacancies.

952 This was the life that we grew up in, and I'd  
like to maybe hit a point here now giving you a  
954 background of what I consider the General Contractor:  
The General Contractor (if you go back to your days  
956 like we said earlier, of Thomas Jefferson, George  
Washington, and the others) was a Master Builder.

958 Now incidentally, up until this year I had  
maintained my Master Builder's License. It's the  
960 same thing (a lot of people give me hell when I say  
it), but a Master Builder was licensed to get  
962 building permits without architects or engineers,  
because we already had the knowledge of what we were  
964 attempting to do. In other words, we knew our

966 limitations and that's what we were holding to, and  
the city and the state honored it. There's your  
968 point of us with a permit. We (incidentally)  
employed the full trades. Now that picture over by  
the window -- that was Reniger's work crew in that  
970 year of 1927.

GW: That's a circuit camera picture.

972 HR: Yes, and all those people, they all worked for  
Reniger's. After the war, at the college we had  
974 between five and six hundred on the payroll. That's  
hundred people, during the boom years right after the  
976 war. During the war we lost a lot, but everybody was  
busy because we were hopping all over, working in the  
978 plants.

GW: Keeping the repairs up for the war work.

980 HR: Yes, and like myself in school, that you were  
expected -- Even though you were 4-F deferred, you  
982 were still expected to do your part. You put in  
sixty hours, and then you went to school, for  
984 example. The work that we had there was -- Bob  
Hughes, from Silver Lead. I don't know if you ever  
986 ran across Bob or not. Well, Bob was one of my  
bosses; and Ted Simon, who was at the University now  
988 and retired with a new power plant being named after  
him, The Ted Simon Service Park there. They were

990           both my employers at Fisher Body during the war when  
              I was in the Engineering Department.

992   GW:   What were they building at Fisher at that time, Hank?

          HR:   What we were building at Fisher Body was -- that's  
994           another long thing; see this is what Robert is.

          GW:   Oh, yes, Robert Engle wants to talk to you about.

996   HR:   Right, now you see, they were building the turrets  
              for tanks, and two of them would go on a flatcar.  
998           Everything that I was into out there was all  
              classified at the time. Actually, the first -- the  
1000          B-75 Plane (which is another story) -- That was  
              tabled because every time it would go into a dive the  
1002          pilot was killed, because they hadn't learned yet  
              [that] when they passed the G's and they passed a  
1004          certain one, the guy would blank out from that. But  
              then they would come alive when they got flown up to  
1006          the ground, but they came so fast.

              Then they invented that new little do-daddie on  
1008          the plane, so that when it hit that certain altitude  
              that would automatically bring it out. Then you see,  
1010          that plane was only experimental; the B-75. Then  
              right after that the war ended, and then they came  
1012          out with the jet; so you see, all those high-powered,  
              special prop planes were a thing of the past. But my  
1014          job at Fisher was in the Plant Engineering, designing

1016 all these jigs, (the machinery that all these parts  
would be built on). I was in anywhere in the plant  
1018 that they needed somebody, so I had that industrial  
plant [experience]. Everything, whether you know it  
or not, (I mean at the time) prepares you for  
1020 something else in later life.

1022 GW: If you are graced enough to live long enough, you get  
that feeling that everything you ever learned  
supports tomorrow.

1024 HR: But you don't realize it at the time, because it's up  
here. It's not written down anywhere. Basically, we  
1026 belong into the sixties. In the fifties and sixties,  
at one time I had nine automobile dealerships all  
1028 going at the same time throughout the State of  
Michigan -- because of the relationship that I had  
1030 built up with the head people at GMAC or the finance  
end (actually the ones that finance all these  
1032 dealerships that you see built around), and through  
the Shrine, and through our friends in the K of C --  
1034 You see it didn't matter whether you were Protestant,  
Catholic, or what: All of your top men -- there was  
1036 Al Edwards, Al Rice in Mason, Bud Kouts in Lansing --  
whether you were Protestant, Catholic, it didn't  
1038 matter. But they were all key men with Chevrolet,  
after the war. Then they went out when they left

1040           there [and] they all became -- When a dealership  
                  became available they took over the dealership  
1042           whether it was in Mason, or whether it was White down  
                  in Coldwater, or the ones in Lake Odessa, or the ones  
1044           way over in Sandusky. All these people were  
                  fraternity, whether General Motors or from Ford.

1046           I never could do a job with Chrysler, because  
                  Chrysler -- always somebody had a hand under the  
1048           table for a payoff. It's still the same way today.  
                  This is a part where somebody can raise cane with;  
1050           but the point is that General Motors (with a training  
                  program), and Ford -- If you were accepted, and see,  
1052           I was probably accepted the same way in this  
                  dealer-type of a setup, that my grandfather and  
1054           father were with people at Olds, Motor Wheel, and  
                  during their generation. So we had dealerships going  
1056           all over, and they were all designed right on this  
                  drawing table behind you here. I did all my own  
1058           design, all my own plans.

                  GW: That's a monstrous table. It's a beauty. When was  
1060           that built?

                  HR: No, that's a new one. That was one of the later  
1062           ones. Those tables today, run about six thousand  
                  dollars, but you see that takes the great big, huge  
1064           drawings.

1066            Basically, I've had a happy life. You've had  
1068            your pitfalls, your up and your downs. We had to  
1068            have been born in the rust state (the "rust belt"),  
1070            where our kids could not continue in the family like  
1070            they wanted to; but hey, if they've got a brain and  
1070            if they've got the gumption, they shouldn't stay here  
1070            and starve: Go somewhere else.

1072            This is why I'm in such a panic of disposing  
1072            everything we've got here in a sound way, to where we  
1074            know it's going to be protected. Another great thing  
1074            that you can see is that first off, East Lansing  
1076            really had nothing before 1930. It was still a  
1076            little, almost like a farm town; no building records,  
1078            nothing like you would think of today. I have  
1078            probably the second most complete set of city  
1080            directories of anybody in the City of Lansing, and I  
1080            offered them to the library, though we've got most of  
1082            those; so we decided that we're going to give them  
1082            all to East Lansing (our historical society), because  
1084            there's nothing out there of that nature. But the  
1084            two gals you've got over there at the library, Mrs.  
1086            McClary and JoAnne Jager -- but she and I have hit it  
1086            off because now she's president of -- Isn't she the  
1088            president of R. E. Olds Museum?

GW: Yes, she is.

1090 HR: So we've got some dreams coming out on that, too,  
that will blow people's minds if and when we ever get  
1092 it off the table. There again, everything -- You  
see, I've studied the histories. I've written a  
1094 couple small histories on the history of Mill Street  
way back to Day One.

1096 GW: Where are all these histories that you have written?

HR: Those are all over there now.

1098 GW: At the library?

HR: Yes, I mean whatever it is, in either one part or the  
1100 other.

GW: There's someone here again.

1102 HR: We're closed. Now everybody comes here. They think  
I'm open, and I haven't been -- That's why I work in  
1104 the back room more.

We've got so many things here of all my books  
1106 and things. See, there again, it's almost -- It  
isn't even fair when you take my wife, Shirley, who  
1108 now does all the sorting of any book that comes in as  
a gift to the Library, because you know what's going  
1110 to end up in the historical society in a hurry. All  
the years that she's accumulated books for me, today  
1112 we find out that they are priceless, because no one  
else has them. Like that map right there; it's the  
1114 only one in existence. Many of the other things that

we have, where else are you going to find it? You  
1116 won't.

GW: You have to have people that collect and save.

1118 HR: Packrats. You've got to be a packrat first, but then  
you've got to have the brains to know what you're  
1120 saving it for, or how to catalog in your mind. Now  
the map behind you there; now that's an 1859 map of  
1122 the two counties (one of the originals).

GW: Yes, that's the Giel Map.

1124 HR: Yes. Now that color is because of the smoke on that  
visqueen over it.

1126 GW: I did an index to that, you know.

HR: You were telling me, yes.

1128 GW: Took all the names off of it and published it.

HR: Yes. I told you I quit smoking about two and a half  
1130 months ago, didn't I?

GW: No! Well, good for you!

1132 HR: Did you notice there's no ashtrays in here?

GW: No, I don't smoke, so I didn't miss them.

1134 HR: Remember how I was always sucking on a pipe.

GW: Yes, you had a pipe. That's right; that was part of  
1136 your image.

HR: Two and a half months ago I sat here. It was a  
1138 Sunday afternoon, and I ran out of tobacco. I put



1140           the pipe up, and I've never had an urge even to go  
              back to it ever since.

GW: Oh, that's great.

1142 HR: The point is, you can change -- when you're ready to.

1144 GW: The company survived because it changed with the  
              times.

1146 HR: Yes. Another thing we did, and see, it would be in  
              my time that you don't think of as much because we  
1148           didn't build the monuments in our time that we built  
              before that. It breaks my heart to see the buildings  
              that our company has built that they've just knocked  
1150           down, like they want to do the Civic Center. The  
              Olds Administration Building (remember on Townsend),  
1152           what a handsome thing that was! You remember that  
              again, like the Lansing Fireproof Storage. Remember  
1154           how long it took with dynamite to blow those up?

              That was another point that we had, of the part  
1156           -- I don't know if you've got the one there on what  
              I had on the birthday of Mason Hall. To get back,  
1158           I've got a couple here: From 1920 to 1940, Lansing  
              had three contractors. There was Reniger, Christman,  
1160           and Hagemeyer. George Hagemeyer did a lot of work,  
              and he'd been here longer. Reniger and Christman had  
1162           a big battle going, who was the oldest. Christman  
              had the first job in town, but they came from South

1164 Bend. Renigers were the oldest to establish in  
Lansing in business. So that's how Harry Conrad  
1166 finally stopped saying that he was the oldest and he  
was older than Reniger. Their work was older, but  
1168 they were not considered "here" until they finished  
the -- and they were the ones that built the Durant  
1170 Motor. It kills me that you cannot get the Conrad  
boys, both Al and Bud, to do the same thing, keeping  
1172 the history that we have.

GW: Well, Bud is very involved with Christman Company  
1174 yet.

HR: But he will not keep any history. They haven't got  
1176 any time or patience for it.

GW: I don't know: We are planning to do an interview  
1178 with him.

HR: Good; well, you will get a different approach then.

1180 GW: It will be interesting to hear what he -- Maybe  
that's the value of the oral tradition, then.

1182 HR: Yes, I think it is.

GW: It may fill in some spots here where you haven't seen  
1184 it before.

HR: Today Carl Haussman is the only General Contractor in  
1186 the City of Lansing, in my interpretation of a  
General Contractor.

1188 GW: We should interview Carl.

HR: Yes, and he is < unclear >. Do you know him very  
1190 well?

GW: Well, he lives right across the field from me -- or  
1192 works across the field from me, in the old Creyts  
House.

1194 HR: He is getting so bull-headed and stubborn (like I  
am), but I mean this is why; because he's upset. He  
1196 is so discouraged that the tradition that he grew up  
under -- Now Haussman all came out of Christman.  
1198 Carl knows when his father was the one that was known  
as Lansing's circus buff. When I travel with my --  
1200 all my circus histories I've acquired from his  
father. Well see, Lansing there again is a small  
1202 town. That's where I came up with all my ideas on my  
circus train that was down at the museum at the same  
1204 time, everything handmade in it. Everything we've  
done is historically correct. It's been sources;  
1206 now, his father was the one that I used to tag  
around.

1208 Oh, that's another thing: The last year Clyde  
Beatty was in Lansing for the Jaycees, I was chairman  
1210 of the circus thing for the Jaycees (another one of  
my activities). Everything I've done has been fun.  
1212 It's been productive.

1214           Anyway, Carl is the only one today. We were  
1216           talking here about the other buildings. Now, in the  
              1980's: All you have today is a broker, manager, or  
1218           developer. You have no more contractors. One of  
              these three people will hire subs: Nobody is  
              responsible. Back in our day you built a building to  
              last a lifetime.

1220           I'll say one thing (to protect the rate of the  
              people today) is that the IRS is the one that killed  
1222           sound construction, because back years ago we were  
              allowed fifty years to amortize a building. Today it  
1224           has to be wiped off in twenty to twenty-five years.  
              This is why when you just drive down the highway,  
1226           where you saw Holiday Inn that was built twenty-six  
              years ago, if you notice it now, that it's changed  
1228           its name to something else. That promoter, developer  
              has -- The building is totally amortized, and from  
1230           now on he has got to sell it. He sells it to a  
              competitor, and they start over again with another  
1232           twenty-five years. So this is why you're getting the  
              junk you've got today. Downtown Lansing, for  
1234           example, has one building (to me) that I would be  
              proud to say that I had my name on, and that's the  
1236           Radisson. It's the only one built in Lansing in the

1238 last twenty years that uses the old style of  
construction.

1240 Look at the Commerce Building and all they used  
-- they threw up the steel frame, chicken wire,  
1242 putty; remember all that crud they put on that? You  
see, that building isn't built to last more than  
twenty-five years. Take the one there across from  
1244 Board of Water and Light, Comerica, where a year or  
two ago that they had to reface the whole thing?  
1246 It's only about twenty-five years old; but you see,  
like a car, they're only built to last so long.

1248 To get back to the other point now; O.K., this  
would be the expected lifetime today is twenty,  
1250 twenty-five years. Today the owner is stuck with the  
overrun. Back when you were working with the State  
1252 or when you think back to the days of the  
contractors, we bid a job, and our bid was what we  
1254 stuck with -- whether we lost our shirt or not.  
Today it is a manager, and all he's doing is working  
1256 for the guy that's paying the bill. Nobody is  
responsible. The architect isn't responsible. Look  
1258 at the Breslin collapse. I can say it now because  
I'm out of school (so to say); but if I were active  
1260 in business, we figure -- I myself being in safety,  
et cetera, feel that there's a conservative thirty to

1262            forty violations of OSHA in the Breslin Center just  
                 for that collapse. Any one of those things could  
1264            have caused that to happen. That never would have  
                 happened back in the old days. See, there's nobody  
1266            responsible, and of all the silly things; we look at  
                 that beautiful new museum, and they're so darn dumb  
1268            they didn't even think to put that paper in there to  
                 protect the moisture inside from staining the stone.

1270    GW: I know; the problem with the vapor barrier. I walked  
                 in there one day and there was visqueen all over the  
1272            offices.

                 HR: Right, but now, nobody's responsible. Back in our  
1274            days, either O. J. or my dad would have had his head  
                 nailed on the wall, because we are supposed to be the  
1276            professionals. Today there's no professionals,  
                 because your architects today are not an architect,  
1278            you know. You see the name "manager" on the job.  
                 All Christman is today are managers. They're not a  
1280            contractor any longer. They are just a manager.

                 I know you understand what I'm [referring to],  
1282            but a lot of people -- The developer; look at all  
                 this junk that's gone up around town with Gentilozzi  
1284            or which one, and I can't condemn one or the other  
                 because one's as bad as the rest, because all they're  
1286            in there for is their developing, and they all put up

1288           that thing and then they run. Let somebody else  
worry about the leaky plumbing.

1290           Have you heard the tales of the Commerce  
Building? How they have to wedge up all of the  
1292           furniture that's got a castor under it, because it  
will all roll to the middle of the building because  
of the loadings? That's cheap, underdesigned  
1294           construction. In other words, they haven't gone so  
far that they've become unsafe. Well, to give you an  
1296           example, the best thing that I ever learned from Max  
Reniger, my uncle; back when I started in estimating  
1298           or pricing to bid a job, you took it from the  
engineering standards by all of your tables and when  
1300           you were done you put a safety margin of twenty-five  
percent on it. It was done either on a calculator or  
1302           an adding machine. They didn't even trust their  
slide rule. That was only to do a quickie, but you  
1304           still for your final calculation did it with the  
calculator. That's all I've ever learned to run.

1306           I cannot fathom these other machines. Today the  
safety factor -- They've redesigned it by computer,  
1308           and the computer says that you're crazy; you've  
overdesigned it by one hundred percent, so the  
1310           architect, the engineer automatically reduces it by  
that hundred percent. In other words, he's going by

1312            what that machine tells him, not what common sense or  
                 the engineering book tells him. He's going by what  
1314            that computer tells him.

GW: You consider that the flaw.

1316 HR: That's the flaw of many, many failures. Look at all  
                 these skywalks that have collapsed in these hotels  
1318            around the country over the last twenty years. Look  
                 at the number of domes that have collapsed on these  
1320            big arenas. Look at the mess at the Detroit one.  
                 It's all because they have -- Well, to give an  
1322            example, and I know for a fact that bidding and the  
                 work that I'm in today (or was in) like with the  
1324            pre-engineered buildings, that the companies were  
                 competitive. I could not understand how one company  
1326            was underquoting us, underbidding us by twenty-five  
                 percent.

1328 GW: That's a lot, isn't it?

HR: Yes, and I talked to the old chief engineer, who was  
1330            an old -- Well, actually, he was a German Jew that  
                 came over during the days of Hitler, and he settled  
1332            with Inland Steel Company. That was my major account  
                 -- was at Inland Steel. He said, "Well, what they  
1334            have done, they're paying the same price for all the  
                 steel that you're paying." He said, "But they are



1336 gambling. That twenty-five percent is that they have  
reduced the margin of safety by twenty-five percent.

1338 This is what you're doing today with many, many  
of these failures that you have. A lot of people say  
1340 I'm all wet. I have no business because I'm not  
registered, but I feel in many ways that I have maybe  
1342 forgotten more, and Carl Haussman has forgotten more,  
than what a lot of these people today -- the geniuses  
1344 that are losing money on State buildings. When is  
the last time you ever saw a building come in under  
1346 estimate? They're all thirty, forty, fifty percent  
over estimate. Nobody today even cares. They just  
1348 tax the people for money again. There's no control  
of quality. The last building in Lansing that we  
1350 built, and that was < unclear > job; that was the  
Presbyterian Church on Ottawa, and if you will look  
1352 when you're going by there one of these days, look at  
the dental work around the eave line. You know what  
1354 I mean with dental work, now?

GW: It's a beautiful church.

1356 HR: Right. Now do you realize that we had a man that  
spent six months just nailing those little square  
1358 blocks all the way around that building? The dental  
work? The other one that would be second to that  
1360 would be Trinity Lutheran. Those are the two last

1362 monuments of Renigers. When I say monument, it's  
something that I would be proud to show my kids. Now  
1364 Civic Center was built before that, so that would be  
a quasi-monument.

1366 My finest job would be -- Mother < unclear > at  
St. Lawrence -- I don't know if you ever happened to  
know her.

1368 GW: No.

1370 HR: Well, she was the Mother Superior. Renigers built  
the original St. Lawrence, and Mother < unclear > was  
1372 Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy for the State  
of Michigan. Today if you followed it, is Ohio,  
1374 Pennsylvania, there's about eight states now that are  
in Mercy \_\_\_\_\_. Mother < unclear > was retired, but  
1376 still -- when we built the east addition at St.  
Lawrence we got into the chapel. See, I was kind of  
1378 a handyman or a trouble shooter from the office. I'd  
worked down there. Again, I worked on everything at  
1380 St. Lawrence Hospital, doing the laundry room way  
back when I was in high school. This was the way  
things were, in those days though.

1382 She was very formal, and I was "Henry" always.  
To everybody else I was either Junior or Hank. She  
1384 says, "Now Henry, you've got to be very careful and  
you do the drain in the chapel. Well, not being a

1386 Catholic, I never -- (I don't think many Catholics  
even know either, that the holy water goes into pure  
1388 sand, white pure sand. It does not go into the  
sewer.) So here we are down there. We're getting  
1390 ready for the floor, and we put down -- like you  
remember the old sump pits that you used to have on  
1392 the farm? Only you fill it full of sand, and that's  
where the drain from the two sinks in the chapel went  
1394 to. This one day it was raining like the dickens,  
and we had just finished that, and she pulls up her  
1396 habit. In those days it was clear to the ground.  
She pulls up her habit and she takes off with her  
1398 construction boots on, the two of us in that mud,  
over there and inspected that. She took a stick, and  
1400 she was [poking around] in that hole; and all sand.  
She patted me on the back and she said, "You did a  
1402 good job on this, Henry." In other words, I gave her  
enough sand that she knew that that holy water was  
1404 going to be safe. It never would reach a drain or in  
any way would ever go into the ground water. It  
1406 would have dissipated within the sand.

GW: What a nice story.

1408 HR: There's so many. We've got hundreds of stories like  
that of construction. Like Harold Childs, the  
1410 architect from East Lansing, that did the Rider House

and so many other places in Lansing. My future wife  
1412 stayed with the Childs'. When Renigers came to  
Lansing, Harold Childs was one of the first  
1414 architects who worked at that time with (I forget the  
fellow's name). Anyway, the whole block -- Ever  
1416 heard of Kerr Street in Lansing? Kerr Street, along  
with five other streets were changed during World  
1418 War I, because they were German names.

GW: Oh, I've heard that. My George told me about the  
1420 name changes and how they changed the cornerstone of  
the German Methodist Church (the Seymour Avenue  
1422 Church) around, so that the German on the cornerstone  
is on the inside of what we see today. I was just  
1424 amazed. I get duck bumps when I think about that.

HR: I know, but what was your background or what  
1426 heritage? Were you English?

GW: My father was a German Kebler. He was first  
1428 generation American. My mother was old American;  
Howe.

1430 HR: So you're like our family then. You had the Germans  
that came in. My grandmother and grandfather were  
1432 the Gauss Baking Company.

GW: Gauss and Reniger are both of German background.

1434 HR: Yes, but you see the Gauss' were all immigrants, and  
the Renigers were all DAR. They came to Pennsylvania  
1436 way back in the 1750's.

GW: Way back in the days of the Hessians, and never went  
1438 home. < Laugh >

HR: Right. The ancestor, the Reniger that we came from  
1440 was in Oil City, Pennsylvania: One year they were  
rich, and the next year they were destitute. They  
1442 were in that Oil City area when they discovered the  
first oil. That's the ones that ended up in Olivet  
1444 and all through that area, coming into this part of  
the state. There I go jumping around again.

1446 GW: That's alright. You can jump around.

HR: The Gauss Baking Company was a quarter up there;  
1448 everything that they had left over was given to  
welfare: But all of a sudden they were boycotted by  
1450 Schmidt Brothers, who were Germans, and all the rest  
of the other stores. They claimed that the Gauss  
1452 Baking Company, since it was German, was grinding up  
glass and putting it in the bread to poison people.  
1454 These are tales that I'm not -- and here my uncle was  
in the trenches in France. Lansing had some weird,  
1456 ornery tales.

GW: Yes. I heard a terrible story from my mother about  
1458 how -- She was a young bride at this time living in

Grand Ledge. My father was twenty-four years older  
1460 than my mother. She told me that there was a German  
man who did speak English, and he didn't buy Liberty  
1462 Bonds because he didn't understand. He didn't have  
communication with the rest of the community. He was  
1464 in his eighties, and the leading young men of the  
community (like chamber of commerce sort of people)  
1466 put a rope around his neck and dragged him across the  
Grand River Bridge there (that they're now ready to  
1468 take apart and do it over). He died as a result of  
it. They really killed that man. Some terrible,  
1470 terrible things happened.

HR: You know, it's interesting, because I get so  
1472 disgusted with ethnic groups today because they're no  
different than what we did. To me today, to be  
1474 honest with you, I feel that if people want to change  
our way of life, they ought to go back where they  
1476 came from. That was the thing, that any immigrant  
that ever came to the United States, the first thing  
1478 they wanted to do was forget their heritage and  
become Americanized.

1480 GW: Each group seemed to have set aside a certain part of  
it, a large part of it. They wanted to be  
1482 acculturated, didn't they?

HR: Yes, but now you take the Gauss's for example. There  
1484 again, I've been very fortunate that my uncle spent  
his last years back here in North Lansing with me.

1486 GW: Your Uncle Max?

HR: No, Lawrence Gauss, of the Gauss Baking Company, In  
1488 fact, it was his wife, my aunt that just passed away  
last night. That's the last; I'm now the oldest of  
1490 any of the Renigers or the Gauss's.

GW: The Gauss is through your --

1492 HR: My mother's side -- and there you see, it's a small  
world because my dad met my mother, who was  
1494 bookkeeper at Lawrence Baking Company when Dad was  
treasurer of the Lawrence Baking Company. He ends up  
1496 marrying her, and this is the time of the Gauss  
Baking Company. I was born in the big old house on  
1498 Clark Street which is two doors from that big  
three-story block factory building, which my  
1500 grandparents built as the first bakery there. (I  
mean their last bakery.) When people get snobby with  
1502 me about North Lansing ("What do you know about  
it?"), I say, "Hell, I was born in it; where were you  
1504 born?" It's kind of like tongue-in-cheek.  
< Laughter > My uncle did spend a lot of time with  
1506 me, all through those last years. Here he'd come in  
and visit, and go down to the little bakery, the

1508 German bakery, Rick and Susie. So I was able to  
acquire many, many -- in fact, all of my albums that  
1510 I have now have all been about the Gauss Family. I  
borrowed his prints and had new negatives made. Then  
1512 remember the book that was put out (I've got it here  
somewhere), the one that was put out by the savings  
1514 and loan out -- O.K. You know there's about a dozen  
pictures in there of the Gauss Family, and the bakery  
1516 and --

GW: < unclear >, and you had them, didn't you?

1518 HR: Yes. So all of these things have come together, and  
I've got all the buildings along the avenue here. I  
1520 like our models here, you see. Now these are all  
handmade right from the original photographs.

1522 GW: You've made all these?

HR: Yes, these are all knocked out in a period of a month  
1524 and a half along with my other fellows at the  
computers at L.C.C., or from M.S.U.

1526 GW: This is made out of cardboard.

HR: Yes. These are all handmade on the drawing -- See,  
1528 I sat down and drew them all up on the drawing board,  
cut them out. The kids came in, my artists. You  
1530 know what those buildings are.

GW: This is the comfort station, right next door.



1532 HR: This is the one that was torn down for the bank, up  
on the corner. My aunt (the one that died); this is  
1534 where her office was as ticket salesman for the Arbor  
Line to Owosso.

1536 GW: Oh, really? What was your aunt's name, that died?

HR: Hulda Gauss.

1538 GW: Hulda, and she was in her nineties.

HR: Ninety-one, ninety-two, and they were very dear  
1540 friends of all the Cregos, and the Affeldts, all the  
old German families. But you see, now this is our  
1542 young art -- Now, both of the boys here have decided  
now that they're working on their graduate work for  
1544 either Museum, Library Science, or something. It's  
all come about just because they've hung around with  
1546 me and worked on this kind of stuff, and see all they  
are is just that heavy art work. But that's what  
1548 comes with being able to conceive as a builder. This  
is what I say: As a Master Builder you can sit down  
1550 and draw these out. I knocked these all out, maybe  
in a couple of hours. Then they're on these big  
1552 boards, like you see over at the museum. The guys  
took them home, they colored them, did all that; and  
1554 then they brought them back, and I cut them out and  
put them together.

1556 GW: And that's how you got that exhibit going.

- HR: That's how we got it done in the time we did, yes.
- 1558 GW: Thousands of people must have seen that.
- HR: But here's the one that we had all the fun with. We
- 1560 spent hours on this one.
- GW: Cedar Street School, with all those windows!
- 1562 HR: Yes. It's all hand done.
- GW: Oh, my word!
- 1564 HR: Dan -- now this is the young fellow that was over there during the time when we were running cranes --
- 1566 did all that, all hand drawn with the instruments.
- GW: A lot of patience. So if somebody says, "What's the
- 1568 feature of the community that's most rewarding to you?" you'd probably say 'opportunity to share,'
- 1570 really.
- HR: Yes!
- 1572 GW: That's one of the features that's been great for you, hasn't it?
- 1574

1576 < Tape 2, Side 1 >

- HR: < unclear >
- 1578 GW: And you said "terribly nosy." You'll have to explain that. < Laughter >
- 1580 HR: Well, O.K. A trait of (the ethnic trait) -- now maybe you've noticed it in your family, if you've got

1582           the old German behind you. To me, there's no one any  
              nosier than a person whose heritage came from  
1584           Northern Europe. You can find it with the Polish,  
              the Lithuanian countries, the Germans, the English;  
1586           they're very, very nosy. They've got to know  
              everything. In other words, they'll keep asking you  
1588           questions where you feel "It's none of your damn  
              business," in a sense. All my relations were that  
1590           way. To give you an example of a funny little thing  
              that happens, and this is so hard when you have a  
1592           young wife who was brought up straight-laced, Upstate  
              New York, with an Old English background.  
1594           Incidentally, our kids are the thirteenth generation  
              on American soil. Actually, Shirl's grandparents  
1596           came over to get away from the days of Bloody Mary  
              with all the beheadings. In other words, if you were  
1598           Protestant, you got the heck out of England. That's  
              how they came over.

1600                     Anyway, my dad -- my uncles -- they'd stand  
                          right there and ask you your age. They'd ask you all  
1602           these questions that some people would say that it's  
              none of your darn business, but I've learned it's the  
1604           only way you learn.

GW: And you're saying that it's cultural.

1606 HR: Entirely, because maybe you had it at home all the  
time; you never thought anything of it because it was  
1608 a cultural, but you run into some of these other  
ethnic groups and they're affronted. Then we become  
1610 pushy; you could almost say that you take the old  
Jewish trader. He was always considered a pushy type  
1612 of person. It's strictly ethnic, because they're all  
that way. They don't realize they're doing it,  
1614 because they're all that way. You take your old  
German families --

1616 GW: Well, the best thing you can ask is "How's the  
business?"

1618 HR: Yes. "What's your return today?" or "How much you  
make on that or this?" and today with the way things  
1620 are, it's no more. The tricky thing, and if you've  
got any people working on history, there's one thing  
1622 I've learned and it's worked like a charm. I know a  
lady hates to tell you how old she is.

1624 GW: Oh, I don't mind. < Laugh >

HR: But you see, you're not like the other ninety nine  
1626 percent. I've as much as had my face slapped because  
I'd asked somebody their age and it's none of my damn  
1628 business. That's the way most of these women are  
today. Now you're the old school again. You stop  
1630 and think of these young ones today that the --

GW: I'm just so glad to have made it this far, Hank.

1632 HR: I know it. But my secret is, we'll be visiting about  
something and I'm trying to spot a young lady or a  
1634 woman of any age. You know how I can get her age  
without her even thinking about it? Ask her what  
1636 year she graduated from high school.

GW: Oh, yes. That's a pretty good indicator.

1638 HR: < Laugh > And you'll be within a year or two: But  
then they say, "Well, what do you want to know that  
1640 for?" Say because then "It places you in my mind as  
to the frame, the location of where you would fall  
1642 within the history." I think basically, the biggest  
thing that ever hit me was the -- I worked on the  
1644 Bicentennial, but the Sesquicentennial was the thing  
that really to me, we went ape with; and I know you  
1646 did. But we had experiences and if nothing more, and  
this is another thing I lecture on today is how to  
1648 get people into writing down things. Now the average  
person is afraid to sit down and write, but nobody's  
1650 afraid to keep a little diary of this little  
happening and that little happening.

1652 GW: People do not keep diaries as they used to.

HR: But I mean if you could get them just to put down all  
1654 these little notes, because everything that I've  
written -- Right now, I think I'm up around twelve

1656 different papers (we call them papers, so then  
they're not quite as gushy with it.) But I've  
1658 checked through with the copyright act, and you know  
that they will allow you to take all the -- That's  
1660 why you've noticed everything that I write here, like  
little thumbnails, et cetera. Those all become  
1662 chapters in a book when you do want to put it under  
one binder and then copyright it as a total. Now  
1664 until you nosed around and found that out, you  
wouldn't think of it.

1666 GW: That's one of the things we have to do here today, is  
to sign a, what we call a --

1668 HR: Yes, your disclaimer, whatever the sheet is. Yes.

GW: It's a deed of gift. I brought one with me, Hank.

1670 HR: I hope you and I've gotten -- the main thing is, if  
you've got anything else -- another main thing too,  
1672 that you'll notice in the book that we presented to  
the library on the Reniger Company (I should say that  
1674 I hope the Society part); and that is on steam  
horsepower and diesel jet. Did you see that part,  
1676 what we've led through? And that is another major  
thing is that you realize that we were still using a  
1678 horse and a pan for all grading and digging of  
basements, excavating. Do you know when the first  
1680 backhoe came out?

- GW: No, I don't know the date.
- 1682 HR: After World War II, because that's why they were  
steam shovels before. You never saw a steam backhoe.
- 1684 All you saw was a steam shovel. The first, when you  
look at all the pictures of Reniger's equipment,  
1686 everything up until after World War II still had  
steam cranes. We never owned a diesel. We never  
1688 owned a gasoline motor, except on small equipment.  
We've gone to spades. We have TV. People think of  
1690 that's all in the last what, forty years. You also  
can add the diesel, the bulldozer, the crane.
- 1692 GW: Ready-mixed cement.
- HR: Oh, no, no.
- 1694 GW: When did that come?
- HR: We had that in '37.
- 1696 GW: In '37? That was earlier.
- HR: That was the very first thing because the first  
1698 building in the Lansing area was Mason Hall. Did you  
get a copy of my story on that? I think it was in  
1700 the bundle somewhere.
- GW: I think it was in that folder that I saw at the  
1702 library.
- HR: Or would it be in the other one? There's the paper  
1704 that I gave. This is more of my lecturing things.

- That's the paper that also was given to the State.
- 1706 That was on the construction of Mason Hall.
- GW: Oh, this is your talk on the building of Mason Hall.
- 1708 HR: Yes. That's another of the papers that we've added.
- GW: Is this a duplicate, that I can take with me?
- 1710 HR: Yes, you can have that.
- GW: Thank you.
- 1712 HR: The other one is in the book but it's got all of the  
pictures, the photographs of the construction, et  
1714 cetera. Remember that was in '37, and I worked on  
it. Well in '37, I was still in junior high. So  
1716 here's all these poor old senile faculty out at this  
party, and this party was a fabulous thing.
- 1718 GW: You had a great party, and you were the youngest  
person there.
- 1720 HR: No, I was the only one that wasn't senile.  
< Laughter >
- 1722 GW: Oh, come on, Hank! < Laughter >
- HR: No, I'm serious! < Laughter > And there was East  
1724 Lansing High School.
- GW: Our long-term memory is better than our short-term.
- 1726 HR: Here was the invitation to it.
- GW: February 2, 1989, at Michigan State.
- 1728 HR: Yes, and here you can see all of this stuff, and this  
is the program. This is in part what I've got in one



1730 of the other sources, and then here was this paper  
that you have here.

1732 GW: Yes, your speech, and then look at all the  
photographs you've got.

1734 HR: And you notice the old crane, steam cranes yet.

GW: Steam cranes, right.

1736 HR: Now this was later, you see this was the other, but  
we got moving on this project after the war because  
1738 we used the drawings from the other one. So just a  
case that I went to work on all that stuff.

1740 GW: To build the Snyder-Phillips Dormitory.

HR: These are the steam tunnels all around under campus.

1742 You could drive a car down through them, or a pickup;  
they're so big.

1744 There's our concrete plant. We couldn't get  
Redi-Mix, so we opened our own plant and set it up at  
1746 the college, for all the buildings that we did.

Another thing (talk about as a kid), I was able  
1748 to ride the Great Lakes freighters, both the Huron  
Cement and Inland Steel because of my dad's  
1750 relationship with them back in the twenties. So see,  
everything ties into a pattern.

1752 GW: That must have been a thrill for a young -- well, for  
anybody, but especially for a youngster.

1754 HR: Yes. And there was Dad with the National Bricklayers Contest out at MSU.

1756 GW: They still have that, don't they?

HR: Yes.

1758 GW: He died in 1969?

HR: Yes. And this "Means of Education," I'll give you

1760 that too. You may want these for you own.

GW: I made a photocopy.

1762 HR: I don't think they had these though.

GW: No. This looks different, Henry.

1764 HR: This is all brand-new, see I just finished that in '89.

1766 GW: This looks different; I don't have a copy of that.

HR: This is my one to Tom Jones, when I sent him all this  
1768 stuff.

GW: Oh, yes, for the Centennial business.

1770 HR: I sent him the picture I found, but here's the story of the building. We can catch it on this one over

1772 here -- real fabulous. You never think of these. Do you know Edna Brookover?

1774 GW: I know who she is, but I'm not acquainted with her.

HR: How we got into this was that Edna was writing the  
1776 history of the Quonset living, because Wilbur was a professor. He came to Michigan State right after the

1778 war, when they had to live in the Quonsets.

GW: I heard she was involved with that.

1780 HR: So what do they do; they call me, "What have we got  
on Quonsets?" Well, you see, Christman built all the  
1782 Quonsets on campus while we did the other side. That  
got me going. Everybody bugs me into writing a paper  
1784 now on the construction after the war.

GW: It was just like a bubbling cell out there.

1786 HR: The point was, that it all came about: Little known,  
forgotten construction; it was Harry F. Kelly. Right  
1788 here, you probably read faster than I can.

GW: 1943: Harry Kelly established a special committee  
1790 for the development of a post-war program for higher  
education. President John Hanna and Henry Reniger,  
1792 Sr. were appointed. Both would soon become  
subcommittee members of the federal post-war program  
1794 for higher education, with top priority travel  
ratings to and from Washington, D.C.

1796 HR: Now you know what that meant. Remember that, with  
the top travel? They could get on any plane and fly  
1798 to Washington, where everybody else either took the  
train or whatever, or waited.

1800 GW: Yes, waited. And then, "Henry was appointed to the  
National Building Trades Apprentice Board," because  
1802 that apprentice program wasn't in force then, Hank.

HR: Do you know where it was really one of the first  
1804 places it was instituted? Lansing Technical School.  
That's when they opened Sexton, and they turned over  
1806 the old Central High to Lansing Tech. We had all the  
training programs. You had the electrical, you had  
1808 the automotive, you had the typesetters (which were  
booming in those days, you remember). The printers,  
1810 and all the kids that didn't want to go on to college  
-- they could take their trade school at Lansing  
1812 Tech.

GW: And that was really the parent of L.C.C, Lansing  
1814 Community College.

HR: It makes them mad, because L.C.C. was supposed to be  
1816 following the same thing, and then Gannon gets in  
there and closes our streets and shuts off the North  
1818 End. Plus he puts in a basketball team, swimming  
teams, and now it's just another glorified college.

GW: But it's true, isn't it, to say that Lansing Tech as  
1820 you knew it was the parent of Lansing Community  
1822 College?

HR: Yes. We keep talking about it in here, but people  
1824 today don't believe you. Well, see, we had all  
technicians. In fact, the biggest war that Dad had  
1826 (along with the people) was education, because the  
educational groups would not approve of having a

1828           bricklayer teaching, because he didn't have a college  
                  degree as a teacher.

1830   GW:   But now they have changed that, Hank.

          HR:   They let you have both: I mean they work together,  
1832           but back in those days we finally had a real hassle.  
                  Then see, I served a time of twelve years on the  
1834           Carpenter Board. That's all in these two papers  
                  here, that other one.

1836   GW:   I appreciate having those.

          HR:   Whatever you want to do, whether you want to pass  
1838           them on, or let me know.

          GW:   I'm going to file these with the transcript of your  
1840           tapes.

          HR:   O.K., because you've got everything else, too.

1842   GW:   You're left-handed.

          HR:   Yes. That's another year I was a year behind in  
1844           school, because they --

          GW:   Oh, did they try to change you over?

1846   HR:   They fought, yes. See, I flunked out a term. I was  
                  held back third grade because I couldn't write. When  
1848           they let me put my pencil back in my left hand, I  
                  took off like a wild bird. They were vicious in  
1850           these school systems then.

          GW:   I wonder if that didn't have something to do with  
1852           your arithmetic, your mathematical --

HR: Could've: Because why can I do add and subtract,  
1854 multiply and divide today in my head? You know  
another thing that I love too; and I laugh at my kids  
1856 -- I say, "Look, you kids today with all your  
brilliance and your damned computers, you'd starve  
1858 and you'd freeze in the dark if somebody pulled the  
plug." Because they wouldn't know how to get into a  
1860 can without a can opener; they couldn't add and  
subtract without a calculator.

1862 GW: Do they say, "Oh, Dad!"?

HR: Yes, they do now because they're getting old enough.  
1864 They begin to understand this, and John (getting his  
CPA) and Christy are getting so they do not trust  
1866 computers at all. That computer is only as good as  
that kook that's putting it into the machine. This  
1868 leads you back again to the failures in construction  
of buildings.

1870 GW: Well, it's no panacea. It's just a tool.

HR: Yes, and it's the ignorant imbecile that's putting it  
1872 into the machine. It's not the brain that's doing  
it.

1874 GW: Isn't it like a lot of inventions, Hank, that when  
they are first new we give too much responsibility to  
1876 them, when it's really our own intellect that must be  
refined.

1878 HR: Yes. I make a double parallel, though. The one  
thing is, after the war remember what a boon DDT was,  
1880 and what it turned out to be such a serious --

GW: Evil, yes.

1882 HR: But that was something that we created as a product.  
What you create with your brain and assume that it's  
1884 right, that's what worries me. This is what computer  
science is today. There's nobody double checking  
1886 that computer. If all you're doing is turning the  
price of five hundred dozen eggs, or something like  
1888 that, or putting it into the computer to draw it out  
that Hey, here we've got so many eggs; that's fine.  
1890 But don't tell me that you're going to design another  
State Museum and do it all on a computer, because  
1892 there's nobody double checking, because they're all  
taking the word of the computer. What I'm trying to  
1894 say, computers are great as long as you're using them  
as a tool. Let's not use it as a thinking science.

1896 GW: Maybe that's what one of your suggestions to young  
people, or to the residents or business people of the  
1898 future would be.

HR: This is why there's none of us around because you  
1900 see, in a sense, Carl Haussman is almost ten years  
older than I am.

- 1902 GW: You're in your mid sixties. Oh, Carl is older than  
you are.
- 1904 HR: Yes, and he's at least seventy-six or so -- seventy-  
seven, I forget. This is why he's such a  
1906 < unclear >.
- GW: < Laugh > I guess I'll have to call Carl, and ask --
- 1908 HR: This thing is turned off now, isn't it?  
GW: No, it's still running.
- 1910 HR: Better turn it off a minute.  
GW: Got a story to tell me?
- 1912 HR: Yes, well, maybe we should have it!  
GW: I think you ought to tell, Hank.
- 1914 HR: He had a case that he got so mad. He had a building  
that he was building in town, and he felt that the  
1916 owners were trying to stick him for something that he  
was right on. He was so mad that he walked down and  
1918 he pulled all his money out of their bank.  
GW: < Laughter > I love it.
- 1920 HR: You see, this is the frustration that you are going  
through, the same as I am.
- 1922 GW: I guess it's just generational, every generation.  
HR: No, but we learn many, many things are done the same  
1924 way today that they were a thousand years ago, or  
five hundred. Honesty: Probably the biggest thing  
1926 that's hard for me is the loose moral life today.



- 1928            There's no more morals than a jackrabbit, compared to  
                 what we were brought up under. This honesty to one's  
                 spouse; today there's no such thing. Why, it's so  
1930            odd when we run across somebody who's younger that  
                 even has the same kind of beliefs that we've got.  
1932            Our daughter-in-law from Wichita (that's now in San  
                 Diego), she told Shirl one day and Shirl just about  
1934            dropped her face: She said, "Why Mother, I've never  
                 known anybody that's been married as long as you and  
1936            Dad have." Judas, at that time we'd only been  
                 married thirty-five years.
- 1938    GW: That's a long time, Hank. < Laughter >  
                 HR: Yes, because we celebrated our fortieth anniversary  
1940            in England. That's when we took our month-and-a-half  
                 trip over there.
- 1942    GW: I think you're over the hump now. I think this  
                 marriage is going to last.
- 1944    HR: Yes. The only thing we worry about now is our own  
                 health lasting, because that's what we run into now.
- 1946    GW: Yes.  
                 HR: Another thing that I get very upset about is that I'm  
1948            one of the "notch babies." That's never affected the  
                 woman like it has the man. This notch baby thing is  
1950            probably one of the most cruel things to ever come  
                 out of our government. Know what I mean?

1952 GW: I don't know what you're talking about.

HR: O.K., the notch baby's anybody that was born between  
1954 1919 and 1929, for the Social Security. You see, my  
disabilities -- I'm not making as much on Social  
1956 Security today as a common laborer would get, because  
I did not pay the maximum all those years. The part  
1958 that's dishonest about it, and that's the only thing  
I've got to agree with old Claude Pepper about (and  
1960 he was an old fool in a sense), was that the notch  
baby, the Social Security Act in the fifties,  
1962 arbitrarily said that anyone born between 1919 and  
1929 would have all of their records of Social  
1964 Security prior to 1950 purged.

Now I started work in 19-- well, way back.  
1966 I've paid Social Security since it started in 1938,  
and it is wrong to take all of my Social Security  
1968 credits from '38 through '51 and throw it away, and  
then when now that I needed it, I'm way short because  
1970 of my not working full time the last fifteen years  
because of disability. Now they could have said that  
1972 since there's a disability here (and it's legal),  
that they should have allowed you to keep that to  
1974 have met the amount.

Joe Iding and Phil Albers, many of them that are  
1976 very active over at St. Mary's Cathedral -- all we're

1978           doing today is advising, working with many, many  
1980           people who are destitute by the loss of that. Then  
1982           another angle -- As long as we're on the thing we  
1984           might as well get up on the stand. (Now I'm  
1986           preaching,) but the other thing that's bad was the  
1988           Internal Revenue Act, which has killed people my age.  
1990           It won't affect you because you're in the widow  
1992           status with the other. First off, the ethnic again;  
1994           I was brought up to invest in the way that my  
1996           grandfather and my father had, in real estate that  
1998           someday would be your retirement. So twelve years  
              ago, with all of this oil deal with everybody  
              becoming millionaires, IRS put through that law which  
              affected all excess profits. Now when you have built  
              real estate, like we did at Mill Street and the  
              others; that when we sold it was to be my retirement.  
              Now, IRS deems it as excessive profit and taxes it at  
              sixty percent. Now that's where many of them, like  
              myself, have planned on our retirement and seen it  
              wiped out by our government. We're not only getting  
              a double whammy; we get social security and we get  
              that.

GW: You lost during the Depression.

2000 HR: We didn't because I started after the Depression.

2002 GW: But there was a generation from whom you would have inherited.

2004 HR: No, because say a person that was born before 1919 never lost anything of his Social Security.

2006 GW: No, not in Social Security, but you've lived through several traumatic economic times.

2008 HR: Yes. We figured that they hit us -- I myself lost a good hundred and fifty thousand dollars in excessive taxes. I'm talking about this so-called, like this  
2010 oil, where this guy bought it for a dollar and sold it for a hundred dollars. Now that to me is  
2012 excessive profit, so to say.

GW: That's gouging.

2014 HR: When all you're doing is looking at holding a piece of property for forty years, it's going to appreciate  
2016 -- we know it, but we planned on it because that's the way we were brought up. It wasn't like the  
2018 hot-shot that has been into it three years and he's made that killing. We had planned by the way our  
2020 parents told us, "That is your retirement."

GW: Then when you retired you found out it wasn't --

2022 HR: It's all been wiped out; and these are the poor souls that today are destitute over at their churches, and  
2024 going in, and Joe Iding and the others are working with. Joe said: "Hey, you've got a tale. We've got

2026 people over at the church that could make you look  
like you're almost a saint or a wealthy person,  
2028 because they've been totally wiped out by the same  
government acts. Acts of government. Then we let  
2030 somebody like Blanchard and these others just tack it  
on, and all the deals they do today.

2032 You want to get another person, if you can ever  
get him, is Don Moore, our County Treasurer.

2034 GW: Oh, yes.

HR: You realize how government has grown in the last  
2036 thirty years. When Don Moore went to work at the  
county, you know how many county employees there were  
2038 back when he became County Treasurer?

GW: Oh, I have no idea, but probably nothing.

2040 HR: Less than five hundred, and how many thousands have  
we got in Ingham County alone today?

2042 GW: Tremendous!

HR: When you went to work for the State, you had two  
2044 office buildings, and now you've got what, fifteen?  
scattered around the state?

2046 GW: Half of Lansing is rented for State offices.

HR: Yes, and the part that gets me is that everybody  
2048 claims about the high employment in Michigan. My dad  
taught me way back in the beginning that the day you  
2050 become 'service' industry, then "you have become a

parasite of your society." Being a parasite, now --  
2052 I know that you're wondering what I mean!

GW: That's an interesting statement.

2054 HR: It is, but I'll tell you why it is: Because you're  
depleting. You're not building, you're depleting our  
2056 worth. See, a manufacturing job is you're making  
something to sell. When you become a service  
2058 employee, you are not producing; you are only  
depleting what you already have. When you think of  
2060 it in that light, that's our whole trouble in this  
country today, is that we're not a producing country  
2062 any longer. We are now depleting; we are living off  
our own fat, so to say.

2064 GW: We are considered a service society?

HR: Yes, and when they talk about all this high  
2066 employment, if you were to knock out all the service,  
we'd be worse off than we were back during the Iron  
2068 Age. The iron -- the rust belt area, so it's all  
just a great big hyped-up case of the governor and  
2070 the rest.

Now I go along with a certain degree of it,  
2072 because you have got to have a certain degree of  
health, and you've got to have a certain degree of  
2074 education, which really is a service industry. But  
to be rating hamburger stands and all that kind of

2076           stuff as service jobs, and to be using them is to say  
                  that we're so high on our employment today.

2078   GW:   To use them for statistical purposes.

          HR:   Yes, you're right.   See, you've had enough of that  
2080           state that you know what I mean, where the average  
                  person will never get it through their head.

2082   GW:   That's the way you communicate and manipulate.

          HR:   Yes.   Doesn't it make you sick sometimes?

2084   GW:   Well, it's a fascinating study.

          HR:   I just hope we live long that we can develop the rest  
2086           of it.   I still have three more projects to do before  
                  I hope I'm not able to do any more.

2088   GW:   Only three?   < Laughter >

          HR:   Yes.   I did pretty well getting through these.

2090   GW:   I think you've got a lot more than that ahead of you,  
                  Hank.

2092   HR:   Are you interested in anything in East Lansing?

          GW:   Yes, but I think I'd better come back another day,  
2094           and talk about East Lansing.

          HR:   Well, I'll give you this.   This is what I'm just  
2096           finishing.   This is history now.   This is a map that  
                  I just finished last night, and that's the one on the  
2098           wall there.

          GW:   The Michigan Agricultural College, 1910.

2100 HR: That's that one right there. Now you notice in the  
title block here that's down in the corner? This is  
2102 my whole new story that we're just working on.

GW: That says 1910, and this says copyright 1913.

2104 HR: This is why my disclaimer over here see, 1910, and  
then with the overlay.

2106 GW: O.K., reading from right to left here.

HR: What I've done -- well, here's the book. This is the  
2108 book that was put out by our historical society for  
all of our new historic districts of East Lansing.  
2110 Here's the 1913-15 map. This is the only one that  
we've had that I could work on. What I've done is I  
2112 took this copy of this and made my overlays and  
blanked them out, and that's how we ended up with  
2114 this map you've got here. That's why we call it  
that, because there's no other printed source of  
2116 that, until I made this.

See, this is where I'm having all my fun today.

2118 People say it bores them to hell, but --

GW: I don't think so: It doesn't bore me. Have you used  
2120 some of those fire insurance maps out at --

HR: Yes. I got them and Robert has run off copies for  
2122 me, and everybody else has, but the one I have all  
the fun with is Race Street here. You know where it  
2124 got its name was the Old Mill Race: But then we find



2126 out there's two more races that ran along here, out  
the river.

GW: They show up on those early Plat Maps.

2128 HR: Right; the ones that the insurance put out, because  
they got those from the state or the city.

2130 GW: The City's Plat Maps that are filed with the State  
Archives shows those other little races that went out  
2132 to the river.

HR: Right. Now, did you have a copy of that one?

2134 GW: No.

HR: O.K., this is the one that the girls prepared for me  
2136 over at the State Museum. They ran off a couple  
thousand of these things, and these are the ones that  
2138 are on file over at the Docent things at the  
Archives.

2140 GW: I'm going to file this with your interview. I'll  
make a copy for myself, but I'll file this with the  
2142 interview.

HR: Yes, but this is the one I just finished in January.

2144 GW: January 6, 1990. Yes, we talked about this on the  
telephone one day.

2146 HR: That covers that, and then here is the file -- This  
is just being presented now to the historical  
2148 society. See, I'm the new chairman of the new  
projects, so we do all these kinds of things to give

2150 new people an idea what we want, and what they can  
work on with projects. Those two are inserts into  
2152 this, and this you see was tongue-in-cheek again,  
because everybody told me that it was all wet until  
2154 we actually found it. < Laugh >

This is my paper that I use when I lecture. It  
2156 was actually known as Village of Agriculture College  
by the Post Office.

2158 GW: Right, and you find some cancels from the Post  
Office.

2160 HR: It was College Farm, and it was on my map of that,  
and the utility of this because everything is right  
2162 where you can understand what I'm doing, where the  
average person doesn't know what the word  
2164 < unclear >. Actually right today I've probably  
found at least five hundred errors in East Lansing  
2166 history, because nobody ever had anything before  
1930.

2168 GW: Don't start in on Ingham County. You'll lose your  
mind. < Laugh > That's the sad part when it gets  
2170 written down, isn't it Hank, when people think it's  
true.

2172 HR: I know it; but really here, this is my favorite thing  
that I learned from you and other people: Historians  
2174 hate to be corrected.

GW: Did I teach you that?

2176 HR: All of you have, everybody! I mean this is the  
point, but I've learned from somebody over there that  
2178 I have used the following disclosure: However actual  
the state or county records --

2180 GW: And the state-commissioned records introduce another  
theory to the actual date.

2182 HR: Now you see, nobody is being affronted when you use  
that disclosure. Who do you suppose the number one  
2184 person -- two people that have become my dearest  
friends in the last two years? Ford Ceasar and  
2186 Justin Kestenbaum. Those two people; talk about  
right down snob ways. All of a sudden you have done  
2188 enough that you're finally accepted as an equal. (For  
you and I, tongue-in-cheek). You know what I mean.  
2190 It makes you feel good, though, because you've been  
down-trodden so damn long because we're just a work  
2192 nut.

See here these go all through all this stuff.  
2194 You can take these with you, but here's all the  
original plats. I've got all the books for that, and  
2196 there's the areas. See Plank Road, all the way down.  
And Franklin Avenue came down to here, on other  
2198 sources that I've got. It takes in your railroads.  
Here's all my references, which is most of those you

2200 run across. < unclear > That's part of the old  
story. Anyway these three things together, with your  
2202 new map; (you might even say) hot off the press,  
because I just finished that. I just ran those  
2204 copies last night, and they're going to go tomorrow.

GW: That's great. The ink's just getting dry. Well,  
2206 this has been a lot of fun, Hank.

HR: I knew we would have, once we ever got the time and  
2208 you know, it's almost five o'clock. We blow time  
like --

2210 GW: Some other day will you come back, and we'll turn on  
this machine again, and we'll make the rest of the  
2212 world over?

HR: I think what you ought to do now -- You've got an  
2214 idea of all the stuff we've got.

GW: Oh, this is a great collection.

2216 HR: Then, because I need you and I need the other gals; I  
need your advice, really, who it should go to.

2218 GW: I think it's important that you put all of it in one  
place.

2220 HR: These all came out of my fire files, so here's the  
way I set these up. This is everything I'm doing to  
2222 Grayling's. I'm giving them memos, so I've got a  
record of who gets what; many old famous pictures.

- 2224            You've been around Grayling. You know Shopnagon, the  
                 old chief.
- 2226    GW:    Oh yes, Chief Shopnagon. Oh, that's an interesting  
                 picture of him. I've never seen that before.
- 2228    HR:    Yes, but you see, this was taken within three hundred  
                 yards of our camp.
- 2230    GW:    He was beautiful face, wasn't he?  
                 HR:    Yes.
- 2232    GW:    That's a covered bridge!  
                 HR:    No, no. This is our camp's -- shelter.
- 2234    GW:    Oh, that's what that is; that's the shelter! Isn't  
                 that beautiful?
- 2236    HR:    Let me show you the map over here that I made, on the  
                 wall here. This gives you an idea of what you can  
2238            get into -- This I made for Christmas for our kids  
                 for Christmas two years ago. This is Crawford County  
2240            overlaid from 1929 and '30, through 1950. These are  
                 all overlays. Then we came up from Roscommon and did  
2242            all the trails. Then right here is Reniger Camp, and  
                 this is the blowup of it.
- 2244            Back in the thirties and forties, when a county  
                 map was prepared they put every established camp on  
2246            the maps, because it was self-sufficient. We could  
                 sleep twenty-eight people in beds, and it was just a  
2248            great big old rough camp -- no interior finish except

the studs. That's where we had all these different  
2250 things. That's where I've taken my national awards,  
fishing with fly and < unclear >. Each of my kids  
2252 poled the Au Sable Riverboat to Wakely Bridge. At  
the bridge they received recognition for what they  
2254 had done for Jim Wakely.

That big fire we had a month ago started right  
2256 here and went right across [like this].

GW: Well yes, southwest < unclear >

2258 HR: It actually ended up right in here, Bald Hill and  
Lovells area.

2260 GW: That's a beautiful place -- < unclear >

HR: I guess what I'm trying to say there, is that what  
2262 we're looking at there is; you can see the total of  
training that I've got. I'm not just stuck in one  
2264 thing. I've hopped, skipped, and jumped from one  
thing to another. It's all come about because if you  
2266 had a brain, you could conceive taking -- The  
average person that you and I find today has no  
2268 conception of how to go about completing a product or  
a project. For example with that map, that's three  
2270 or four overlays. This map that you've got here of  
East Lansing is actually a total of about eight  
2272 overlays, and what would we do without Kinko's today?

GW: < Laughter > I know!

2274 HR: For a nickel a sheet, you make up the rough one, you  
put on an overlay, you run over there, and I buy my  
2276 little whiteout, because that's special for  
photocopy. Oh, incidentally, I'll give you a handful  
2278 of these. They're becoming antiques. I've still got  
probably a couple thousand of them left. These are  
2280 our pens that we had for --

GW: Oh! bless your heart.

2282 HR: The key is, that is the kind of ink for photocopy  
work. It's not regular, because everything will come  
2284 out black. All my work that I do is all done with  
one of those pens. That's how it comes out so black.  
2286 It's what they call photocopy work the same as this  
is for copies, you see.

2288 GW: Whiteout just for copies. Well, thank you.

HR: Next time you buy this junk, make sure you get the  
2290 kind for copies, because the others that you have for  
typing a lot of times won't work.

2292 GW: I know, won't cover.

HR: Also, all of my paper that I buy today -- everything  
2294 I've got here's done on a ruled line, but my lines do  
not come through because you can set that copy  
2296 machine in such a way that you can blank out without  
losing the depth, because this is not a blue-type

2298 ink. It's what they call a permanent photocopy  
black.

2300 GW: It's beautiful; copies well.

HR: Here's the ones that we've given to the historical  
2302 society.

GW: This thing's still running.

2304 HR: I've learned, because you make detail of what you've  
given everyone.

2306 GW: Oh, I'm glad you're doing that.

HR: But I want you and the gals over there to think about  
2308 what you see around, because another thing that I'm  
very upset about is our painting < unclear > Now see  
2310 with the painting, Shirl and I gave that to the  
Railroad Museum, but the dingleberries -- you know  
2312 what they did; they've just gone down the tube, so we  
got the painting back. Now that's the original  
2314 painting, and where's that going to be exposed the  
best? Is it going to be used at City Hall, or  
2316 something that we could use at the Library for the  
Historical Society? because it's our history, more  
2318 than anything else.

There's nobody else that should get it. To me  
2320 it's a big toss-up whether I give it to the City  
Hall, or whether it's something that goes in the







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