

**Oral History Interview of  
Sherman P. Vinograd**

**Interviewed by: Robert Weaver  
July 14, 2012  
Cedar Park, Texas**

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## Transcript Overview:

This interview features physician and NASA researcher, Sherman Vinograd. Vinograd discusses growing up in Milwaukee, his Jewish heritage, and attending the University of Chicago before transferring to the University of Wisconsin. Vinograd also discusses his interest in music and time spent in Europe. Moreover, Vinograd talks about his career at NASA and his research.

**Length of Interview:** 02:14:36

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### Keywords

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**Robert Weaver (RW):**

Okay good, it's getting us—you said, what was this fellow's name, which Institute of Health was he with? Was it National Institute of Health, or—?

**Sherman Vinograd (SV):**

At that time there were nine National Institutes of Health—it's plural, National Institutes of Health.

RW:

Oh, okay.

SV:

And his was the biggest. It was the National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

That was the name of it.

RW:

And his name again?

SV:

Don Whedon.

RW:

Whedon.

SV:

W-h-e-d-o-n.

RW:

Whedon.

SV:

Yeah, he helped me a great deal, helped us, and he was an expert in mineral metabolism, calcium in particular, bones. He did some major research, which is how he got into it and he became the head of that National Institute of Health.

RW:

I saw just a—

SV:

I recruited him along with others—I'm getting ahead of the story—

RW:

Oh no, do whatever you want, I just want to hear it.

SV:

Okay, but he advised us, NASA. I was just an instrument in the thing really, although I pulled it all together. What this was—what it originally—and this meeting has nothing to do with it except that Don was there, and I wanted to introduce him to some of these people. This guy was a very fine fellow, he hung out at—I've forgotten his name—but he was one of our researchers at NASA. He was affiliated with Georgia—yeah, it was University of Georgia. Yeah, he was a nice guy. Anyway, that's my daughter, you might meet her later.

RW:

Oh okay, yeah she's who I spoke with then the other day. She was at the grocery store when they called her.

SV:

Yeah, and she's going back there now.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

But she helps me a great deal. She's responsible for my moving here.

RW:

And she lives here in Cedar Park?

SV:

She does.

RW:

Where we are. Okay.

SV:

She is a horse lady.

RW:

Oh really?

SV:

Yeah, she's got—

RW:

Well there's still a little bit of land out here, they're filling it all in as fast as they can.

SV:

Well they maintain that, I don't think there's anything else in here.

RW:

Oh really?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

I'll take a quick clip.

SV:

But she's very important to me now. She insisted that I move here.

RW:

And her name, for the—

SV:

Her name?

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

Jocelyn.

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RW:

Jocelyn, for the recorder, so that it can—

SV:

She uses her maiden name.

RW:

Oh she does, Vinograd?

SV:

Vinograd, uh-huh, and she's married to a guy by the name of Trierweiler. That's why she uses Vinograd.

RW:

Monte, my boss, who I think you may have spoken with, he said that her husband did something that we wanted to talk to him about, but I can't remember what it was.

SV:

He's a geologist.

RW:

Geologist, that's right.

SV:

And he does analyses of sites for artifacts.

RW:

Oh archeology?

SV:

He's an archeologist.

RW:

Oh, wow.

SV:

Well I said geologist—no he's an archeologist, that's what I meant to say.

RW:

Well you have to know many of the same things, depending on where you go.



SV:

You do, that's right, and a little anthropology, too. But yeah, he's always finding old things, a fifteen hundred year old dwelling here in—not in Cedar Park, but in Texas.

RW:

So is he looking at Spanish, or Native Americans, or—?

SV:

It mostly is Native Americans.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

But he finds them all. Anyway, but he's got an important place in this—it's a commercial enterprise that does these things nowadays. You know, a graduate in archeology really didn't have anywhere to go but a university in the past. But now since about the early eighties, they've done these analyses. And what's happened in recent years is that the states—almost all states now have laws that want an archeological evaluation before there are any big building or structure that would destroy the countryside.

RW:

You know, I have a friend whose wife works out of Austin here, and she's in—I don't know what she does there, but she works for an outfit that does that. And they look at places—you know, there's wind energy has become really big in West Texas, and they look at those same type of sites out there. I don't know a lot about what she does, but it's clearly the same type of thing.

SV:

She might work with him.

RW:

It wouldn't surprise me, I might have to ask.

SV:

Yeah, well do you know the name Trierweiler?

RW:

I don't remember, and her last name is Kimble.

SV:

I don't know; he works with some women, too.

RW:

Yeah, I mean there's not a lot of employees there, but I think she might organize the crews that go out to the sites and things like that and the hands-on stuff.

SV:

That sounds like where she works for him.

RW:

Yeah, it may be.

SV:

Because he's the organizer of these things, and he writes the proposals and all that.

RW:

Well, and even if I don't get a chance to see him or your daughter, I'll ask her when I get back home and see. I bet she knows him; that's crazy.

SV:

You live in Lubbock?

RW:

Yeah, I finished up my master's degree in history about a little over a year ago.

SV:

Really?

RW:

And lucked into this position at this archive, and I've been helping them out ever since.

SV:

That's interesting, because I had a—well we'll talk about him too, a very dear friend from long ago, who was a little older than I. In fact we became friends, everything spills into everything else.

RW:

That's fine.

SV:

But his name was Bill Timmons, Wilbert—what the hell was his middle initial—anyway, Bill was a graduate student at the University of Chicago when I went to the University of Chicago. I came as a freshman, he was earning his master's degree. A wonderful guy and a great pianist, and that's another part of me: music.

RW:

Oh really?

SV:

Yeah, I've been very active in that and jazz.

RW:

Wow, getting more questions I'm going to have to ask in a minute, by the second.

SV:

Well everything leads to everything else, and this is going to be a long session.

RW:

Well as long as you want, I don't want to tucker you out completely.

SV:

No, I will tire. I'm pretty old. But anyway, Bill Timmons, Wilbert Timmons, was the guy we're talking about at the moment. Bill as I said, he was I guess about twenty, maybe twenty-one when I knew him. I was sixteen when I went to college.

RW:

Oh, wow.

SV:

And that picture, did we look at those?

RW:

Let me—I just want to write down that little fact, and then—

SV:

Yeah, well I'll try to give you—

RW:

Well we had the service photographs back here.

SV:

—a chronology, yeah. This is my senior year of medical school. He and his wife came through—she's a gorgeous little thing. They came through, he had returned from Guadalcanal, and we were so happy to see him. And this was at, I think it was the Palmer House in Chicago, maybe the Stevens, it was one of them. And we had dinner together, and that's what that was. As he was navy, he was a physician as I mentioned, and because the marines had no medical department of their own, they used the physicians of the navy.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

And that's why he was on Guadalcanal, but he wore both uniforms, this is his marine uniform, that's his navy uniform.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

Yeah, he really saw action.

RW:

So you served as well, is that correct?

SV:

Yeah, yeah. Where's my uniform? There it is.

RW:

And now were you—is that navy that I see on here, the anchors?

SV:

That's navy, yes, that's a cadet's uniform. But they had a program that—it kept me in medical school, thank heaven, along with a bunch of others, called the V-12 program. The navy was trying to provide for the future needs and physicians. So they sponsored this program, and paid for tuition and books and all that and uniforms of people who qualified. And I had already gotten in to medical school, I was already accepted, and they simply took over, which was great in a way.

RW:

So did you do the medical school at Chicago as well?

SV:

No, no, in Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin.

RW:

Wisconsin, okay.

SV:

Where were we before I interrupted myself?

RW:

I don't know. I wound up just listening instead of keeping track.

SV:

Okay.

RW:

Well let me jump back to the beginning. What's your date of birth?

SV:

January 24, 1921.

RW:

January 24, 1921. And where were you born?

SV:

Do you have a pen?

RW:

Oh yeah.

SV:

Okay, where was I born? In Milwaukee.

RW:

Okay, and—oh, go ahead.

SV:

Well, I was just going on with my life, which I just hope you are interested in.

RW:

Oh, that's what were here for, because right now we have all the materials, NASA and the technical things, but people may want to know who you were as well. And so we're trying to capture that.

SV:

That is what I understood you to say, and I'll help out best I can. Well, I was born in '21, in Milwaukee. I'm going to bring in some religion—

RW:

Okay.

SV:

—which I don't like to do, and I didn't intend to do, but it's important to understand some of the influences in my life, and some of the movements, and friendships of my life I think.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

If it isn't just tell me. But, I'm Jewish, we moved essentially to three parts of Milwaukee, okay? When I was very young, when my folks were young, they grew up in—it wasn't a ghetto, but it was where the people from other countries came, particularly Jewish people came. They generally settled in big cities in areas that were close to ghettos, or they became ghettos, some of them did in New York, you know about that.

RW:

Sure.

SV:

And that was true of my folks, they came over as infants, or my dad was a teenager I think, my mother was an infant. She was carried. I don't know of my father's family that well. My father died when I was eleven years old.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

And we lived initially—and I don't even remember this—but my brother and sister remembered parts of it, they were born in an area that became a black area, and the blacks and the Jews



frequently, when you looked from city to city, settled in similar areas, because the people that came over from Europe didn't have a dime, didn't have anything, and they had to give up everything to leave. They were in bad shape. So they worked their way, literally, out of the ghetto areas. And so there were big movements in Milwaukee that are traceable to that. The Vliet Street was a street that—well it was kind of a center, it wasn't a commercial center, but it was kind of a central street in the ghetto area, and then Walnut Street, which was a couple of blocks away. So they, originally after they were first married—I never knew the exact progress where they went, that is what streets—but I think it was on Vliet Street, which was where their parents settled after they were married—or they were married. As their finances improved slowly, my dad was in the real estate business—well he did a lot of things. He had a waffle wagon. I mean they didn't have anything. They did with whatever they could, and I remember the story that his horse pulled the wagon into the lobby of a theatre, a movie theatre in that area. Anyway, he progressed in the real estate business, which he moved into with some relatives. They had a building and loan association that they developed. This is way back, and that was located further up Vliet Street, the place where they lived was on Vliet Street. Then as they improved, he bought some real estate himself, and it consisted of an apartment building and a store and a flat over the store—two of them, one on each side of the apartment building, which is kind of unique. The building itself was unique, too, it was a symmetrical two-story building, front and the back were the same, they both had big porches on them. Anyway, I digress. But anyway, when I became aware of things, we lived on Vliet Street, on the latest form of our own property. Now that's important later. So we had a big backyard I remember. It spanned all three buildings. Anyway, that was where I began going to school. It was called the Cold Spring Avenue School at first, and then it became the McKinley Street School. It was an old school, but the quality of education in Milwaukee was at that time outstanding, it really was. And I'll go into that a little bit, but anyway, as the plight of the Jews improved—not only the Jews, everybody I think, but in my life it was the Jews who were most influenced, and they lived in a protective group. They had to, defensively because of the prejudices of the times and so on. But they pulled themselves out of it; they did in all big cities I think, most of them anyway.

RW:

Were they religious, or were they just sort of cultural Jews, you know how—

SV:

It was both.

RW:

You know how in New York a lot of people don't go to temple—

SV:

Yeah.



RW:

Because they're Jewish, but that's just what they do.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

But in other places it's different, I mean were they—

SV:

Well, that's the way things developed. Initially, they were all ghetto people, ghetto in the sense that they had to provide everything themselves, nothing was available to them. Even schools, they couldn't even go to school, and in Russia it must have been terrible. Anyway, they survived, and as they progressed, as they became economically better off, they moved outward from the center of the city, and we did the same thing. That's what I'm trying to point out to you in a very clumsy way. (laughs) We moved outward—westward, really, as Vliet Street itself extended westward, and as people became more wealthy, they moved westward in our case. Also, they occupied more of the east side a little later, because that required more wealth. They east side along the shore of Milwaukee, the Lake Michigan shore, was—where are you from?

RW:

Most recently Austin, I spent about twelve years here.

SV:

Where originally?

RW:

Well all over—I did ten years before that in Oklahoma City, and then ten years before that up in Amarillo, Canyon—so it's pretty much this area.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

Okay, well anyway, as time went on, people moved out of that central area, further westward in the central area, and out of the central area, and so I moved with my family. Initially we lived in that area I told you about in the near end part of town, and specifically in that three-structured—

we had an apartment building flanked on each side by a duplex, a storefront duplex with an apartment in back of the store. God I hadn't thought of this in a long time. But anyway, then from there, as we became a little bit better off, and I was just a little guy then—the growth of the city was interesting, and I don't want to bore you with it, so if I get off track, let me know. But in my life, to age four, we lived on the west end of Vliet Street, but it was close to downtown. But it grew westward over the years, and we moved to—well from let's say Eighteenth Street and Vliet—across the street was Eighteenth Street, and westward the numbers increased, and so we moved out to Forty-Seventh Street, new area. The city expanded both directions, eastward was downtown, and then beyond downtown was the east side, the coastal area, which was very exclusive. So anyway, we moved to Forty-Seventh Street for about four years, and I went from kindergarten to fifth grade there. And I mentioned that—it's the way things developed in Milwaukee, and I grew with it in the same way. I had a lot of, well friend of all kinds, but several Jewish friends that I grew up with, and they were good guys. Most of us were trained from—because of the ghettos in Europe, and their principles and their ambitions that persisted, and the Jews tended to be professional people, they wanted to be professional people. And so I was influenced I'm sure by that. Am I boring you?

RW:

No, no, no, I saw somebody walk by, I couldn't tell what they were doing. But no, so—and that makes sense—I mean immigrants are often that way, especially coming over here where there's a chance to do, that's the old story.

SV:

Right, and I'm with these trends, and that's what I'm trying to tell you. So I went from Cold Spring Avenue School to Forty-Seventh Street, and that was Sherman School. It was, and there was a Sherman Park within a few blocks, and there were a lot of Shermans in there. There was Sherman Boulevard, Sherman Park—anyway, and a fair number of Jews, good representation. And I had a lot of friends of all kinds, of all nationalities—lots of Germans at that time, and it was not a Nazi time as I was growing up. There were prejudices and all that, but they weren't intolerant, and we'd have neighborhood fights once in a while, nothing bad at all. It did reach very severe proportions in some areas of some states. But anyway, Milwaukee was not at that time—of course with the advent of Hitler, things changed.

RW:

So they did change? How?

SV:

Well they didn't change that extremely. They tried to, there was a German Bund that developed—are you familiar with German Bunds?

RW:

I know the word, but I knew—

SV:

Well, they were organizations, patriotic to Germany.

RW:

Ah, okay.

SV:

And featuring swastikas, and armbands, and khaki shirts—all that crap. But anyway, it didn't influence me a great deal, nor my brother. He went to a certain point, and so did I in the church—that was the west side, and at Sherman School. Then my father did a little bit better even, and his real estate business had improved, and so he felt that—he didn't discuss this with me, but this is by implication—he must have felt a little bit more firm and confident, so he moved us to the east side. And I went to a school in an area called Sherwood, and Sherwood is a suburb of Milwaukee—

RW:

Okay.

SV:

—on the east side, and that I really enjoyed. And there were Jews there, there were also Catholics, and they were all over the place, all religions. And religion took on a different quality—although I never really was influenced by the quality, except suddenly I think. I think I left the west side in the fifth grade, as I entered fifth grade—the year must have been about 1929 or '30. Well then the crash came, and my father went broke. And he was working one night, looking at real estate, bad weather, and his car was hit by a train, and so I lost my father. I was eleven years old then. My mother went straight out of the kitchen into—well she didn't leave it—she was suddenly in charge of the business, the business of maintaining the home, and there was no money. It was an awful time. The pressure must have been terrible on her. She was left with the kids. But the kids were pretty much grown up, my brother wanted to go to medical school and was working on that. My sister worked as a secretary, and contributed and helped my mother. And I grew up caring about and concerned about my mother. Nowadays, kids are worried about themselves, and mothers are worried about—really.

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

They don't have any real worries, but they did then. And I would go away—my mother tried to provide everything she could for me, and when I went to camp, for example, it was a YMCA camp, a very nice one, Camp Minikani on Lake Amy Bell, but I found myself worrying about my mother. And I was homesick a little bit, but it was mostly concern for my mother, which is much different from I think the way kids are today. Well, there were no teenagers then as a body of people.

RW:

Yeah, yeah, that was a fifties thing I think.

SV:

Yeah, yeah, they're spoiled.

RW:

I probably was. I'm not going to lie.

SV:

Well, you probably were, I hope you were, it's a comfortable way to be. But anyway, that controlled my mindset pretty well. I didn't fraternize a whole lot. After Dad died, I had a cousin who we grew through our teen ages together. So all these influences were great, and I was sort of impressionable, and so because of that association, I became very keenly attuned to the developments of the early thirties. Dad died in '32. We had the same birthday.

RW:

Oh really?

SV:

Yeah, he was buried that day in '32. Anyway so, and we moved back from the east side, to the center of town again to our own properties out of necessity. So that was a big change, big change. On the east side we had Sherwood High School, Sherwood Junior High, but that doesn't mean much. But anyway, I was in seventh grade when my father died, and we moved within a few months back to the property we owned. And so my cousin, the one I mentioned, who lived in the middle of town, he lived on First Street, and so we had to conquer the long distance. But we got interested in bicycles, and so we could make it to each other's house from Eighteenth to First and Reservoir, very fast, in ten minutes. We'd time each other. I believe we took our watches, I'd call as soon as I got home, race up to the phone and call, and it was about ten minutes each time, and that was a good speed, we really moved. So we had a lot of little things that we did. We had second cousins whom I barely knew, but they were professional people. They were brothers, and they owned the Gaiety Theatre, which was a burlesque theatre. We

couldn't take advantage of that because we were too young. But anyway, we were exposed to a cousin of ours who lived with the cousin I'm talking about because he lost his mother at childbirth, was a lawyer, and he lived with my other cousins, and they were very poor, but he supplied them with some money, and he was affiliated with show business. So I had those influences, and show business, it grew. The thirties were a very interesting time to me. They were full of new things. Movies, for example, developed sound in 1927 I think it was, and it really blossomed in the next five years, I mean really grew. All the early movies you hear about were developed at that time. As a country, we—I forgot what I was going to say—but we—writers, there were excellent writers because of the WPA [Works Progress Administration] program, that developed artists, and writers. So art grew, and I mean it grew in quality, and people were desperate. Writers had to make money.

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
And it was tough, and so there were a lot of wonderful things that happened: music and jazz. Jazz became swing. Goodman, Benny Goodman, influenced me greatly, I can still sing those tunes.

RW:  
Now you'd mentioned that you played, and that your sister had. When did y'all start, at least playing?

SV:  
I started when I was in high school.

RW:  
In high school?

SV:  
Yeah.

RW:  
What did you play? Piano, or something with strings?

SV:  
No, I played the clarinet and saxophone.



RW:

Clarinet and saxophone, okay.

SV:

And clarinet.

RW:

So definitely prepared for swing.

SV:

Oh yeah.

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

I mean that was because of swing. That's when I got into it. But I really enjoyed it, and I was pretty good at it, so it was within two weeks of starting, I had first chair in the band.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

I was apparently good at it, but I learn fast, too. So I stuck with music my whole life. I played in many bands, and I played my way to Europe one time.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

Yeah, that was when I was at the University of Chicago. Well I'm getting ahead of myself, but I really—I explained I think pretty much the influences on my life, and things that influenced me in my early years, which were very important. So I graduated from high school at sixteen, and my picture is in there somewhere.

RW:

Was it—

SV:

I looked very innocent.

RW:

Let's see, there's the wartime photo. That's it? That's got the—

SV:

No, that's the graduation photo.

RW:

The navy—

SV:

My medical school.

RW:

Yeah. So the only other ones we have are the very young sister, and—

SV:

Yeah, and I thought I had one of me in here.

RW:

Well maybe it's on the next one.

SV:

Oh that's of me too, but that's in medical school. I was delivering babies in Chicago at that time.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

Well maybe it's in the other one.

RW:

Just that.

SV:

Yeah, my graduation from high school is in the green thing I brought.

RW:

Oh, okay this one over here? There's something in the front of the basket there—well, close to you. Is that it?



SV:

Yes.

RW:

Okay, was that a high school yearbook?

SV:

That's my high school yearbook, and they wrote some very flattering stuff.

RW:

The Comet, were they the Comets, was that the—

SV:

The *Comet Annual*. The *Comet* was the newspaper.

RW:

Ah, okay.

SV:

—of the students.

RW:

Yeah, you have it thoroughly signed. Let's get to—going to see that photo. Do we have—the faculty—

SV:

This is faculty. Oh, I could go on about the faculty, they were wonderful.

RW:

Well you said the quality of education was really high. Why do you think that was?

SV:

Well, I think teachers needed jobs for one thing, and it was just traditionally how it was.

RW:

Here we are, back here I think with the—

SV:

That's it.

RW:

Yeah, these seem to be everybody you know, because they signed it all over.

SV:

Yeah this is my graduating class. Vinograd, where are you?

RW:

We've got Neville, Waterman

SV:

Jean [inaudible, 00:39:22.2]

RW:

There you are.

SV:

This is me.

RW:

Wow.

SV:

Yeah, I had that picture—

RW:

You take a good photograph, mine was terrible.

SV:

But yeah, and they wrote something very flattering, and I appreciated it.

RW:

"An ear for music, an eye for beauty, and a zest for life."

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Did you agree?

SV:

I did actually, yeah. Well that was very nice. I think the gal who wrote on it had a crush on me. But she wasn't far off, because I was interested in those things. Anyway, I had an interesting background, a very nice background. Despite all the turmoil and all the financial problems of the nation, my mother shielded me pretty damn well. My father left enough money so that I could have a college education, and I did qualify, I had wonderful teachers. See if you can, among my teachers, there are two that I want to mention in particular—a guy by the name of Meau, Mr. Meau, and he should have—what's this guy's name, Ehlmann?

RW:

Ehlmann.

SV:

Ehlmann.

RW:

Ehlmann, E-h-l-m-a-n-n.

SV:

Yeah, he was a good man. He was an older guy, and he taught physics.

RW:

Oh yeah, Department of Science it says.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

So you were looking for someone last name Meau?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Let's see—

SV:

I can't remember how to spell it, it's probably M-e-a-u.

RW:

There's English—oh, Maurice?

SV:

Maurice Meau—this guy, he influenced me strongly, he was a mild-mannered little guy.

RW:

In the English department no less, not a science or something you would get into later.

SV:

No, no, no, I had a broad background. But he was a very quiet little man, wore grey all the time, had chalk on his pants, and was just a very pleasant, shy man. He was an older man, but what he did, he taught English, and the way he taught it, he didn't have normal seats in his classroom—seats with the fold-down desk thing that you write on—he had tables, the whole room was full of tables, and with I think something like four chairs around each table. And we were seated accordingly, and what he did, he put us in competition with each other, one table with another. And you could earn points for yourself and for your table by completing vocabularies, and he'd have these things all laid out, or by interviewing businessmen in town, various professions, and various stores, we'd go interview people there. But all of this took you into the affairs of the city, which nobody did at that time, and you could accumulate points, as much points as you wanted. And the points accumulated not only for you, but for your table. So it was a wonderful competitive affair. And he did all this stuff on mimeograph, that's all we had then.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

So anyway, it was a very illuminating thing, and he interfered very little. He graded everything, but for the most part he had us grade each other, which was wonderful. It was a real eye-opener for me anyway, and I'm sure for most of us whether we realized it or not. So anyway, I wanted you to see his picture. He should be enshrined; he's just a wonderful guy—very passive, very quiet.

RW:

So you graduated then in '37?

SV:

'37.

RW:

Did you go straight to school, or did you have to work for a while, or—?

SV:

No, well, I worked in the summertime as an usher at a movie theatre.

RW:

In Milwaukee?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Did you come back, or in Chicago?

SV:

No, in Milwaukee. But I was accepted at the University of Chicago, and went there as soon as the fall season began. So, that I think explains some of the background. Religion—not very important—I was not very religious, but my mother went to one kind of temple, the reformed, and my dad the very orthodox, because that's the way he grew up. As a result, I had to be confirmed in both. One is called *Bar Mitzvah*, and the other is just confirmation. So I was confirmed in the hoity-toity temple on the east side, and was *Bar Mitzvah* in the old-fashioned shul, I don't know if you've ever heard the term, but it's a temple, but an orthodox one.

RW:

Did you stick with one throughout your life, or were you that devout—

SV:

Well no, I really fell away because I had other interests.

RW:

Sure.

SV:

And I'd resented being shoved into a category and being hated for doing nothing, not bothering anybody. But I had many friends who were also hated, and actually I wasn't hated, it was almost routine to be hated, or to be treated differently, and to go to friends' houses and find that the family didn't appreciate you because of that. But you got used to it, and you just ignore it, and my feeling was they just need to know better, and that's all. So I looked down on people like

that. That was my defense. I didn't feel defensive, though, really, and the older I got, and the brighter I got, the more firm I was in my beliefs. Who could sympathize with a Nazi?

RW:

Yeah, it's hard to do, even today.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

If there's one villain for the rest of time, I mean that's it.

SV:

So as a result, I didn't spend much time thinking about it, I didn't react to it, I didn't stick to Jews in particular at all. But I knew them, and they're people like anybody else, and that was my attitude, and that's how I got through it all. I was never really pilloried in any way for it. So, that's the story of religion in my life. I was pretty firm about that. I just look right down my nose at people like that. On the trip I went—well, you have to go?

RW:

No, no, no, I'm just moving around.

SV:

Yeah okay.

RW:

I try not to move too much, sometimes I get a bit antsy in a chair.

SV:

Be my guest, and don't let me bore you, I could easily.

RW:

No, no, no, I love this job, believe it or not.

SV:

I may be boring. If I do, let me know. But anyway, this is all by way of background. In retrospect, it was a really an interesting phenomenon, at that time in particular. It was full of wonderful changes, the movie business, for example, color, sound, literature, wonderful literature, wonderful humor in the thirties, marvelous stuff. The *Esquire* magazine for example had nice cartoons, of course. Do you know those cartoons?



RW:

I'm afraid I don't, no.

SV:

Oh, they were girly cartoons. There were—some, well they were a little looser, they were not bad. But they had the “Petty Girl,” have you ever heard of the “Petty Girl”?

RW:

No, no.

SV:

There was a guy by the name of Petty, who was an artist and a cartoon artist, and an excellent one because he had ascended to the ranks of *Esquire*. But those were really daring, and they were very shapely gals. The kind of stuff, you don't even bat an eye when you see it in the movies now, or on television. We didn't have television, thank God. But we had wonderful things. Also in *Esquire* magazine—my sister took *Esquire* magazine, thank God for her, she was—and it was also a wonderful magazine, it was a very literate magazine called *Mercury Magazine*, it had a green cover, and it had some wonderful stories and articles. My sister took it regularly, and over the years, it accumulated up in the attic, so I used to spend some time when I was in high school on Saturdays or something up in the attic among these stacks of old magazines, enjoying the hell out of them, they were really wonderful. And also bike riding, which I didn't go to do very much, but that stuck with me pretty much my whole life, but just enough to keep active. So I don't know how I got off on that, but these are facets that were very important to me. Bike riding was very important to me, even recently. Not now anymore, but up until about five years ago. I had a little eight mile route that I used to travel every day, and I managed to travel my eight miles, which isn't very much on a bike, but at my age it was. But I did very well.

RW:

It's the only way I get around. Lubbock's real small, and I refuse to drive unless I have to carry a bunch of groceries.

SV:

Good for you, then you know what I mean.

RW:

Oh yeah, there's nothing like it.

SV:

No, that's right.



RW:

You have time to see everything.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

And to smell everything, and it's just a little better than walking, because walking drives me a little crazy, it's a little too slow.

SV:

It's slow, yeah.

RW:

But driving you just don't see anything, and you don't even realize it until you start riding a bike.

SV:

Yeah, that's exactly the way I've felt about it for years since I was a kid, and I maintained it. Bought a racing bike when I was—my mother bought it—when I was in high school, and both my cousins and I did a lot of riding together. We'd ride to other towns around Milwaukee, small towns, when we could. And yeah, and with tool clips, and we didn't have brakes, we had direct drive, and they wouldn't allow that today, but a very hard little seat. Have you ever broken in one of those things?

RW:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, it takes a little while.

SV:

It does, it takes a little while to heal.

RW:

Then you feel proud of it when other people complain, and you're like well, I'm an old pro.

SV:

That's right, my brother did that. He borrowed my bike one time, and was sorry for about week. But it became very important, and you know exactly what I'm talking about. So we—

RW:

I guess you got off to school, and what did you start studying right away. Did you have an idea of where you were going?

SV:

Well the University of Chicago—

RW:

Nobody does.

SV:

No, I didn't know what I was going to be, you know. But the University of Chicago was a very unique school, it still is I guess. But its president was the youngest president of a university in the country; his name was Robert Maynard Hutchins. And Robert Hutchins, he was a confirmed classicist, and he would say when he felt the overwhelming urge to exercise, he said he'd just lie down until it went away. (laughter) But he was a brilliant, brilliant guy, way above me. At that age I couldn't even understand him half the time. Chicago was a very unusual school, and it attracted extremely bright people. Anyway, he established what he called survey courses, four of them. He and his henchman, Robert McKeon<sup>1</sup> was his name, was the head of the philosophy department, brilliant guy, the guy who took over the Encyclopædia Britannica, Mortimer Adler, yeah, brilliant guy. They're forgotten now, and they were at the top of classical education. Anyway, Hutchins and company divided all knowledge into four areas: the biological sciences, the physical sciences, which included math and astronomy, the social sciences, and the—what'd I say—physics, mathematics, biology—oh, the humanities, of course.

RW:

I was wondering if that's what—that's what I do. But I didn't know, sometimes they put people under—yeah I did history, and then English as an undergrad.

SV:

Did you really?

RW:

Yeah, so I'm about as humanist as you can get, without being a classicist.

SV:

You may know my buddy, the pianist in our band and the guy who I started talking about him earlier. He was, as I said, the pianist in our band. He was getting his master's at that time in history, then he went away to war—I left the University of Chicago, transferred to the University of Wisconsin. But he went off to war, and I learned this later, but I followed his career, he came back, finished his master's degree in history, then went on to get his PhD at the University of Chicago. He sort of specialized in the—he was a Texan, and Willy, my buddy, he was—where was I now?

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<sup>1</sup>Sherman is likely referring to Richard McKeon.

RW:

This fellow that was from Texas—what was his name?

SV:

Timmons.

RW:

Timmons.

SV:

Bill Timmons, Wilbert Timmons. Yeah, he was a wonderful guy, a little guy. Well he wasn't little—well he was, he was slender, and had a raucous laugh, a Texan, he was from Fort Worth.

RW:

Oh, yeah Fort Worth.

SV:

Yeah, anyway, he roosted his career, he established his career at El Paso, UT, and he wrote several books about the Mexican border, history books.

RW:

I'm positive then I've seen the books. I don't know how I couldn't remember the names, though, because that's what you have to do. At any rate—and I have a friend who's a professor of history that does what they call borderlands now, everything along Texas-New Mexico border and over. I guarantee you he'll know his name, I'll ask him.

SV:

Oh he certainly will.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

And Bill played a hell of a piano, and he did it all of his life, even when he retired and was in a retirement home, he entertained the people. And his wife was a dear, dear person. But anyway, Bill Timmons.

RW:

Well why did you leave Chicago to go over to Wisconsin—Madison I guess?

SV:

Madison was attractive—the University of Chicago campus, for all of its value is, in a classical sense as an educational institution, and it still is, top quality, was a dull place to live. I was thinking of college in terms of Hollywood. You know, rah-rah and pretty girls and all this stuff. And University of Chicago, women in knit dresses that clung, and pugs, hair pulled back tightly, horn-rimmed glasses, oh no. So it didn't intrigue a teenager, believe me. (laughter) So anyway, we'd played—well, Bill and I were very interested in music, and we were part of an orchestra that was established by an Alpha Delt.<sup>2</sup> And anyway, we got together and maintained this damn band throughout my time there. And we had to avoid the union, because the musician's union was headed by a guy by the name of Petrillo, who was a gangster. And we daren't play in downtown Chicago. I mean daren't. We did once because we were assured by the people that ran the dance, it was for Benny Goodman's mother, it was her birthday. We were asked to play, and we played downtown at the Medinah Club, which was a fancy, expensive club in the loop. And we assured ourselves that we were all set. We had no problem. Sure enough, we got there and we played for about maybe a half hour, when some two tough-looking guys—I mean, do you remember Tony Clemento, I don't think you do.

RW:

No.

SV:

Well, he was five by five, blocked out the horizon when he came into a room. But two guys like that, they looked like fire plugs. (laughter) They came in through the door, and I was the leading alto, and we had a full band, had three saxophones and three brass behind them, probably two trumpets and a trombone, and then the others, the piano and the guitar and the bass fiddle. And anyway, but I was the lead alto, which is the middle chair, right in the middle of the orchestra there I was, in the front. These guys came at me, and I didn't know what the hell was going to happen. And the guy said, "You the leader of this band?" I said, "No, he's not—" and it was actually the guy who ran the band, the Alpha Delt. So I was happy to refer him back to him. But we had been assured that everything was all right. So when the guys left they said, "All right this time, but don't you ever come back to this area again, play here." So that was a harrowing experience I needed. He was a democrat too, the damn fool, they were all democrats. That was the Kelly Machine, that was before the Daley Machine—you've heard of Daley?

RW:

Yeah, half the town's named after him, or was.

SV:

Yeah it was, but before him was Kelly, and I learned a little bit about Kelly's operation. One day

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<sup>2</sup>Possibly referring to Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity established at the University of Chicago in 1896.

I walked into a drugstore on the University of Chicago campus, called Readers. And I used to go in there once in a while to get some food, or something. But anyway, the jukebox, which we had then, you know what that is?

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

Yeah okay, the jukebox had been turned to the wall. And I said, "What happened here?" He said, "Well we didn't pay our dues." It was the Kelly Machine. You pay up, or we'll stop your operation.

RW:

Wow.

SV:

And it's this way now I guess, but it's more subtle now. Oh it was bad. Anyway, I don't know how I got off on that.

RW:

No that's good stuff, I've never heard any of that before.

SV:

Oh you haven't, that's good. It was an interesting time, it really was, and it was tough, but there we were. Anyway, the education—I was talking about the education—the four survey courses, you had to take them. They were mandatory. You took two in your freshmen year, and the other two in your sophomore year. And at the end of the year, you didn't have any tests until the end of the year when you had comprehensive tests, and these were done with so-called using objective methods. In other words, filling in blank squares, that kind of thing, checking things, but you didn't have to write essays or anything like that.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

But the exam took a day, a full day, and you had to remember everything you'd heard. But it was tough, but in retrospect, even at that time, it provided a hell of an education, because you had a smattering of everything, I mean everything. And you'd been lectured to by Nobel Prize winners, and way over your head, could be over mine anyway. But after I finished those two survey courses, I transferred. So that was interesting, but we had this band, and played almost every



weekend, and I made a few bucks, not much, but enough to ease the budget a little bit. Well Bill and I used to, when we had the time—I mean we didn't have any money, it was just terrible—we had a little bit of money, but it was tiny, we'd go downtown on the IC, the Illinois Central Railroad. It'd take you downtown in ten minutes or twelve minutes, I think it was. And we learned the technique of staying at a bar, or a hotel bar, and nursing a drink all night so we could hear the music. We did. Anyway, but we heard some marvelous music. Also we used to get our arrangements from these people, Bob Crosby, have you ever heard of that band?

RW:

I guess not.

SV:

Bing Crosby's brother.

RW:

Oh okay.

SV:

And they played at the Blackhawk. Kay Kyser—

RW:

Kay Kyser I know.

SV:

You have heard of him?

RW:

He had a Kollege of Musical Knowledge, as I recollect.

SV:

Yeah, that's the guy, that's the guy, Kay Kyser, we got our arrangements from him. These guys who played professionally would get the arrangements for free. The companies that made the arrangements, publishers, would circulate the tunes that way, new tunes. And so within a short time, we had a good-sized library, and they would keep only the guitar parts, and make their own arrangements from that, and then they'd give us the rest of them, and we were fortunate enough to be favored. So we got our arrangements that way. We had a big library of stuff, so we never had to want for music. And Bill and I, we found some beautiful players, some wonderful musicians. I won't name them, because you wouldn't know them I don't think. They're gone now, but there was a lot of good jazz music around Chicago.

RW:

Yeah, that's the thirties and forties, Chicago.

SV:

Oh yeah.

RW:

That's the heyday.

SV:

It was, you know anything about jazz at all?

RW:

I mean a little, my parents are really into it, so I've osmosed a little of it.

SV:

Good.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

Good. Joe Turner was a—there was a place called the Three Nooses, 222 State Street, it was, and unfortunately, it was a great place because they had marvelous stuff, musicians and singers and—well, I won't go on. But we learned a lot about music and we enjoyed the hell out of it, and we enjoyed each other. So Bill was a great guy, and probably in many ways someone who was very important to my life. Unfortunately he's gone now.

RW:

Well, was Madison better, at least in terms of—?

SV:

Not in those terms, no, I met some wonderful people at the University of Chicago. And I wrote a production there, and also five of us went to Europe, played our way to Europe, and we did that on a budget. None of us had any money, they had money, they had more money than I did. That trip to Europe was an eye-opener, it was just great. War broke out while I was there.

RW:

Was that '38, or '39?



SV:  
'39.

RW:  
'39?

SV:  
'39, and, as I said, war broke out while I was there. In fact, I was sitting in the—I had just gotten out of Germany, and that was not a healthy place for me.

RW:  
I was just thinking that, yeah.

SV:  
So and I had some interesting experiences there, too. But I of course did not disclose my religion at all. And fortunately I didn't look too much like a Jew, and I could pass for others.

RW:  
You think being an American helped, too? I mean since they maybe didn't have a frame of reference?

SV:  
Well, I thought so at the time—we thought so, but we didn't know what the hell was going on over there at that time.

RW:  
Sure.

SV:  
You see it now in movies, but we didn't know that. We didn't know about the concentration camps. People were being murdered.

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
I didn't know that. We didn't know that at all.

RW:  
When did you finally find out about, after the war? That's what I hear—

SV:

It was after the war, yeah.

RW:

Most people say, yeah.

SV:

Yeah. Well yeah, we were in dangerous territory and I was alone some of that time in Germany.

RW:

Well when did you join the service then?

SV:

Well that was later, that was medical school. I was an undergraduate at this time. Are you comfortable?

RW:

Yeah, yeah I'm good.

SV:

If you want to quit, let me know.

RW:

No, no, no, I can do it all day, it's really up to your stamina.

SV:

Good, good, I've got to get to dinner—we've got time. In fact, even if you'd like to have dinner here, I can—

RW:

I appreciate that, but several of my friends from when I lived here for a decade.

SV:

Oh.

RW:

They're eager to see me.

SV:

Oh good.

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

Yeah. Well, they won't be as noisy and verbose as I am.

RW:

I don't know, some of them—

SV:

They may be more up to date. Anyway—

RW:

So you were an undergrad then at Wisconsin, and you went to medical school there also?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Is that right?

SV:

Mhmm.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

Yeah, but I lost some time too, just goofing off.

RW:

Sure. Well, why did you decide medical school then?

SV:

My brother a doctor, and I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, and I thought, Hell I'll try it. And he mentioned one day that maybe we can practice together. Now there's an attractive idea. But then I also had an inclination towards science and medicine, and so on. I was good in it. But—where was I—I was just going somewhere, but I forgot where. It happens.

RW:

So would you have started medical school in '42-ish, right around there?

SV:

Yeah, matter of fact it was '42, and I graduated in '46, class of '46.

RW:

So after you got back then from the service?

SV:

Europe?

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

That was only summer.

RW:

No, I meant after you served. Did you go overseas when you served, while you were in medical school, while you were in the navy?

SV:

Not then—I had sea duty, but I didn't go overseas.

RW:

Oh okay.

SV:

It was out of New Orleans really.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

I had a squadron of destroyers, nine destroyers, the medical department. I hadn't gotten out of Europe yet, that's where I was.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

So anyway, we went over there, and none of us had the foggiest idea that anything was going on in terms of potential war. But we knew that Hitler was—what Hitler stood was and what he stood for. But we didn't know anything was festering at the moment. So we took off. It was an interesting trip in many ways, and I'm not going to go into detail, but we traveled all through Central Europe, and we did it on our own. The ship left us there—it landed in Rotterdam.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

That was its port, home port was, and the deal was that—they'd furnished our room and board, and we ate in second—we were in second class—pretty good. And we enjoyed the ship tremendously. We played for a lot of events, birthdays, and all kinds of stuff. And people were very nice to us, we were nice to them, and it was really a treat, exciting, because it was way out of our ordinary lives.

RW:

Sure, oh yeah.

SV:

And my mother was home in Milwaukee, except for my sister she was with her, and thank God because I ran out of money. And when we were over there—well, anyway, when we were in Europe, we traveled any way we could, that we could afford, mostly hitchhiking.

RW:

Oh, wow.

SV:

And we did that, and we wore red, white, and blue socks, long socks, and carried little flags, American flags, because the feeling at that time was very, very strongly in favor of America.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

And it was left over from World War I.

RW:

Okay

SV:

And the people were extremely nice to us. That was not true in visits after that, but it was true then. That was in, what'd I say? '39. So we did a lot of interesting things, we saw a lot of things, and so on. I won't bore you with that, but it was an exciting trip. But we went through Holland, and then we crossed over to England, and when we got to England we bought bikes, we bought raingear, Sou'westers, yellow ones, and you know, oilskins?

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

And we had capes and pants too—oilskin, a little overkill. But the capes were interesting because they had little thumb-loops inside, so you could handle the handlebars—

RW:

Okay.

SV:

And cover yourself at the same time.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

So anyway, we went through England and Scotland, we hitchhiked, we sold the bikes, and hitchhiked with some very lovely people and had rides. And then we met, we'd broke apart. These guys were from the same hometowns, there were two guys were from the one same hometown, and two others were from another same hometown, and I was the oddball. Nobody was from Milwaukee, two were from Rockford, and two were from Spokane, Washington.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

So anyway, we—I don't want to get stuck in this—but we met some wonderful people. They were very nice to us. In the movies, in the newsreels, every once in a while you'd see in the sports section, when they flashed it, you would see some news about a rugby team, an English rugby team. And it was *the* English team. There was a guy by the name of Count Obolensky. He was a count too, but I've never forgotten the name. He was a big star, and I had no interest at all in it, but I remember the name and so on. And the guy who picked us up in England was a guy



by the name of Huxley—I've never forgotten it—Desmond Huxley. But he had a brother—we learned this from him as we motored through England to their home. And he wanted to take us to his brother's place, Derek was his name, the rugby player.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

So we went to his country place, and we found him in a barn. He was a rugged guy. And anyway, but they were just wonderful, Derek and Desmond Huxley, wonderful people. Desmond was married to an Argentinian, and he kept us at his house for a couple of days, couple of nights, and showed us all over the place. We went to a tavern and all that, and he showed us around. I never knew what happened to him.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

But they were wonderful people. That's the bad part of it, you lose track of people. So, then we boarded the channel ship. Now you don't do that anymore, you don't have to.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

But and we went across the channel to Brest I think it was, and then we took the train to Paris. We enjoyed Paris very much, and I grew up considerably. But we were clean cut guys in general. We had to take advantage of the champagne, which was I think six cents a glass.

RW:

Oh wow, wow.

SV:

Yeah. Well anyway, it was interesting, then we went through France, through Italy, and then walked among the—what do they call them—not storm troopers, but their army.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

And their crazy uniforms, and they were all short, which made us feel very big. We were big Americans, because they were short guys. And they'd come marching through little narrow streets, and we'd have to move into a doorway or something to get out of the way as they marched through. But this was, they meant business, obviously. And then we went up through Switzerland, and then in Germany, we broke apart because—we'd broken apart before, but not in quite the same way. It was three and two—there were five of us. But this time I was alone, because two went up to Berlin. Bad time. This was just before war broke out. And two wanted to go through Belgium, and so they went far away. And we were to meet again in Rotterdam. We were going to meet our ship. So I was alone at that point, and this was in *München*, in Munich. Have you been over there?

RW:

No I haven't. I've been to Italy, but that's it, yeah.

SV:

Italy's a wonderful place.

RW:

Oh yeah.

SV:

So anyway, that was my first experience, but at the time, we stayed in youth hostels, because that was all we could afford, and it was a good place to stay. So we enjoyed it very much, but the youth hostels were taken over in Germany, were taken over by the youth, The Hitler Youth.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

And with their armbands, and swastika knives, and Sam Browne belts—I don't know what they were called over there, but—so anyway, I was alone there, and fortunately I ran into a guy by the name of McWhorter, John McWhorter. And John—the year before I had written the Blackfriar's Show, I'd written most of the music for it, and I don't know if you know what that is, but in Wisconsin there's a Haresfoot Club like that, puts on a show every year. There's a Hasty Pudding Club at Yale I believe—I think it's Yale<sup>3</sup>, but the universities at that time did things like that, the kids did. They weren't kids but, you know. And they wrote all the music, and the boys were girls—

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<sup>3</sup>Possibly Harvard.

RW:

Oh, yeah.

SV:

And their slogan was, and it was great to see these big linemen, these big college football guys doing a chorus dance, a kick dance, and that was the fun of it. And it had no sinister qualities at all that I was aware of anyway. But now it would be much different. And I don't know what they do now. But anyway, McWhorter had written this show before I did, and it was called, "Where in the World?" The idea being that this professor had worked out a way of crossing the date line, the international date line, as often as you wanted to, to turn back the time. So it was an interesting thought, but my show was called "Patients Please" and it was about young doctors.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

So anyway, I ran into McWhorter, of all people, and I didn't even know him, and I knew who he was. But he was at the opera house in Munich, that's where I ran into him. I was in the courtyard there, do you know it, you haven't been there?

RW:

No, I haven't unfortunately.

SV:

Well, I won't describe it all to you except it has a big courtyard, in the middle of which is a big fountain. And the tables are barrels, empty barrels turned on end, and you just stand, there are no seats in the courtyard. That's the way it's done. So anyway, I ran into, of all people, John McWhorter in the courtyard there, and I was alone. So turned out that he was on his way out, and we were the only two Americans in the opera house. The opera house had—where was I again—I was going to make a point, I can't remember what it was. But John was headed for the border, headed for France. But we were going to be together in the—

RW:

Oh in the hostel?

SV:

Youth hostel, yeah, overnight. But they didn't have sleeping quarters. The youth hostel was a wooden building, if you can call it a building. It was just a wooden-frame building that was small, relatively small, it had—are you getting—

RW:

No, no, no. Like I said I just get—squirm—I can't sit in one place too long.

SV:

Oh, I don't blame you. But the sleeping quarters were not in the hostel itself. You had to walk, as it turned out, march, with the Hitler Youth to a nearby school, which was a couple of blocks away, where they set up the gymnasium with mattresses on the floor. To be a member of the hostel, you carried a sleeping bag. They called it a sleeping bag, just two sheets sewn together and open at one end, and with a little slip for the pillow. They would furnish the pillow, and the blanket, and the mattress. So that's what we did. Anyway, as we marched over, and I resented the hell out of it, so did McWhorter. They started singing Hitler songs, and we didn't like that at all, so we countered by singing American football songs, college songs. And we sang as loud as we could, the two of us. We didn't know what risk we were actually running. They could have killed us. They didn't, and we just strutted along, swaggering as best we could. Anyway, that was the way that night was spent, and John had to leave the next day, and I was scheduled to leave in the middle of the next night—no, that's not right—well the next day, too, but he was going in a different direction. Yeah, that was it, there were German troops at the station when we got there, and he left in a very short time. And I had to go to Mainz to get my connection to go on down to Cologne, and so I lost my friend McWhorter, and I really was alone. And on the platform were German troops amassing, I didn't realize—well I did realize it very shortly—but they were amassing to go to Danzig, Poland.

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

That was it.

RW:

Yeah, that was it.

SV:

So anyway, on the platform, one of the German soldiers asked me how we liked, in America, if we liked Hitler, and I said, "Gut." He says, "Ja, gut." So fortunately he didn't have his bayonet fixed. But I didn't realize how serious it was. But it was very, very serious, could have been a disaster. So anyway, got out of there and went from Mainz to Cologne on a boat down the Rhine, and then in Cologne they were having a blackout. I had to wait until the middle of the night for my train to go to Rotterdam. Utrecht actually, and then on to Rotterdam—well, they took me off the train in Utrecht, and I didn't know why—reason was I didn't have a ticket—

RW:

Oh.

SV:

—steamship ticket, and they weren't allowing people in—

RW:

Huh.

SV:

—unless they had a way out, because they knew war was happening.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

So anyway, there was a long delay, and they finally at the last possible minute—I had to run for the train. I got on it, got back on, and then to Rotterdam. And in Rotterdam, at the youth hostel there, which is a much different place, a very friendly place. I had a week to go. The other guys are going to come in, so I went down to the railroad station, and it was a sad sight. Trains came in loaded with people. They were all running beyond full capacity. So it was an interesting time, and war was declared that Sunday, or Monday. Well the guys came in through the week and we were prepared to get back aboard the ship. The ship departure was delayed by a day and a half I think, because the *Athenia*, which was the first sunk to be ship during the war, was sunk on Monday morning, or perhaps Sunday, I don't know, I don't remember.

RW:

So y'all got out in the nick of time, basically.

SV:

Well yeah, we snuck—

RW:

It was a completely concurrent—

SV:

Yeah, the first night we slept in the first class lounge, which was a crime because it was a gorgeous place full of really expensive tapestries and gorgeous furniture and so on. The upshot of that was that we left, late, but it was harrowing. They had painters over the side of the ship painting the name of the ship there, and the morning we woke up in the first class lounge, we



woke up to the sound of the captain yelling through his megaphone up on the bridge just above us looking down over the side. He was yelling at some crew that was leaving the ship. They didn't want to go, they were afraid. So it was an exciting time, and then we picked up some survivors of a sunken ship—

RW:

Oh wow.

SV:

On the way home. First we had to wait for a—what do they call a—a guy who knew the location of the—

RW:

Oh pilot?

SV:

A pilot, yeah.

RW:

Yeah, to get you out of the harbor?

SV:

Right.

RW:

Sure.

SV:

And he knew the location of the mines that they had quickly placed into the channel. So it was interesting. Then the day after that we picked up some people—or we had picked up the people—we picked up then some survivors of a torpedoed ship, and it was sad. There was lumber all over the sea, and the front of the ship, the ship was a trans-steamer that had come from the opposite coast, from the west coast. Apparently it had gone through the canal, and it was very close to England, and it was torpedoed. This was at the beginning of the war, and they were very chivalrous, and the captain stopped the ship, and the captain of the submarine stopped the ship, got the captain of the ship down to the submarine, gave him some bread, and some water, and gave him time to be certain that everybody was on a lifeboat, and there were only two lifeboats for the people. But he allowed everybody to get off and turned around—as I understand it blew a forty-foot hole in the side of the ship, and they were all—well it was an exciting time, anyway.



RW:

Well so when you got back to the United States, what was next, just more school?

SV:

Yeah, it was more school, and I'm sure there are a lot of things that happened, but I can't go into great detail about everything.

RW:

Well once you then had completed school and were a physician, what did you do next? Because it was some time before you got to NASA.

SV:

Oh yeah, well it was through medical school, all the way through. Well '39, and I graduated in '46.

RW:

Yeah. So after '46, what was next, I mean where did you—

SV:

Well I interned in New Orleans.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

Touro Infirmary in New Orleans. It's a very good internship, it was supposed to be. It was graded very high, and we had wonderful, a wonderful staff, wonderful staff. Touro called itself the Mayo of the South at that time. We had some really marvelous people. You've heard of Michael DeBakey?

RW:

No, I haven't.

SV:

Alton Ochsner was recognized as a great surgeon, worked like a fiend. But he was also one of the elite families of New Orleans. But Mike DeBakey worked with him, and Mike DeBakey got to be head of surgery—well he and Alton Ochsner did a lot of wild, innovate surgery. And Sam Snead, a famous golfer—

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
Alright, Sam Sneed got himself into an accident and had required a complete, really daring surgery. Rewiring, as it were, of his venous system in the abdomen, and he recovered.

RW:  
Is that the one they made the movie about he was from Texas?

SV:  
Yeah.

RW:  
Yeah, got in the car accident.

SV:  
Yeah.

RW:  
Yeah, yeah, I remember, I remember I've seen that old movie, yeah.

SV:  
He was a little guy with a tremendous swing. Anyway, yeah he was something. Well those two operated on him, and they did a lot of well-known surgery at that time. That was pioneering surgery, which you don't do anymore—you can't, because the insurance costs are crazy. Medicine has changed considerably.

RW:  
Oh yeah.

SV:  
So yeah, that was the Ochsner Clinic, that was a small part of the Ochsner Clinic. But that's where I interned, and then I spent two years in the navy on sea duty as I said, with my ships. That was out of New Orleans—and so, then where did I go—oh, then I took a general residency for a year, which is really another internship to get myself back into medicine.

RW:  
Oh.

SV:

Being aboard a ship was not satisfactory.

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

And so I did that in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and then—

*Pause in recording*

RW:

Okay, so you had moved to D.C. to find a NASA program, that wasn't really a program, that was in disarray, and—

SV:

It was in disarray, yeah.

RW:

And—

SV:

Well it hadn't gelled at all. There were elements that had sort of—when I joined NASA, there was some wonderful people involved. I don't want to convey the impression that they weren't. But it was sort of disorganized, nobody quite knew—we used to kid about that we had a modernistic painting, and we used to call it “Chart of NASA Organization,” because everybody was running into each other really. And in terms of medicine, they hadn't really settled on anything. They wouldn't admit that.

RW:

See that makes sense, because I've seen some charts in the collection you gave us that clearly define who's the head of this, you know an organizational chart that had everything out there, and I assumed while I was messing with it, because I'm a child of the modern age, that that was there when you got there, but apparently it wasn't.

SV:

Well it might have been, but if wasn't the same one, you can bet your life on that. What they were doing, essentially they were trying to fill in holes, and they're trying to do it in a hurry, so they wouldn't be caught flat-footed. Nobody knew really what to expect insofar as the effect on the human body was concerned.

RW:

And so there was no experiments program, and you had to devise it from scratch almost.

SV:

I did, yeah.

RW:

Well what was the first angle you had to take on it, I mean what seemed to be the big thing you had to do first.

SV:

God—

RW:

Everything?

SV:

I can't even remember which order. Yeah, there was structure there which was part of the problem. It was evanescent structure, and one office not related to another, and everybody trying to figure out what to do without stepping on anybody else's toes. But it was really a difficult problem, and then you had other extraneous problems too, having to do with one group, and one service, maybe the air force versus the navy versus—these things that go on.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

But I had the advantage being a civilian, which was an overall disadvantage, I mean everybody hated you. But it was just enough to get in the way, to be perfectly frank with you. But I had a wonderful help—a guy by the name of Frank Voris, V-o-r-i-s. Frank was my—he was my guru, but he was a wonderful, very unusual man. He was a surgeon, fully qualified, practicing in Miami when he went back into the Navy after World War II, and it was one of the crises I think that prompted him to go back in. He was doing well. But Frank was an unusual guy. He was bright as hell, in the first place, and he was very pleasant, and very friendly, like a big puppy dog. He was big, he was a football player, had been. In fact, do you remember hearing about a guy by the name of Red Grange?

RW:

Oh yeah, Red Grange.

SV:

Yeah, Chicago—

RW:

He was the first all-time greatest, when the NFL started, he was there.

SV:

Yeah, he was there. And Frank was on that same team.

RW:

Oh really?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Wow.

SV:

And he was a big guy, and talking most of the time, but everybody loved him. As I said, he was a big puppy dog. He would pound the table with his finger for emphasis on something he was talking about, everything would jump. He was so pleasant. Anyway, he helped me enormously, and we got to be great personal friends. Well Frank was in the office of life sciences. At that time, we had an office of life sciences at NASA headquarters. And it had really three parts: the biological sciences, the development of hardware and techniques, and a little bit further in-depth of the medical aspect. But then the office of space medicine was right at the forefront of the care and feeding of astronauts, and the development of scientific points, and hardware that needed to be developed for flights, specifically for flight. So that was the office of space medicine. So that division—the office of life sciences, broke into those three divisions.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

And that caused very great complications as it turned out, but it was the way it worked, and it worked more or less. In a clumsy way, it worked. So there were all kinds of changes at first, and all that. I was trying to pursue a straightforward course. There were things we needed to know, and they had not been defined specifically; each had been defined and pursued, but not in a coordinated manner.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

So that had to be done, and I wanted to do it. And I did it essentially, but with great difficulty. We did not have any money shortages at first. Later we did, when we needed money.

RW:

Oh when was that?

SV:

Oh with the black problems, the riots and all that, the civic problems that began to beset the country.

RW:

Now you began, was it in '63? When did you start at NASA?

SV:

In—it wasn't '63—when did I start? It was '61.

RW:

'61.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

Funny about memory, specific things are tied to specific things.

RW:

Yeah, yeah.

SV:

Yeah, so if I wanted to play a role, that was significant. I didn't want to just sit around and read letters and answer them.



RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
So anyway, I started a few things.

RW:  
Well other than the actual organizing it, what was the biggest challenge that you had? It's really open-ended, but was there something that sticks out?

SV:  
Well there were organizational challenges as well as scientific challenges. Scientific challenges are obvious, you wanted to prevent problems, and you didn't know exactly what problems you were going to confront—So there were problems in developing hardware, for example. If you wanted to do something, if you wanted to drill a hole in a spacecraft, it would take at least a year to get it all into the plans.

RW:  
Oh wow.

SV:  
Well yeah, because everything—well, things were done for safety.

RW:  
Sure.

SV:  
They had to be done very carefully, and there were contingency plans for every little bit of hardware, because these guys are out there alone.

RW:  
Yeah, there's no—

SV:  
There's no back-up.

RW:  
Yeah it's not like you're trip back from Europe.

SV:

No.

RW:

There's not going to be a boat come by and pick somebody up.

SV:

No way.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

That's exactly right; it's all or nothing. So it was a dangerous sport, so to speak, but we did it. There were lots of problems. There were organizational problems; there were rivalries. They could pose unbelievable problems. They didn't talk about them, because you couldn't, for obvious reasons. But there were a lot of people who saw that budget we had and just wanted to get in on it. They didn't have a talent, but they did. There are a lot of pitfalls, and you didn't want to fall under any particular wing. There were lots of subtleties that you had to be wary of.

RW:

Lot of diplomacy, you'd say?

SV:

Oh—

RW:

Yeah, that's ninety percent of every job, you discover.

SV:

Yeah, particularly in government, boy. In fact it's almost stopping government now, I think.

RW:

Well what was, in your opinion anyways, the biggest success that you had?

SV:

Well—

RW:

Because I mean there were a number of them, you got—

SV:

Well we developed a number of things. One of the problems we had, it wasn't a bad problem, people would get exuberant about some little thing that they never heard of before, but was well-known in the field.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

In medicine, for example, and they'd make these claims about it, and it would be embarrassing. When, in reality, they didn't fit. That was one of the many small problems, and I could go into big ones. But you want to know something specific. One of the things that we developed, and I'm very proud of, is Whedon's contribution, Don Whedon, the guy whose picture you saw. I don't know if you know which one he was—the one who is the—

RW:

He's on the right side of the photograph.

SV:

Yeah, the one who's the head of one of the National Institutes of Health.

RW:

Yeah, I'll bring him out there, just so I can remember—that guy?

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Is that correct—alright, yeah.

SV:

That's right, yeah, Don. That group of guys I selected, or we selected—I selected, really—but, I'm so pleased with that. That group of guys, which I called SPAMAG, Space Medicine Advisory Group, that was the study we did at that time. Those guys were marvelous, and an enormous help. Don was one of them, and Don was the author of the experiments, the flight experiments—they were daring, really, and he didn't look the type at all, but scientifically daring. He dared to suggest balance studies, mineral balance studies, like nitrogen balance, like calcium balance. These were done on metabolic wards in hospitals, when they were done at all. They were so precise, because you had to empty excrement and urine, things like that, because you wanted know content, and you had to do, practically, it really was almost a quantitative

chemical analysis of everything, going in and coming out. And we did that in flight—that was one of our experiments. Don did that.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

He authored that.

RW:

In flight, so from the start? From the first manned missions?

SV:

No, not from the first, no, that was with the establishment of the experiments program, which was my program. But we established it, and Don offered that particular experiment, and he had a great deal to do with the experiment that led to what's now used clinically to measure osteoporosis.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

Nobody knew anything about osteoporosis outside of medical school. Because of the fact that we had no way measuring it decently, we were working on a way that unfortunately didn't develop well. It didn't prove to be as accurate as we wanted it to be. We had developed another technique, which was, strangely enough, and not in any collaborative way at all, developed at the University of Wisconsin.

RW:

Huh.

SV:

And it used a radioactive isotope, and linear measurements across bones. It's called absorptiometry, photon absorptiometry—fancy name. But that technique is used in offices now.

RW:

Yeah, isn't that a PET scan, is it the same premise? I mean, I know that—I worked for the American Cancer Society for a while—

SV:

It's not a PET scan, but it's a—

RW:

But they use, yeah, the isotope that can—that'll be attracted to tumor sites, and particular ones.

SV:

Right, right.

RW:

And they can identify—

SV:

Well this is just a transmissibility across bones.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

And a photon absorptiometry, which is what it is.

RW:

Wow.

SV:

But that's in use now, it's clinically useable, and not only usable, it's used. Now everybody—well, women in their forties and fifties and beyond are getting tests routinely, that test that we developed.

RW:

Do you remember the first flight, or astronaut, or even the year when you were able to do these in flight?

SV:

I don't know that we did do photon absorptiometry in flight.

RW:

Well I mean or—

SV:

Pre and post-flight.

RW:

Well, be able to implement this.

SV:

Do I remember the year?

RW:

Or just the—

SV:

I can't remember the flight.

RW:

—was it the *Saturn*, or *Gemini*, or *Apollo*?

SV:

Yeah, I can't remember the flight.

RW:

Oh, that's all right.

SV:

It was, I think, at the beginning of the *Gemini* program. It was before and after measurements, and I think that's what it was. Pauline Barry Mack, poor gal, sweet old gal, used to wear knit dresses, and she was quite old, and had black horn-rimmed glasses. She wore tennis shoes, because she wasn't sure of her footing, and fur—not coats, but the short ones. You know what I mean?

RW:

Like a jacket, or—?

SV:

Yeah, yeah, fur jacket, and tennis shoes. Sweet lady, she lost her husband unfortunately, and carried on his research—this was an x-ray technique that she used. And we did this through *Mercury* and *Gemini*, and I think later in *Gemini* we started using this new technique as an alternative. I think that's when I began.



RW:

Well, I know you we'll probably have to stop this in a minute, but the one thing I want to ask you about is there's this huge compendium of information, and you know I'm going to forget the title, but it was about life sciences, where you seem to assemble all these articles, and reports, things that people have put together, and put them in this multi-volume thing. And I knew I would leave the office without writing the title down, but does that ring a bell? Because we have a bunch of correspondence of you sort of arranging this, and sending drafts of it out, and it was—

SV:

Me?

RW:

Yeah, and it was a large—it was like something—this very umbrella of a title, of something or other in the life sciences, or space and life sciences. Or, I'll rephrase the question, were there large publications like that that you were able to put together that you remember, or something that really contributed to things later on, that gathered that information in one place?

SV:

Well, I really don't know, because there were things like that coming out all the time, other people did it, I didn't do much of it. I did some. But only the stuff I thought was important.

RW:

Well and if I had remembered the title—I apologize.

SV:

Call me again, come back.

RW:

Yeah, yeah, I may.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

Well, again I don't want to keep you any longer, but is there any other thing you'd say about any of this, either early life, or a career in NASA, or something that you'd really want people to know, while we've got a chance to record it?

SV:

Gee I don't know, I assume we can make that chance again if we need to.

RW:

Oh, most definitely. I know that there are other materials that your daughter has gathered up that we may come down to pick up, some more things that are related to the—

SV:

There may well be. I haven't the energy frankly to go through that.

RW:

Sure.

SV:

Well, I've been very slow about.

RW:

Well there's no rush, we're going to be there forever, so whenever things happen, they happen for us. We're not ever in a hurry.

SV:

Okay, well at age ninety-one, I'm just not as capable, nor as energetic by any means.

RW:

Well I mean, you did your part to do all the stuff that now we just pick the pieces up, and show them to the rest of the world.

SV:

You're very kind.

RW:

You did the hard work.

SV:

Well I hope so, I don't know, it's never finished as you know.

RW:

I have an interesting question because we just witnessed the end—it just dawned on me—we just witnessed the end of the shuttle program, I guess about a year ago. Any thoughts about that? Because I know it started during your tenure and then towards the end of it.

SV:

Well, you'll be disappointed in my answer, and that is that with the end of the manned space

program, I am not as enthusiastic as I was. I don't think there's as much to do, I really don't. I don't know what the hell a man can do out there now. And in actuality, even our leaders were fishing for an answer to that, and I don't think they could defend their position very well.

RW:

You say even in the eighties and the nineties, as—

SV:

Well, we had set our goals, and we were going to meet them.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

But that's kind of a nearsighted point of view.

RW:

Sure.

SV:

Eventually, I don't think there's a lot to be done in space, until we get—I think the unmanned exploration of space has a great deal to do. It's all in astronomy and has to do with the origin of the universe. It's really metaphysical.

RW:

And we're about to get one around Pluto in 2013, 2014. I think the unmanned is going to actually orbit that, which is just amazing.

SV:

Yeah.

RW:

I'm a nut for astronomy. I can't do the math, but I love it.

SV:

Yeah, well I think you're right. To me, that's where the challenge is. Who cares if man can tolerate being out there or not? Why would we want to be? I wouldn't want to be, would you?

RW:

I don't know. I know it's a rhetorical question, but in a way, it would be great to be on Mars, and

in a way I would be terrified for nine months all the way there and then every minute that I was there.

SV:

You would be.

RW:

Yeah.

SV:

You would be. Hell, that'd be mighty lonely.

RW:

Oh yeah.

SV:

You don't even hear sounds. Nothing. So that—it doesn't intrigue me, and I think what we did was a tremendous feat of daring-do, and I think we learned a lot, and we learned what's not out there, too.

RW:

Yeah, yeah, that's a good point, yeah.

SV:

Yeah, so when I joined, we had a little session in the office with some media people there. And I had just got there, I didn't know for nothing. And there was a guy by the name of Jules Bergman, who was a newscaster, and sort of took over the reporting of news about the space program—

RW:

Huh.

SV:

—particularly the manned space program. He was a nice guy, and his voice was—really he had a beautiful voice, and Julie-baby was all hot-to-trot about the space program, and I was glad he was, and at that time I was a little enthusiastic myself, or I wouldn't have done it. But I've forgotten where I was going to go with Jules, Julie-baby, but it was kind of interesting. He was a good guy. I've forgotten what I was going to say about him, but you don't even hear about him now, but he was in the days of A-okay.

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
You know that saga.

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
It was a mistake, and Shorty Powers had developed that—he just was, he paused and said, “A, A-okay.” That’s where A-okay came from. Did I get off the point?

RW:  
Oh no, I mean I was curious, I mean you having been there through almost the beginning of the program, that is the manned program, and now with it ended, you’re one of the people we have with the best perspective on it, at least a unique perspective on it.

SV:  
Yeah, it is unique, but no, I don’t think there’s much to be gained, at least at this stage of our ability to project man into space. Where the hell are we going to put him, and why? I think we’re at at least a stopping point. But I don’t say stop the space program, I say it gets more expensive, well it’s even more expensive with man, but I mean to continue out further and further and further, we’ve got some big learning to do, to do this, and that challenge is important. It’s got to remain.

RW:  
It’s exciting.

SV:  
It is. It’s exciting. It’s going to be slower, it’s not as really a daring-do type of thing. It really is, but it’s more scientific.

RW:  
Yeah.

SV:  
And more heady. Oh yeah, I was going to say about Julie-baby, and this little séance they had—he tried to set up in the office. I’m forgetting my point again. Oh yeah, one of the first questions that he asked was about the little green men.

RW:

Of course.

SV:

And I said, "What the hell is he talking about, little green men?" Somebody brought that up early in the game—it was one of the astronauts.

[Knock on door. Lady asks about a truck parked outside and departs after Robert confirms it is not his.]

RW:

But you said an astronaut brought up the little green men, early on, what was that?

SV:

Yeah, well I don't know, somebody brought up the little green men. They were asking if people were hallucinating.

RW:

Ah.

SV:

And you know, some of the early experiments that were done with cutting off sensory inputs that man has. We'd put him under water, see if he'd go nuts, would he see the little green men, that kind of thing. So they were asking questions about that, or like that, as nutty as that—fortunately we know they're nutty now, but we weren't so sure back then. But that's what he was referring to.

RW:

Ah.

SV:

I don't think we ever even came close to having men hallucinating. They could be.

RW:

Well, and like I said, I'll close with one last question, which is how did you feel personally then when they successfully completed *Apollo 11*, and got that done?

SV:

Very, very happy, and proud of those guys.



RW:

Oh yeah.

SV:

Yeah, all of those—they were tremendous, the astronauts were tremendous, and that support crew they had down at Houston. It was an interesting saga, it was an excellent saga, it was a great accomplishment I think.

RW:

To me, in many ways—I probably shouldn't editorialize in a historical record—but in might be one of the pinnacle accomplishments of mankind, really, I don't know that there's much higher.

SV:

I think it was of the century.

RW:

Oh of the century, no question.

SV:

Yeah, and I'm proud of it, and I think highly of all the guys that participated in it, even guys I used to fight with. But, and I do, I'm proud of them. Gilruth was a great guy, great man.

RW:

You said Gilruth?

SV:

Yeah, Bob Gilruth, the head of Houston.

RW:

Oh okay, oh yeah, yeah.

SV:

Yeah, and also Langley, he was at Langley, and he inherited the astronaut program, the astronauts, and selected—he was the father to the astronauts. He was a wonderful man, an engineer. I met some great, great people.

RW:

I mean it sounds like a heck of a career, but you know, I hate to cut it short because I'm fascinated by it, but I know, I can see them doing their food thing out there, so you might have to head to that, unless you'd like to talk some more?

SV:

Well no, I will if you want to.

RW:

Well I mean you're the one with the life to get on about, and I'm the one who just showed up here to start harassing you with questions.

SV:

Well, I don't mean to be showing off, that's not the idea.

RW:

No, no, no, I mean there's only one person who can tell your story and it's you, so—

SV:

I hope it's interesting. I don't know. I could be boring as hell.

RW:

Well, why did you chose to retire, or was it a choice, or why'd you leave NASA?

SV:

Well, because funds were being cut off, and the impetus was gone. We'd been to the moon.

RW:

Well, when did you leave, was it '80?

SV:

When was it? No, it was—when the hell did I leave? '80—it was about '80. '81 I had my cardiac surgery.

RW:

Oh.

SV:

That's one reason.

RW:

Yeah, that'll slow you down.

SV:

That's all it did really, very lucky. When the hell did I leave? Thought I'd never forget. Well, I

needed heart surgery, and it took place in January '81, to give you the exact date. Then we were about to get a divorce, and that wasn't going well.

RW:

So I guess those were the factors that contributed to just—the money and the surgery and everything, just hung up your hat?

SV:

Well no, I went to Saint Mary's as the medical director.

RW:

Oh that's right.

SV:

Of the hospital.

RW:

I saw that stuff in there, that's right, I already knew that.

SV:

Well, okay.

RW:

I apologize, yeah, yeah.

SV:

Well—

RW:

But how long did you stay there?

SV:

At Saint Mary's?

RW:

Mhmm.

SV:

'86, that's when I started my practice.

RW:

Okay.

SV:

There's so many segments, and when you cross centuries—

RW:

Sure, sure.

SV:

—it gets all loused up. At least it does for me. So I don't know if I can help you in any way. I'd be happy to. If you want to talk some more, anything else comes up—

RW:

Sure.

SV:

Let me know.

RW:

Well, I'll thank you for this one, and let me get this.

***End of interview***

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