Livermore Heritage Guild Oral History

Interviewee: Herbert L. Hagemann, Jr.

Interviewer: Unknown

Date: 6/28/1985

Length: 1:19: 28 (MP3)

Description

Herbert L. Hagemann, Jr., was born on the Hagemann Ranch in 1921, 2.5 miles west of the flagpole on what used to be the end of Olivina Avenue. In 1921, the population was only about 2,000. He shares his memories of businesses, schools, scandals, alcohol stills, politicians, and other topics. Herbert L. Hagemann died in 2000.

Biographical Information

Friends have fond memories of Herbert Hagemann Jr.
Wrote Valley history, boyhood memoir.
By Ken McNeill

LIVERMORE -- Friends are remembering Herbert Hagemann Jr. as a kind and generous man whose family tree reads more like a road map of the Valley: Bernal, Kottinger, Murrieta, Mendenhall, Livermore. Hagemann, a direct descendent of one of Livermore's earliest settlers, died on Tuesday. He was 79. A bachelor all his life, Hagemann lived in modest style in the family's unpretentious 164-year-old house on Olivina Avenue, the same house that he was born in on Jan. 19, 1921. Hagemann spent his early years farming with his father, until about 1962. He graduated from Livermore High School and attended San Jose State College, later San Jose State University. Nearly all his life, Hagemann was deeply involved in community affairs, devoting much of his time to absorbing the Valley's history and spreading the knowledge he gained.

The Hagemann family was among the original settlers in the Livermore-Amador Valley. The family tree can be traced all the way back to about 1830, when Juan Pablo Bernal settled

in the 36,000-acre Valle de San Jose. Hagemann was Bernal's great-great-grandson, on his mother's side. He had roots back to the founding of Pleasanton through his great-grandfather, John Kottinger. His family's land made up what would be now about half of Livermore. It was Martin Mendenhall, brother of Livermore founder William Mendenhall, who planted a row of walnut trees in front of the Hagemann house on Olivina. All but the family's remaining 5 acres on Olivina Avenue were eventually sold.

Though he lived a modest lifestyle, Hagemann always described himself as "self-employed." Hagemann published a book in 1976 called "Crane Ridge Lookout--1931," the homespun account of a summertime boyhood adventure in the Livermore hills. The book was published by the Amador-Livermore Historical Society, of which he had been president since 1969. He pushed hard to see many historic sites in the Valley restored, such as the old St. Raymond's Church in Dublin and the Thompson home in Pleasanton. He also contributed numerous personal artifacts and historical pieces to the society's museum. Dale Turner was mayor of Livermore when the city and park district dedicated 7 acres on Olivina Avenue next to the Hagemann home as Hagemann Park in 1981. In years past, Turner said he would occasionally visit Hagemann at his home. "What I remember is he was a very humble person," Turner said. "He was very generous and kind. A father figure." Hagemann spent much of his time involved in city activities and community affairs. He was a past Master of the Masonic Lodge and was a Patron of the Eastern Star. He was active in the Native Sons, Eagles Lodge, Chamber of Commerce and city committees.

Excerpted from: *Tri-Valley Herald*, 30 June 2000, pages 1-2 local.

Interview started at 0:00:00

I: Okay, the day is 6/28/85, and I'm talking with Mr. Herbert Hagemann. Mr. Hagemann, could you please give me your full name?

HH: Yes, Herbert Luders [Note: Sounds like Loowers on the audio recording] Hagemann. I had to take the last name of a great-grandfather.

I: And where and when were you born, sir?

HH: 1921. January 19th. In Livermore. (I: In Livermore). Right here, actually.

I: Okay. And could you describe where this is?

HH: Well, we're west of the flagpole, two and a half miles, used to be the end of Olivina Avenue. It's 455 Olivina now. The edge of town when I was a small kid was almost North L Street. Probably P Street would be the edge at that time.

I: Okay, and, could you please give me the names of your parents?

HH: Yes, my father was Herbert L. Hagemann, Senior, and my mother, Edna Ruth Hagemann. She was a Kottinger before that.

I: And were both of them— Both of them reside in Livermore.

HH: My father was born and raised in Livermore, and my mother was born in Pleasanton and went to school at Livermore.

I: I see. Okay. So, as far as your parents, they lived in this area for (HH: Lifetime.) lifetime. Okay, and where [what?] were their occupations and did they own any businesses?

HH: Well, my father owned this place. It was a ranch. And he spent his life as a rancher. And my mother, she had a business education, and among her several jobs she had was the Livermore Water & Power Company, secretary and bookkeeper, and also secretary for the Livermore Merchants Association, which preceded Chamber of Commerce.

I: So that was— Was that Livermore Merchants Association, that was like a— Was that strictly for women or was that—

HH: No, no. It was for the business people. (I: For the business people.) Yeah, merchants.

I: And— it helped promote business in Livermore?

HH: It promoted business and it kept track of who was who. In fact, they had a blacklist of those people who didn't pay their bills, and those people who did pay their bills. All very secret, of course.

I: Ah, a blacklist. That's very interesting.

HH: I don't think they do that anymore. But in the old days, Livermore, you see, was maybe twenty-five hundred people. And that time maybe even two thousand.

Time=02:49

I: Okay. So, now we'll go into the business climate, and then we'll go back to the blacklist thing a little later. (HH: [Laughter]) That's fascinating to me. Where would you say— In the town of Livermore, where would you say were the more prominent businesses going on in the late twenties and thirties, early thirties?

HH: Well, the area here was strictly agriculture at that time. The few things that had come in, 1912, the Fuse Works, that was Merritt's— Let's see. Coast Manufacturing, they called it. They made fuses and powder and so on. They were east of town. There was the Brick Works earlier, of course, very early. And the Brick Works is really very important. It was important to the town, more than it was for their amount of bricks that they exported from here, because people would come from Europe, you know, and the first job they'd take would be at the Brick Works. They would come to a relative or a friend of the family that had a ranch, and they'd set themselves down for a couple of weeks, and then go and get a job at the Brick Works, the Brickyard.

I: I see. Was there a lot of immigrant population here?

HH: Quite a few. Italians, and Germans, and some French. And there were always that nationality of farmers. And they included people— And they, while they were at the Brickyard, they would take citizenship class. Get their papers. And then they would go on to something better, and a good many of them went into business for themselves.

I: For like wineries? Was that—

HH: Well, the wineries were mostly earlier. The people that still own the wineries. There's only two now. They were in back in the eighties. And Mr. Wente had worked in wines up in the Napa Valley. And Concannon, I believe, he had experience before he came here, and he had capital and he simply came here, and both of them, they bought their vineyards and started out.

I: I see. So as far as the vineyards go, that was something that was established really in the eighties, in the 1800s.

HH: 1880s, the wineries and the vineyards got a real establishment.

I: And what were— So common occupations would be more of an agricultural background?

Time=5:39

HH: Agricultural. The big thing were the warehouses. And, of course, in the early days, the warehouse was also a commission merchant. There weren't stores enough in town, why they could get the goods for you and have it shipped in by railroad, and you'd have it. Everything was based on what the rancher did. He sold his crop to the warehouse, and then he went uptown and bought his supply of whatever. And he had, oh, hardware stores, and of course always the grocery stores, and usually carried hardware line. And the other businesses, they were all more or less geared to the agricultural system. They were dependent on the agriculture to be their livelihood.

I: And so that was the major portion inside the town of Livermore; everything is more geared toward the agriculture. (HH: It was.) Everything was geared toward the agriculture. You would say this stretches on through the thirties? (HH: Yes, I do.) Okay. So, there wasn't anything— As far as— Would you notice anything new cropping up? Any new types of businesses that were coming up, let's say? (HH: Automo—, well—) Automobiles, maybe.

Time=7:04

HH: Automobiles. Automobiles were going when I was a kid, you know. My mother saw the changeover; I didn't. I saw the automobiles improve and advance. From the Model-T Ford to what we have today. It's quite a change.

I: Yeah, it is. Modern technology [unclear].

HH: And, of course, the trains. The trains were here. For a long time. But in the twenties and thirties, trains were still a big thing. Trucks hadn't taken over the drayage business yet. And the roads hadn't been built. We had the Lincoln Highway, but we didn't have freeways as we have them today. Everything is trucks today, and the railroads are practically out. But railroad was still the big thing. And the depot was the center of town. We still had the passenger trains, and if you didn't have a car, you took the train to the city.

I: You took the train to, like, San Francisco and Oakland?

HH: Yeah, it was kind of a long trip, but it was an easy trip.

Time=8:17

I: It was an easy trip. So, basically, cars were just starting to get into popularity. But they were more of a novelty for transportation.

HH: Well, yeah, most people, if there was something in Livermore they couldn't get—fancy clothes, for instance, or whatever—they'd take a shopping tour in their car down to Oakland or San Francisco.

I: I see. But you could get via the Lincoln Highway.

HH: Yes, we'd go out on Lincoln Highway and go straight on through Dublin Canyon and on into Oakland. It would sometimes take an hour and a half with the car.

I: Yeah. It takes about fifty minutes now, I think.

HH: Well, Oakland's more like thirty.

I: Yeah. Oakland, and San Francisco about fifty. What would you say were businesses that were becoming obsolete or starting to close down?

HH: The warehouses. (I: The warehouses at the same time as they were big—) No, no they weren't obsolete in the twenties and thirties. That had to come after World War Two, when that happened.

I: So, you would say before 1940?

Time=9:24

HH: Yeah. No, before 1940 all this was strong. Livermore was healthy. And even with the Depression, Livermore had its captive business here. And the businesses did thrive. Everybody a hardship, but no more than anywhere else. In fact, I think Livermore was a little better off because there were a lot of ranching people around here who did not invest in the stock market and had money. So, there was some capital to put back into the local economy.

I: So, Livermore was something like isolated from everything else that was going on? Before then? (HH: Sort of, yeah.) A lot more self-sufficient as far as what it produced and what it used. (HH: Yeah.) And so— Then I would think that the Depression didn't really have that big of an effect on it, or would you say?

HH: Well, it had an effect everywhere. Those who had investments—well, everybody had some—they lost. The market crashed. That was the big thing that—. I don't think there was ever anybody in Livermore that I knew that went hungry. Cause we lived on the ranch. And if we had hungry friends, we gave them the food [laughter]. That was the way of the small town, then.

Time=10:54

I: Yeah. I referred to— A lady— Another lady I was supposed to interview, she refers to the cash and carry.[1]

HH: Well, yes. That was even before the Depression. I can remember in the kitchen we have the grocery bills on a nail. For the whole year. And at the end of the year add them all up and pay the bill.

I: Yeah. You had year's long credit, and that changed when they had the merchants that came in, or these co-op stores?

HH: Well, yes. But this was the old agricultural way. Once a year you sold your crop, and when you've sold your crop, say sometime in the fall, everything was done, the cattle were sold, grain crops were sold, you had all your money put together, you went to town and you paid your bill. And then you started again for the next year. Not that you couldn't pay it as you went. This was the custom.

I: That's when you had the money to pay it off, usually.

HH: That was the way it was geared. But it was the custom. The merchants expected that to happen and the farmer planned on it. And sometimes the farmer thought it was kind of inconvenient, and he'd like to just— There were some who just paid as they did it. In fact, we did. Like in the Depression, that sort of changed a little bit because the farmer would come in with his produce, and he'd trade it for groceries that he needed. So there he paid right there instead of having a just cash and carry thing. He didn't bother with it. He just paid his bills. He just bought it. Paid cash. Or trade. A whole lot of trade. Eggs and butter. See, we didn't have the restrictions on dairy products and things that we have today, and we could make butter and sell it.

I: I see. So, it's more of a— So the people who lived in Livermore are a lot more self-sufficient, though, as far as— would you say, as far as what they produced and what they bought. And everything was very self-contained.

Time=13:03

HH: Yeah, and they could do for themselves.

I: And like you say, if they wanted something special outside, wasn't inside the town, then you'd go to Oakland or San Francisco. (HH: Yeah, they did.) Where would you say was the impact of large employers like Kaiser, like the Kaiser gravel, or Hetch Hetchy water project?

HH: Okay. Kaiser came in in about 1924, I think. Fuse Works, Fuse Works had an impact and they hired quite a few people. Of course, they came earlier. When I was a small boy,

[1] The use of "cash and carry" seems to be incorrect in this context.

they were quite a big thing in the town. And then the Veterans Hospital came in, and that hired quite a few people. For a small town, you know, if they hired a hundred people, that was a big thing. And then the gravel pits, Kaiser was the first for Livermore. And he located where the hospital is today. That's where Kaiser's first plant was. And he mined the creeks, and then he moved down to Pleasanton. Of course, earlier they had Jameison's company had started out in Pleasanton. And the rock quarry was beginning to take hold before 1920 already. Building those buildings in the Bay Area. And as building expanded, so did the rock quarries out here. And, of course, it became a big thing for the local economy. That was one of the things after these people who went to work at the Brickyard, the immigrants, they would look for a job at the gravel plant. That was the next step.

I: It was a step up in employment? (HH: A step up in employment.) I see. Was it looked down upon as, let's say as, were they looked on as a welcome thing? Or were they looked on as something—

Time=15:05

HH: Oh, they were a welcome thing in their time. Because they weren't big enough to, uh— We couldn't visualize what they were going to do to the landscape. Like it is today. If we could have seen that, we probably would have taken a shotgun after them. They started out small, you know.

I: Yeah. And it was something you couldn't foresee. (HH: No.) Okay. You were referring to your mother was a member of the— What was that association?

HH: The Livermore Merchants Association. That was— She was secretary.

I: So that was before the Chamber of Commerce.

HH: That was before 1926. The Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1926.

I: And was the Chamber of Commerce, was that an active body during the twenties and thirties.

HH: Yeah. Very small, but active. Well, the town was small. And as far as bringing in business, futile attempt because there was no need for it. That is, you know, there was no need in the Bay Area to expand out this way. So, they simply took care of their own. And they did bring some things in. And they were active in bring the rad lab in. That was in 1950. But in the early years, why they, their businesses were new stores, or the sale of the business to somebody else. Livermore was a little bit stagnant, you know. (I: As far as business-wise?) Well, yes. They could only have so much to satisfy the population. And growth was limited.

I: Like you say, was it like a homogeneous population of agricultural base, so—

HH: Well then in the twenties, Hetch Hetchy began to work here. They were digging the tunnel for the water project for San Francisco. And they hired multitudes of people. I think the town grew a thousand in population while Hetch Hetchy was working. And we saw some temporary new business. I can't remember what they were, but they were here and gone. And the old businesses that were established flourished and continued afterwards. Dropped back to their normal flow of business.

Time=17:35

I: Did you know what type of business it was that was, the one that flourished for a brief period?

HH: I would say all businesses. All retail trade. Clothing stores, grocery stores, and hardware. Cause people lived here. The had to fix a faucet or something, do some work in the house. And just about everything that was household, because that's all we had, you know.

I: I guess we go back to problems of financing or credit for farmers or merchants. Was there a big problem with that?

HH: I never knew of a problem, no. There were the local banks. Well by the 1920s the Livermore Bank had became Bank of Italy. Was bought out. And the other one, there were only two, the other one was Livermore Valley Savings, and that was bought out by American Trust. So, we had two branch banks here from major corporations, which operated the same as the old system did. And in the twenties, it was prosperity time, and financing wasn't necessary. In the thirties, it was a different story. But the banks did cooperate.

Time=19:09

I: Was there any project, federal project works going on during that time—

HH: Yeah. The Federal Land Bank came in. Now I couldn't tell you exactly when. They later became Production Credit Bureau. But they were the Federal Land Bank, and you got a loan at a very low rate of interest. This was designed especially to overcome the Depression and put the farmers back into business so that they could hold their land and not have it taken over by a bank or foreclosures and so on.

I: So, there was some sort of federal help. And was basically to help the farmers during—

HH: Yes. It was designed especially for agriculture. And they had an office here in town. They started off in Dublin, very small. And then they rented a space here in Livermore, and later they built a building. And they did a very good service. They'd give you a long-term loan at low interest rates, and if you couldn't make your payment—it was a yearly

payment, agricultural basis of everything, you know. If you couldn't make the payment, why they gave you a break and you could go on till next year. [unclear]. Sometimes it was a dry year, you know. And if that happened, then okay, next year maybe it's better. The farmer has to gamble.

Time=20:41

I: Yeah. So as far as financing credit, there wasn't really any problems at all. (HH: No real problems.) And you had federal backing also during that time.

HH: Oh, yes. (I: Some federal banking.) I remember the bank holiday. That's when this— Under Roosevelt. First thing he did was to declare a bank holiday.

I: Yeah, he closed them all down. (HH: Devalued the dollar.) Right, gave them new value to bring the economy back on its feet.

HH: And then the Federal Land Bank took over a good many— A lot of them stayed right with the old banks. Which was fine but— We had a federal land bank loan. See, you had expenses on your place, and no money to pay. So, you had to go get a loan to pay your hired help and your supply costs, and gasoline, and whatever you had to use to harvest your crops.

I: So, you used the money you got from the loan you got from the land bank to pay off your hired hands, just regular—

HH: And as the years went by, you kept reducing and reducing and then it's gone.

I: I see. So, it was a time-carried type loan, was it?

HH: Yeah, you could— I really can't remember. It was made for a number of years. I think five years, and then you could renew— An option to renew, if you didn't have the capital to eliminate it. I would say there was no problem really. Basically, no problem.

I: Okay. As far as the places of the business going on inside Livermore, would you say the majority of the shop owners or merchants, did they own or rent their places of business.

HH: Was about fifty-fifty, I guess. Fifty-fifty. There was a flour mill[2] in town, and they owned a lot of property on main street. And the old man died and left it to his heirs, and I think they still hold a lot of property. And those buildings were all rented. So any businesses in there were a rent. Now there were lodge buildings, built commercial buildings, and they leased their space. Like Dutcher's, they owned their building. And there was Goebel's meat market. They owned— They built a new building. There were, I would say in the twenties, at least, it was about fifty-fifty.

[2] Possibly Diamond Flour Mill.

Time=23:42

I: So, space was not really a big problem as far as getting—

HH: No. I can remember some empty spaces.

I: I see. So, basically, it was just a lot of businesses— Would you'd say they would all be congregated in one space, so once you say. Let's say like a center of town.

HH: Yes, well, of course, the center of town was from the flagpole, east and west, and this way on the side streets for one block, and that was it. And they went down to L Street. Beyond L Street, it was all warehouse.

I: So, you have like a center of town which was L-Street and the flagpole, and passed that it was just—

HH: No, then up to the railroad track on the east side. It was business up there.

I: Okay. But that was like your major block, and then from there— And then any other direction? Or would it be east to west?

HH: Well, north—North, it stops pretty much at the— It stopped at the railroad track, really. And second street on the south side. There wasn't very much business on Second street.

I: And as you were talking about before, most of the shopping was done in Livermore for what you need, your basic supplies.

HH: Oh, yes, yes, basic things were right here.

I: And anything else you didn't, was outside, you can go get it. Wasn't that unavailable to get?

HH: Well, the ladies liked to go for something classy in the stores in the city. So, they did. So, the ladies' shops didn't exactly thrive all the time. But they did, they did, really. There was a lady called Terri MacLean, who had a dress shop, and she became pretty wealthy. But they used to complain. Everybody saw the dress before they bought it, you know. The whole town went to look.

Time=25:44

I: Was it like in the store window, or something?

HH: Well, yeah. They'd go in and try things on. (I: Oh, I see.) You shouldn't ask me about that. What do I know about ladies' clothes? [Laughter] (I: Probably as much as I did.)

That was probably the men's clothes. They didn't have a tailor here to fit them. So, if you wanted a good-looking thing, you'd go out to San Francisco or Oakland.

I: I see. So basically San Francisco and Oakland were the—I'd guess you could say—like the places to be if you wanted to get something outside.

HH: Yeah. Also, you felt a little classy if you were going out of town. I can remember old Mr. Victor. They had the clothing store. He grabbed me by— in the back of the coat. Fits good. He'd draw it up— [Laughter]

I: He'd just draw it up that that. You buy it and it would be all baggy and stuff. That's pretty funny.

Time=26:40

HH: They didn't have a tailor, you know. You had to take it as is.

I: That's funny. So—

HH: They had dressmakers in town.

I: So, things were— I guess people they saw that things were changing, or that they wanted to compete with San Francisco or Oakland in some way so they—.

HH: It was always a competitive feeling with the big San Francisco stores. Always was, always would be. For a small town, you know. But basically, you could get most of the things here. If a few wanted to appear somewhere in a very fancy dress, you didn't buy it in Livermore. Fancy suit, you know, you'd go off to—

I: The prestige would be coming from San Francisco. (HH: Yeah.) I see.

HH: And of course, the label. Especially in the twenties. Livermore's 400 had to be bigger and above. Every small town has it.

I: Livermore's 400? The social class?

HH: Yeah, the heights of society. (I: I see.) As if we had any. [Laughter]

I: That's pretty funny. The social class? That's something that must go on right now, I mean.

HH: Well, it exists in every community.

I: The Livermore 400— Was that, uh—

HH: Oh, that's just my term for it.

I: Oh, I see. It wasn't a commonly known thing.

HH: No, no, no, no. Heavens, no. [Laughter] They couldn't count 400 people like that. More like 50—

I: Fifty people. I guess they'd be more like— I guess they'd be more like merchants?

HH: Not all. There were farmers, and the winery people, and the Livermore Sanitarium out here. They hired quite a few people, and of course they came in— Forgot to mention that. They started in the nineties. They were a hospital—mental hospital—private, you know. Very well run.

Time=28:53

I: I see here a story— I guess it was sort of a sanitarium for, I guess, World War I vets? Things like that.

HH: Yeah. Yeah, well, that's further out. See, that was the Veterans Hospital. And then there was a tuberculosis sanitarium beyond that. Run by the county.

I: Tuberculosis was pretty big during what, turn of the century, right?

HH: Yeah.

Time=29:21

I: Okay, well, remembering businesses that were going on then, what would you say the differences from then and now? Were there a lot of big change?

HH: There was a big change from what we used to have. Today, Livermore has one hardware store. When I was a kid, there were one, two, three—at least three hardware stores. The Dutchers were the big one. And then the warehouse handled hardware.

I: So, basically, everything is going back to where everything was basically geared toward the agriculture. (HH: Yeah. Exactly.) Okay, what were the major conveniences, like major hotel.

HH: Oh, Livermore had a lot of hotels in the early days. There was the Livermore Hotel by the flagpole, and there was— Well, Mally's sort of ran a hotel right in the middle of the south side of main street. And then down by L there were two. There was the Washington Hotel was built by Bardellini. And then Mally's bought it later and they call it the Palace Hotel, and boy some palace. And then across the street was the Valley Hotel. It started out as Germania Hotel. And then there was Hooper's, where Colonel Sanders Chicken is now. (I: Oh, really?) Hooper's Farmers Hotel. And that became the stage depot that

buses, Greyhound and the ones that were earlier. And then there was one— There was a bakery and a flower shop and a beauty shop, I think, right close to L Street on main on the north side. That was a hotel, and then it burnt. It burnt many years ago. But the hotels before the automobile, they did a thriving business. And they had a restaurant. Mally's had a fine restaurant at that time. They all had little restaurants, you know.

I: All the hotels

[Recording stopped at 31:40 and resumed at 32:04]

Time=32:04

I: We've been talking about hotels and restaurants and movie theaters inside of Livermore. And you were talking about restaurants within them.

HH: Well, yes, Mally's was the top restaurant for many, many years. And, of course, in the twenties and thirties, Croce came in here, and he had a restaurant in the show building, the Schenone Building, upstairs, and he ran a very good restaurant. They have since moved to Lodi, and you probably know what the restaurant is up there right now. It's first class. And it was here in Livermore. There was one thing about it. You see we had prohibition in the twenties and, of course, there were plenty of bootleggers around Livermore, as there were everywhere. And, the major bootleggers used to meet at Croce's, maybe once a week. That was the place to meet, and it was also a place for the organized bootleggers from the Bay Area, came out here because they had a big still out here in Mineral Springs, up in the mountains here.

I: Mineral Springs. So, like, this was the major place to meet for all of the major bootleggers in the—

HH: Well, there was a big ring of bootleggers up and down the coast, and some of our major people in the county area were a part of it, including— Will this tape be buried? (I: I don't know.) I better not say what I was about to say. [Laughter]

I: Sure, go ahead. I don't see anything wrong with it.

HH: Uh— Earl Warren was one of the big people in it. (I: Earl Warren, the—) Yeah. At the time he was district attorney for the county. (I: That's incredible.) Yes, it was incredible. And the still was run by Walker[3] up here in the hills, and Jack Gardella was the—the front. What should I say— He was the— (I: He covered for them?) No. He sold it. He sold the stuff.

I: Selling was illegal, wasn't it?

[3] Possibly Hugh S. Walker.

HH: It was all illegal. (I: It was all illegal) Yeah. I can remember my dad bought an old Dodge from Ed Aylward, probably a 1916 car. The only thing that worked on the dashboard was the oil gauge. And he was going to have some kind of a get together, so he went to Jack Gardella to get some liquor. And what he did, he'd take your car and go get it and bring it back to you and then he'd drive away in his own car.

I: So, you never bought it. You just gave him the money and then—

HH: Yeah, then he'd go get it for you wherever the secret place. I don't know where it was. But I can remember he came back, and he says— He was a character. "Why didn't you bring your good car. Suppose I have to make a getaway." [Laughter]

Time=35:11

I: Was there a lot of— Was there any type of law enforcement for it. Against this.

HH: Well, yes there was. There was a big investigation going on, and sometime around like twenty-nine or thirty, they raided the still. And Jack Gardella— They raided the whole thing. The whole organization. It was up for grabs. So, they made a deal. And somebody had to go to the slammer. San Quentin. So, they paid Jack Gardella to do it. He went to San Quentin for—I don't know how many years, two or three or whatever—and when he came out, he got four-hundred dollars a month, which Depression days was a lot of money. And every two years, he got a new LaSalle or new Cadillac. That went on for years and years, and as soon as Earl Warren was made governor, he pardoned Jack Gardella, first thing, so that he could vote and hold public office.

I: And then he [Earl Warren] becomes a Supreme Court justice.

HH: Yeah. And then he became a Supreme Court justice. [Laughter]

I: That's really interesting.

HH: The public doesn't know that.

I: No, I guess not. That's um—

HH: I hope they don't hear it from me. Well, I don't think anybody's going to worry about it.

I: Well, this is just a tape.

HH: There's no documentation that I know of that I could prove my statements with, but I'm sure if it was looked up, it could be found, you know. Court records would be public.

I: So, it was an involvement of both sides. It was something like the district attorney knew of this prohibition, but he knew about the alcohol production but was in on it anyway.

HH: He was in on it, yeah. So that's what happened. Of course, like the payment, the new car and the so much a month, there's no way to prove it, except I heard it from Jack Gardella's nephew.

Time=37:20

I: Oh, I see.

HH: But I'm sure it's true. There's no reason why it wouldn't be. But it's all past history, now. (I: Yeah, it kind of hit me there [unclear].) Yeah. It's the same way as these wonderful Navy people today who are selling stuff to the Russians. That's much worse. I think making alcohol is a lot less of a crime.

I: Yeah. It's not really a crime at all. Let's see. Now one thing you told me about the blacklist. Was this something that was going on in the twenties and thirties?

HH: Well, it was going on before the twenties and into the twenties. I'd say probably up to the time Chamber of Commerce took over. That was a convenience record for the business people. It was a record of those people in town. Let's say you have twenty-five hundred people, and maybe there's fifty of those people, or fifty families, who didn't pay their bills. Like deadbeats, you know. (I: Credit rating.) Bad credit rating. That's what it amounted to—a bad credit rating. Today you have a credit bureau who handles this stuff for you. (I: IRS, things like that?) So, the Merchants Association— No, not IRS. Private. There are private credit things who investigate a person's credit and give out the information. (I: Oh, I see. Okay.) So, this is what the Merchants Association did in their time. But in a little small town, why they didn't have much to do. There weren't that many.

I: What would you say their actions amounted to as far as not letting some buy anything or—

HH: Well, it's a warning to the merchants. Watch this guy because he, uh— Get your money, you know. Make him pay cash or something like that.

I: This was not something that was made public. This was just something that was kind of known.

HH: It was a service for the merchants.

Time=39:21

I: I see. Okay. Now I'm going to lead into some community activities here in Livermore. Were there any— What would you say were, like, the big parades or other forms of entertainment outside—

HH: Well, there were two things. Probably the major thing was the old 4th of July parade which, from time immemorial, was a big celebration. In the early days it would be Livermore, then it would be Pleasanton, then it would be Sunol. But then it got to be each town had their own as the population grew from five hundred to a thousand, you know. So in my time we already had the rodeo, which was— First one was held in I think 1919 or 1918, I don't remember which. It was done for the Red Cross after World War II [Note: World War I]. Anyway, it was a combination. They would have the 4th of July parade and at the same time the rodeo was going on, so they combined, and today we have the rodeo parade which is an outflow of this thing. And we had the wonderful floats, and we had— always had a goddess of liberty. Some local young girl was chosen to depict the goddess of liberty on a big float all decorated. One year they had Helen Reuter? and they had four horses to pull her. She was really a— pretty heavy. Well, they had a four-horse team for the float because it was on a big wagon.

I: She was pretty big, ha? That's pretty funny.

HH: We'd all go— We'd go up four o'clock in the morning and park the car, and then we'd ride to town in the Model T and sit in the car to watch the parade on main street.

I: You had to get up that early?

HH: Just to park the car.

I: Park the car? It was that big of an event?

HH: Oh, yes. It was a big thing. And then sometimes they'd have the— The Livermores were in the parade one year. And, all my relatives, you know, they'd go and wave at them. And they'd always have local color, along with floats that would come from the outside. There was lots of local color. And there'd be some farmers would go in there, they'd even tie flowers around their [moor?] and ride down the street in the parade.

I: So, it was like, yeah, like two or three big events?

HH: Yeah. The other one, I'd say, was the Holy Ghost. They had a big Portuguese population here. And they had their own— Where the Eagles Hall is now, that belonged to the Portuguese Lodge. And, of course, this is a church celebration, you know. So, they'd have this thing, it would be I think it would be in June, if I remember right, like the first part of June. And they'd have fireworks and they'd have a big parade, and they'd go up North Livermore and up to St. Michael's Church. And there they'd have a special mass and crowned the queen. And they had all of the queen's attendants. It was fantastic. They

still have them in some communities, but they disbanded this one when the— generations went by, there was a lack of interest, and they didn't speak Portuguese any more, and they lost the contact with the old traditions. So, they gave it up. It's too bad because they used to have a good time.

I: Where were the topics of community interest or importance discussed? Was there like a basic meeting town— meeting place in Livermore?

HH: Well, we'd, yes, Sweeney Opera House.

I: Sweeney Opera House. Where would you say that was located now?

HH: Um— McLeod. First and McLeod. New Way Auto Parts? Is there a New Way Auto Parts there? There was. The front part of the building is still there. It burnt in about 1946 or 7, along in there. It was a nice big place. Dance floor. And it had a stage. And the Benjamin's Medicine Show. (I: A medicine show?) Yeah. And then the graduations I can remember would be there. Anything that was like that, they held it in the Sweeney Opera House. And then later they held it in the show, in the movie house. The Schenone Building. (I: Schenone Building?) Yeah. Of course, they would have to stop the movies, you know. But there was a stage in there, and they could use that for various things. But Sweeney's, I think, was probably used more for the local get-togethers. Every year the fireman's dance was in Sweeney's. The Firemen's Ball. That was a big event. The whole town would participate.

Time=44:42

I: So, any type of— Going on to civic events discussed in this question was the flagpole—

HH: Well, the flagpole in the early days, if there were any political talks or anything, why they'd set up a little grandstand or something there around the flagpole, and the guy would get up there and talk. You see, right there was the Livermore Hotel and all of that. It was the center of town. When the automobiles were in, they gave that up because traffic, you know, had to go through it. (I: Go around the flagpole.) Yeah.

I: So, the flagpole is seen as something more like a, like a sounding board, would you say or—? (HH: Not really.) Just some place where people would meet and talk?

HH: Well, it was the center of town. They called it Mills Square because the old mill. You used to enter the mill where the Hub Saloon was. And, well, it just was a place in the old Hub Saloon. This is before prohibition. That was the place where you went and discussed. Met all the politicians and the big wheels and had a drink and discussed things. That's all gone today. Lizzie's park or some ridiculous thing. [Laughter] Aunt Lizzie was a local character. I don't know if you want to hear this. (I: You can go ahead.) Well, she to go around— She'd pick up cigar butts and sell them for snuff. (I: Oh, really.) That's how she

made her living. So, they named that street. South Livermore Avenue was Lizzie's street. Now they have Lizzie's Park.

Time=46:35

I: Did the business community itself sponsor any events? Any type of entertainment or anything to increase their own sales?

HH: Uh— No, they really didn't. (I: Something like— You know how Pleasanton has their sidewalk sale.) No, they didn't have anything like that. They all entered into 4th of July, of course. And that brought people to town, you know, along with the rodeo. God, there'd be ten, fifteen thousand people in town. God, I can— I was in the parade more than once. There was one time we had an old buggy, and we'd put the plow horses in it. And, God, the traffic. I had to cross main street to come home, you know, and the traffic was terrible. Bumper to bumper. Just— And the old horses— I was just ten years old, and I just put the lines down and let them do it. And they'd squeeze in, you know, the car would be right there and they'd look mean at the car and just squeeze in. First thing, you know, we got through the thing. They'd wait for us.

I: So, there wasn't really any— Outside the events like, uh, the Holy Ghost and—

HH: There was no— No, the events were all social. There would be church socials and like the Holy Ghost, the Firemen's Ball, and the 4th of July were the big things. They used to have street dances with Holy Ghost and with, uh— And everybody went, you know. They'd dance on the street. They'd close off J Street right there by the, uh— oh, Forester's Hall. And they'd have a street dance. And the whole town would be there, gosh, with all their kids.

I: So, things like the Holy Ghost is a really big thing where they—

HH: Well, yes. For twenty-five hundred people, it was a big thing. Something was going on, you know. And everybody supported it. And 4th of July, too, they had a street dance. They don't do those things anymore. Oh, and then for Firemen's Ball, I can remember as a kid, they had two orchestras. One was a jazz orchestra. But Livermore was a little out of date, so they had Sachaus[4]. And they played every other dance, they played, and it would be a polka and schottische. You know, those old-time things. Because we weren't with it yet. [Laughter] Not all the way, anyway.

Time=49:25

I: Just looking at the town leaders, could you name who were like the more influential people in Livermore.

[4] The Sachau family included several musicians.

HH: Well, Fred Lassen was very influential. And he was mayor twice that I know of. And he had the mill down there by the railroad tracks, across from Hooper's. And he was the one who I believe paved the main street, 1914, about that time. And he was mayor again when I was a kid. I'd say like 1928, along in there. And then George Tubbs was another one. George Tubbs married Freida Wente, of the winery. (I: Of the Wente winery.) The Wentes. And he was a builder. And he tore down the old Livermore Hotel. I'll never forget. It was just about 1930, and he built up a whole lot of houses for the lumber. Then the hotel was loaded with bedbugs. And about six months later, after people moved in, they were all complaining about bedbugs. [Laughter] He had a lot of influence on the town at that time. Sam Bothwell was another. He was the town councilman. And he's the one who built up the rec center that's there today on the old high school grounds. (I: Yeah. I know where. I went there, too.) I guess they call it Bothwell something or other now, don't they? (I: We just call it the rec center.) Well, he should be commemorated. He built that with his own time and money. It was a nice donation for the town. Let's see, who else? Tom Norris, out at the Fuse Works, he was not on city council, but he was a community leader. He was head of the rodeo association several times. Rassie Hansen was another one. His time of influence was, I'd say, right after World War II. Comes later. He's more or less responsible for Livermore being retarded. (I: Retarded?) In business growth and that kind of thing. (I: Oh, I see. He's retarded the growth.) And Dr. Dolan was city health officer for years and years, even during the [unclear]. We used to go to the show, and the rats would run down the aisle. [Laughter] (I: That must be pretty interesting for the show.) Yeah. Very interesting. I remember Edith Cambridge? sat with her purse like this one time and the rats chewed the leather straps. And the purse dropped down, and she drew it up and all she had was the leather strap. [Laughter] Wonderful health officer. (I: Yeah, I guess.) [Laughter] (I: Nobody complained?)

Time=52:42

I: Were there any prominent clubs or, you know, societies going on in Livermore.

HH: Yes, Masonic Lodge was always prominent. They started in Pleasanton in 71 [1871] and they moved here in 84 [1884] and they used the Odd Fellows Hall, which was built in 74 [1874]. I should have said 74 [1874] they moved here. And they rented the hall on the nights the Odd Fellows didn't need it. The Odd Fellows were another strong one.

I: What were their functions as far as— Were they social groups?

HH: They were just social groups. Fraternity. (I: Fraternities.) Paternal order, they'd call them. And then they had ladies' groups, the Eastern Star and the Rebekahs. They'd go with each one of them, you know. And what else? Well, the Catholics had their groups, the YLI[5] and the YMI[6], which held a dance every year. Then there'd— We had a—this is

[5] Young Ladies' Institute
[6] Young Men's Institute

really very important—we had a National Guard unit, the old Company I. And every year they'd have a dance, military dance, at Sweeney's. A very fancy affair. Anybody that was anything got invited to that. (I: It was more of a social event.) Very social event. (I: More like a social, I guess—) That started Livermore's 400. [Laughter] (I: A social elite class.) Yeah. Yeah. Well, it wasn't really, but it was invitational. If you were invited to that, it was always formal dress and everything very nice. And you felt like you were somebody if you could go to that.

I: So, you had basically like religious groups. I mean religious— (HH: Churches. Church groups.) Church groups. And you had social groups. You have anything, any type of business-related clubs outside of the—

HH: No. They didn't have a business-related club that put on anything like that. They did their business. They didn't enter into that. There were ladies' societies. There was the Improvement Club which took care of the library park. Saw to it that the grounds were well kept. All that sort of thing. That's Carnegie Park now. [I: Carnegie Park?] Yeah. And they used to look wonderful. And, of course, Myrtle Harp wouldn't let you step on the lawn. But, what else? Of course, there were— The ladies had their card clubs. The men went to lodge. There were other lodges, too. There were the Foresters and the Eagles, and there was, maybe still is, there were the Red Men. They all dressed up like Indians. (I: Were they like a historical society.) No, no. They were just a lodge. (I: Dressed up as red Indians?) Their ritual of some kind. And then there was— There was the Moose. (I: That was another club?) Yeah. It's a lodge. It's still going, not here in town. And then there was the Druids. I think that one is still going. There's secret orders, you know. (I: It's like they just met and said pledges and they had like, a—) Well, they have a ritual that nobody that isn't a member gets to know about. Of course, most people know about it but that's fine. [Laughter] They're a social group. That's exactly what they are. Well, then they did the— In the twenties, they started up the Lions Club. I remember that. And it wasn't until after the war that we got Rotary. But Lions Club was going before that. And that, of course, is a service group. (I: Yeah. Public service.) Public services. (I: Did they have an active— Were they very active or was it just very, uh—) They were as active as they could be in a town of twenty-five hundred. You know. [Unclear] everybody's getting along. They did things like help the school and help the park or something like that, you know. And then private citizens would often do something for the town. Like Rassie Hansen gave a piece of property for a little park to be the side of town. It's still there where there's a wagon parked in a knoll, down on this end of main street. There was a rose garden in it. Actually, Carlo Ferrario gave the land and Rassie Hansen took it over and put his name on it. Then there were some other little pieces that people gave, too—-out in the middle of the street, you know.

Time=57:46

I: So, basically, the Lions Club was just starting out in the twenties and was kind of limited as far as what it could do for the—

HH: Yeah. For the local community. They helped the poor, if there were any poor. So did the lodges. You know they'd give you a Christmas basket or whatever.

I: As far as like water and power and services?

HH: Well, the old Livermore Water & Power company, that used to belong to the Aylwards. And that started way back in the seventies as Livermore Spring Water Company. Just water. And they brought the water down from Cedar Mountain, down the creek, and they, down by Sachau's out there in the Mocho, they started to put it into redwood flues and brought it to town. (I: Redwood flues. That's like redwood containers?) Redwood pipes. And I'd see on third street when they were digging the street and dug some up. Thought they found something special. They were just pipes for the water company. My mother remembers when they would fix'em, Ed Aylward would smoke a cigarette and take the lit match and put it in the leak— See what happened. It's all wood, you know.

I: So, Livermore Water & Power company—

HH: Well, then they begin to make power.

I: It was a privately-owned company?

HH: Yeah, well. The company itself was started by Dennis Bernal—the power company. And, Aylwards bought that out. And then through a stock deal, a man by the name of Dingee got the water and power company away from the Aylwards. It was a crooked deal. Legal, I guess. So, they lost out on that, so all they had then was their machine works down on Railroad Avenue. And that was going until after the war. Which, incidentally, was a wonderful thing, because during the war, when we couldn't get anything, you could go to Ed Aylward and he'd have something to fix your machinery. And he did it, too.

I: So, he was like a— As you were starting to say, I guess he was a [unclear]

HH: He was a good machinist. He could make the parts, and he had parts of old things. He knew where they were. I don't know how he did that, but he'd go under the bench and pick something up. "Here it is." He said, "This will fit." He'd do a little work on it and take it home and machine's working again. But the power company—Dingee's heirs— Dingee died and the heirs. My Ma worked for the heirs. [HH calls to his mother in the background: "Bissell, Ma? Was it Bissell that owned Water & Power Company?] Bissell, yeah. They sold out to PG&E in about 1926, along in there. And then, of course, PG&E has expanded it to what it is. And they gave up the water. The water went to Cal Water, and the power to PG&E. That's the way they did it.

Time=1:01:04

I: Who took care of the sewage? Is that another part of the [unclear]?

HH: No, that was the city. (I: That was done by the city.) Uh ha. The first sewer plant I remember as a little kid was down in the Northern Addition here. It was nothing but a big septic tank. And then they moved it west, in back of what used to be the PX, on Crohare's property. And it was there until— Well, it was there until about 1956. Very inadequate. Stink something terrible. And then they moved it to where it is. We had to sell them the property.

I: As far as communications go, or newspapers, what newspapers would you say were big?

HH: *Livermore Herald*.

I: That was a big one? The *Tribune?* The *Oakland Tribune*? Was that—

HH: Well, the *Tribune* was Oakland. It used to come in here.

I: It would come in here. It wasn't that popular around here?

HH: Oh, yes. *Tribune*, *Examiner,* and *Chronicle*. And you got those at McKenzie's. McKenzie's had the American Express. And they also handled magazines and newspapers, and you could subscribe to any one of those papers, and it would be in a box in Mrs. McKenzie's office, and you'd go get it.

Time=1:02:32

I: I see. Being the size of Livermore was, I would assume that it was— That most your advertising was done in like the more local papers?

HH: In the *Livermore Herald*. And we had— At one time we had the *Echo* (I: The *Echo*?) The *Echo*, I believe became The *Journal* The *Journal*. There were two papers. The *Journal*, and then the *Journal* became the *Southern Alameda County News* owned by Kingsley. The Henrys had the *Herald*. The *Herald* was the old original. Started in seventy-four (1874). Started as the *Enterprise* (I: The *Tri-Valley Herald*, which is now—) Which is now *Tri-Valley Herald*, yeah. Frankly, it was a better paper in the thirties than it is now. (I: Things change.) Yeah, well— I like to read local news; there isn't any.

Time=1:03:28

I: We already talked about the forms of transportation, about the car just being more of a novelty.

HH: No, the car was useful in the twenties and thirties. You went uptown with the car. Oh, yes.

I: So, was it— It was being used a lot.

HH: Oh, yeah. There were very few horses. There were six or seven people who came with a horse and buggy still.

Time=1:03:52—recording cuts off; resumes at 1:04:10

I: We were just talking about the cars in Livermore. Well, let's see, not the cars themselves, but let's say— (HH: The use of the cars.) The use of the cars, their role. And you were saying that they were more of a— They were becoming a large part of the town.

HH: I would say by the 1920s automobiles were the(underline) mode of transportation for the farmer to go uptown. The horse was time consuming. It got to the point where he'd want to save time. When I was ten years old, we had a Case car. And I'd used to drive uptown. I'd get the mail and get the groceries and stop at Lassens. And Ma would say, "Look out for Doten." He was chief of police and he'd wave at me by the flagpole. [Laughter]

I: Why, because you weren't of age to drive?

HH: Yeah, I was only ten. [Laughter] But in a little place like Livermore, nobody cared.

I: And the railroad was still big?

HH: The railroad was still big. The train was coming through. (I: Shippers, supplies?) Shippers. We used to ship cream, and they did that on the train. Take it to the depot and it would go on the train down to the creamery where they churned it for butter. Once a week they sent you a check. That was— The cows were mortgage payers. We got a good weekly check off of them. Everybody milked cows. They were a pain in the rear.

Time=1:05:42

I: I can imagine. Let's see— Most of the produce [grown?] in Livermore are shipped out of town? I think we—

HH: In the twenties and most of the thirties, we had some vegetable produce. The Schenones, and— The Schenones and their relatives, let's see. I can't remember now. Italian people. They lived out on Livermore's property. In fact, Katie Livermore married Schenone[7], who built the Schenone Building. And they grew a lot of vegetables, and they sold most of it right here locally. And what was excess, they shipped to the market. But they had a vegetable wagon that went around, and then they had a store in town, right next to Dutcher's Hardware store. And they sold their produce there. And they bought from other farmers, like my mother's father had a big orchard out here, and they bought

[7] Louis Schenone

his fruit and sold it. So, shipping things in wasn't so great. It took time. So the fresh produce was best.

I: So, you got a lot— But as far as what was produced here, was mostly consumed here. (HH: Was consumed here.) It was mostly— It was consumed here, with very little outside imports outside of the valley?

HH: No, well, see each— Livermore had its vegetable gardens, the Schenones had it. And down in Pleasanton, another Italian fella had it— Paul. DeLuccie? DeLuccies had it, and they supplied the town of Pleasanton. And Sunol probably had their— A lot of people had a little vegetables here. I remember we picked mushrooms one year. Just the wild ones, you know. And we took them to the Bargmann's Grocery store and sold them. And people bought them. In something like two hours, they were all gone. [Laughter] 'Cause that was the only way you got mushrooms in the old days.

Time=1:07:47

I: As far as what we were talking about— San Francisco to Oakland, they were, uh, the places to be or go for entertainment?

HH: Yes. Any big shows, except for the movies—we got good movies out here. But stage shows, the opera—some people liked to go—that type of thing. It all had to be San Francisco. We used to go and park our car in a garage in Oakland and take the Key Route. The train would take you out to the end of the track out in the bay, and you'd catch the ferry, and the street car up to the opera house, or wherever you were going to see. And we'd have a midnight meal and come home.

I: So, it was like an all-day thing.

HH: No. We'd go early afternoon and all evening event. It wasn't so hard. It would be an hour to Oakland, you know, and then the— boy that old Key Route, that took you there fast. You were like fifteen minutes on the train and twenty minutes across the bay. And just a few minutes on the streetcar up to the opera house or the theater—the center of town, you know.

I: That's right. They didn't have a bridge, either. (HH: No. They had no bridge.) So, you had to— (HH: No. Take a ferry.) take a ferry.

HH: And the Key Route was the best service.

I: I see. It's hard for me to think of that because when I go, I'm there across the bridge. No problems.

HH: Yeah. See, you didn't have a traffic problem with the train. You zipped right— You had the right-of-way, you know. Rough ride in old train, but they were fast.

I: So, but as far as— Let's say as far as transportation, you know, there was more use of the car— (HH: The automobile.) Okay. Was it something that you did frequently? I mean your family is [unclear]. Did your family go into the city a lot? Or was it like, maybe, a very special occasion?

HH: No. I'd say we would go about once a month. Oh, of course, we'd go— like in the summer we might go once a week. If you had a breakdown with the machinery, like the Case equipment, you know, you'd go down to Case Company in Oakland to get the parts. They didn't have them here.

I: So, you were basically dependent upon for the city also for like industrial parts and things like that.

HH: Well, yes. See, if you had a crew if men here working, it was cheaper for you to take the card and go down and get those parts and get that fixed right away. And if you waited for the local agent to telephone it in and wait for the train to bring it.

I: The local agent was someone who— (HH: Yeah. Was a representative of the Case Company, for instance.) Okay. Then he would call and say we need a part out here.

HH: Yeah. If you could anticipate what was happening and call in early, that's okay. But if it broke, bingo you're stuck with a crew of men. You'd better take your car and go get it and fix it within the same morning or afternoon.

Time=1:10:58

I: The question in my own mind is not on this paper, but I kind of wonder— As far as what was going on in the United States, you know, as a whole country, were you more aware, were you—you know—was it more of a consciousness of what was going on?

HH: We were conscious of everything that went on, sure.

I: Was it like things that were going on like in Europe, and things like that?

HH: Yes, the newspapers were full of it. And the radio. News on the radio. Noon news on the radio. I used to go stay with my friend on Saturdays sometimes, and every noontime, a whole hour of news. Papa had his news, and the kids were bored. There was plenty of news. No television, of course, but we got the news. Maybe we got it better because you had to work for it, you know. Your mind. You didn't look at it. It had to sink in. No, I think the daily paper came, like the papers, *Tribune*, they were printed in the morning and you'd have them in the afternoon, so you got the latest news right away.

I: So, it wasn't really as if you were isolated at all.

HH: We were not isolated at all. No. No. And we all had telephones.

I: Telephones, which were— You could keep kind of contact with people.

HH: Oh, yeah. We turned the crank. It cost us two seventy a year. (I: Two dollars and seventy cents?) Yeah, we owned the line. We had to do our own repairs. I can remember when my mother and dad went off to Oakland, and I was here alone, and I had to call my aunt in Oakland. And Hazel was the chief operator. So, I turned the crank and she came on and I says, "Hazel." No, it was Mrs. Shanks. Be polite, you know. "I have to talk to Aunt Sue, but I don't know the number." So, she says, "Just a minute." And before I could say Jack Robinson, Aunt Sue was on the line. [Laughter] (I: Wow.) It's from Oakland. Everybody knew everybody else. See, that was everybody else's business, too. (I: I see. [unclear] That's pretty good.) At one time, I enjoyed it. There were some times when I wished they would not pay attention to me. [Laughter]

I: I'm going to have to end this conversation, but I would like to thank you very much.

HH: You're very welcome.

I: It was a very good talk.

Time=1:13:48

I: This is a little bit more of our conversation with Mr. Hagemann. You were talking about the schools?

HH: Yes. Schools were a big part of social life, and family life, too. And every so often, I'd say once a year, there was an event at the school—the local public school. And I think the convents surely did this, too. Catholic. Where they'd have a kind of a social get-together and they'd have a little dance, and the teachers and the parents and the school board would all be there. And it would be just a nice social get-together. It wasn't for money. It didn't seem that we needed money because we didn't need expansion. Our population was more or less stable. And it seemed for some reason that the education department attracted social activity for some reason. And, of course, the PTA was started in the twenties and they also had social events of various kinds. And they would raise a little money once in a while for something. They used to finance the lunches. If you brought your lunch to school and a dog took it, you could get a free lunch from the PTA. [Laughter] Various things of that nature that they took care of. All on a small scale because we were a small community. We had our school plays always attended by the local population, always a sellout no matter how bad they were. I can remember the senior play held in the Sweeney Opera House, with a full house. I think they seated 500 people. Perhaps more than that. (I: Schools offered a social outlet?) They were a social outlet as well as educating the children. People had a closer interest those days in the small town because there wasn't anything else to do, really. So, if you take an interest in school, and to have some kind of event around it was very attractive. And that way the

whole family could enter into it. They didn't have barbeques or anything. It would be some kind of an evening event. (I: And what schools did—) Well, there was only the Livermore Public School and the Livermore High School. That was all there was. And the St. Michael's Catholic School, which was quite small.

Time=1:16:50

I: And was there anything type of athletics program going on at that time?

HH: Not really. The high school did have ball teams. They had the girls' basketball, and the boys had a football team. [Phone rings.] And that was another thing where the town went. You didn't just have the parents. (I: So, it was a bit more—) Yeah, the school had a big auditorium, and what there were maybe forty kids and two parents each with the baby and all the rest [unclear] everybody else. Lots of room.

I: Yeah. Basically, it seems to me that, during that time, a lot of things were more group oriented or family oriented, would you say?

HH: Yeah, they were. Always in a small town. That's the way it is. That too was the times. The family group has more or less deteriorated over the generations since then. Back in the thirties and forties, we were still a little bit nineteenth century.

I: More of a nuclear family, or you had a lot more relatives living with you?

HH: Yes, we had a lot more relatives close at hand. I can remember Sundays, we always had company on a Sunday. They'd come out of Oakland, San Francisco, you know. Lots of relatives. (I: Friends.) And friends. And, of course, my dad was German. His grandfather was from the old country. But we had a thing going, you know, always writing letters, and people were here from the same town, and they'd come and visit, you know. So we had a constant flow of visiting traffic, I guess you'd call it. And people got together because they didn't go the long distances. They would come for coffee. Like the Wentes would come over on Sunday, and we'd go out there. Harry Wente broke my tricycle. [Laughter] (I: Stuff you remember.). Well, I was going to recommend that you go see Danny Dutro. (I: Danny Dutro?) Danny is a little older than I am. He's a real character. His dad was a barber and so was he up on the main street. (I: Last name's spelled—) Dutro.

Recording ends at 1:19:28

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