

# Livermore Heritage Guild Oral History

Interviewee: John "Jack" Edward Jensen

Interviewer: Richard "Huff" M. Deck

Date: 1981

Length: 1:02:09

## Description

Jack E. Jensen visited Livermore as a youth in 1898, returned several times, and came to stay when the Fuse Works was built. He was the former owner of the Livermore Plumbing and Sheet Metal Works. He speaks of his memories, including the fire which destroyed St. Michael Catholic Church, the time there was two feet of water at the, and several other topics.

## Biographical Information

### *Interviewee:*

John "Jack" Edward Jensen, the former owner of the Livermore Plumbing and Sheet Metal Works, was born 6 Nov 1886 in Hayward, California. He married Minna Nienburg in 1916. He passed away on 30 Oct 1981 in Livermore, California.

John E. Jensen, who called Livermore home since 1914, died Friday. He was 94. "He was a wonderful fellow," said his old friend Joe McGlinchey on Friday. "He made lots of friends, and knew everyone in Livermore. "He was always helping you out," added Warner Holm, another longtime friend. Former school principal Malvern Sweet knew Jensen best as the father of the schoolmates of his own youth. "He was the kind of adult you wanted to model yourself after," he recalled Friday. Jensen was owner of Jensen and Son Plumbing and Sheet Metal in Livermore for 43 years before his retirement in 1956. He was a 73-year member of Lodge No. 219, I.O.O.F. of Livermore and member of Masonic Lodge No. 218, F&AM of Livermore. He was preceded in death by his wife, the late Minna Jensen; a son, the late Jack Jensen; and a daughter, the late Miriam Bube.

Excerpted from: *The Herald*, 31 Oct 1981, p. 8, col. 3

*IN MEMORY*

Noted is the recent death of John E. Jensen, a native of Hayward, who called Livermore home since 1914. He died one week prior to his 95th birthday and was the last survivor of the second generation of the large Jensen family that came to Hayward in the 1860-70's. Mr. Jensen was the son of the late John V. Jensen and Elsabe Borneman Jensen and was born on Castro Hill (later named Pergola Hill). His father was an original trustee of Hayward High School Union District #3 in 1892, representing Independent District. Mr. Jensen learned his trade at the H. E. Bruner Plumbing Shop, a pioneer Hayward business, and later established his own firm in Livermore. Although a resident of Livermore, Mr. Jensen always retained fond memories of his youth in early Hayward. He kept close contacts with his Hayward relatives, the Jensens, Bornemans, Harders and Gottburgs.

From: *Adobe Trails*, Winter 1981, Hayward Area Historical Society.

*Interviewer:*

"Richard Marion Raymond 'Huff' Deck passed away March 11, 2007. He was born in Livermore on January 23, 1917, son of James and Florence (Callaghan) Deck. He attended St. Michael's Parochial School and graduated from Livermore High in 1935. ... He began his work career as a hand on local ranches and the Magnesite mines. He retired from Lawrence Livermore National Lab. ..."

Excerpted from: *Contra Costa Times* from Mar. 14 to Mar. 15, 2007.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/eastbaytimes/name/richard-deck-obituary?id=32720168>

**Interview started at 0:00:00**

RD: On a Tuesday, I am at the residence of Jack E. Jensen, former proprietor of the Livermore Plumbing and Sheet Metal Works, and today I will sit down and have a little chat with Mr. Jensen. This is Huff Deck or Richard M. Deck of Livermore, and I have been a friend of Jack's for at least 63 years. Jack, for information purposes, tell me about what year or at about what age you were when you came to Livermore, and then I'm going to ask you a few other questions, and I'm sure you can give us a complete resume of the whole thing. Thank you.

RD: Jack, when did you come to Livermore?

JJ: I first came here in 98 [1898] during the Spanish American War, and I was just a little squirt then. I visit my uncle Nahmen Jensen, who was farming the ranch that is now owned by Albin Jensen. (RD: And then—) That was just a visit. Then afterwards, in 1905, I came to help N. D. Dutcher doing sheet metal work, and this was for a short time only. I was a relief man from Hayward, from Bruner's sheet metal shop, and I came up again in 1906, after the quake, and was here for about, oh I should guess, six months. And then I went away from here for quite a few years, and in the meantime, I worked a couple of years on a river as an engineer on a river boat. And then I came back here to Livermore when I was building the Western Pacific. In 1907 and 8, I was here. And then I came back here permanently at the time the Fuse Works came, the same time. They were building the original Fuse Works when I came here, and I've been here ever since that. Never left.

RD: Well, that's great, Jack. That puts you—classifies you—as an old-timer in Livermore.

JJ: Wouldn't be a spring chicken.

RD: In fact, I don't think there's many people in Livermore that can lay claim to any more years here than you. Now, Jack, tell me about the Carnegie building, the old Livermore library, as we remember it.

JJ: The old Livermore library, that block originally years ago was a slaughter yard for Pete McKeany, the butcher. He was the only butcher in Livermore at that time. And it was used as a slaughter yard. And then I don't know who purchased it, the city most of it, I guess, and the Carnegie Library was built. I saw the building built and different operations but I had no part in that. But afterwards, after it was built, I installed a furnace in the thing, in the heating system. Whether that's still there or not, I don't know. And several times I did small repairs over there.

RD: Tell me, Jack, wasn't there a meeting hall in the basement of that library?

JJ: Yeah. Yeah, at one time, I think, the Ladies Improvement Club<sup>1</sup> or something met downstairs. I know we did some work down there. We put in, I believe it was a gas, a water heater or something for the ladies that do their cooking and stuff like that. That was done later on, you know. Yeah, I think it was the Ladies Aid, or something. I think it was the Ladies, you know, outfit.

RD: Was the Carnegie Building always landscaped as it is now?

JJ: Yeah, always the same. The trees and stuff changed a little bit, but the filling of the dirt of that was always the same. Yeah.

RD: And has there been any major repair to the Carnegie Building?

JJ: Well, I think they've had trouble with the roof. That's probably been repaired, but otherwise I don't think there'd be anything that would need it. That's a pretty well-built building.

RD: So, then you're saying most of the woodwork and all the old furnishings that are in there are most likely the furnishings of the original library?

JJ: The original library. Yeah, I think so.

RD: The outside of the building is same thing? Never any changes?

JJ: No changes.

RD: Do you remember when the fountain was put in?

JJ: No. But that was put in afterwards. I remember they had a lot of goldfish in there one time and some [unclear] kids put some kind of detergent or something and killed all of the fish.

RD: Do you remember any other pertinent things about the— about the Carnegie building? What part did Mr. Carnegie play in that? Do you know?

JJ: Well, I think he financed the thing. I think he put up the money to build that building. They must have old records of that here someplace.

RD: And it was primarily built as a library? As the original library in Livermore.

JJ: As a library. As the original library. And I was reading, the old original library they had here in Livermore—I don't remember just where it's at—Myrtle Harp was the librarian.

---

<sup>1</sup> Women's Improvement Club, formed in 1911, met at the Carnegie Library.

And the first set of books they had were donated to the library by the Odd Fellows Lodge of Oakland. They had a library that they was abandoning, and they gave the books to the library here.

**Time: 5:31**

RD: Well, that's very interesting. What—Do you recall—Well, I'll tell you, let's branch off into something else now. And then if you recall anything of the library, just come on back and put it in the statement here. You mention to me the other day about the flagpole in Livermore. Give me a run down on that.

JJ: Well, we old-timers, we remember, and these later people, that Mait Henry<sup>2</sup> used to have an article in the *Livermore Herald* that said you are an old-timer if you remember when, and then it would mention something that had happened. Well, I read that one about the flagpole, and I went right down the next morning and said, "Mait, I got you beat. I saw that flagpole hauled up through the Dublin Canyon by David Elliot McDonald and two lumber wagons and a bunch of mules."

RD: Through which canyon was that?

JJ: Dublin.

RD: Through the Dublin Canyon. It was hauled up on wagons and mules.

JJ: Yeah, mules. And right where we lived there was a very sharp turn in the road, and they had to shift the gears so they could make the turn. And, uh, but they're the ones that put it up. Alec [Alex] and Dave McDonald [unclear].

RD: Do you remember how tall the flagpole, the original flagpole, was?

JJ: No, I don't remember. I know it's been shortened.

RD: Well, you mentioned something about the top of the flagpole and Concannon's Corner.

JJ: If you're out at Concannon's Corner and put a sextant there, surveyor's instrument, and sight down here, you'll get the top of the flagpole.

RD: That was the old flagpole.

JJ: Yeah.

RD: Now the flagpole has been moved.

---

<sup>2</sup> Maitland R. Henry (1892-1976), publisher of *The Livermore Herald*.

JJ: Yeah. Now it's shorter. Yeah, we tried that out one day. Jack and I went out with a sextant. We heard that, so we tried it. It was true. You wouldn't think there was that much fall between there and here, but there is.

**Time: 7:30**

RD: Well that flagpole must be over 100 feet tall.

JJ: Oh, yeah. And the first time it was erected, was put up, there was a big celebration, and the fellow that rigged that up was Charlie Lefever. Afterwards it was Tom Marshall there. Lefever was rigging an oil well [unclear], so he knew how to put that pole up. When they got the pole, they didn't know how to put it up. Well, Lefever put it up, and when it was changed, why, uh, Dietz from Pleasanton was hoisting it; he changed it. But that was a big celebration when they put that pole up. I've seen pictures of it, but I— And I've seen them paint that several times; seen a man up there painting that.

RD: Okay, now, Jack, when I was talking to you the other day, you mentioned something about the first railroads through Livermore here.

JJ: Well, the first railroad, I wouldn't know anything about the first railroad, but I've seen the first Western Pacific go through here, though. I watched them do all the cuts up in the Altamont hills. All done with mules and manual labor and wagons. They didn't have any equipment like they have now. And the main construction camp was right up where Trevarno is now. Palmer & McBride had a big camp out there; a repair shop was there and all the mules were kept out there.

RD: And they had hundreds of mules, didn't they?

JJ: Hundreds of mules there. And— Oh, they had these laborers coming from this [Murray?] and Ready labor outfit, you know, in San Francisco. That where you get all the laborers. There was a string going and a string going and a string on the way, 'cause they work about two days and then they quit. Yeah, there were a lot of [bones?] on Livermore Avenue during [unclear] that time.

RD: And in those days didn't they have a lot of Chinese— (JJ: Say, what?) Didn't they have a lot of Chinese help on the railroad?

JJ: No, we had these Chilenos. We called them Chilenos. I don't know just where they came from. Because they used to get in fights. I know they had a camp up in Midway someplace. Every once in a while, they'd bring a guy in. I'd see them bring one in. [unclear] His cheek was always [unclear]. His teeth. Knife fights. But they were Chilenos, they had there.

RD: Oh, Chilenos. (JJ: Yeah.) That was—

JJ: I don't know if they were Mexicans or not. But we called them Chilenos.

**Time: 9:45**

RD: Chilenos. Okay. And then you also mentioned something about a very prominent restaurant here in Livermore. Can you tell me who run that?

JJ: That was run by the Mally family<sup>3</sup>. And there was old Papa Mally, there was Mrs. Mally, and there was Tilly Biggs and Fred, Bill, and Clarence. The whole family run that thing. It was a family deal. And they put on a wonderful meal. People— In them days, the trains all run into Livermore. People would come up from San Francisco and Oakland just to have dinner here on Sundays, spend the rest of the day, and then go back on the evening train. Come here about eleven o'clock and leave here about five again. And that wonderful meal, that cost you just fifty cents.

RD: Fifty cents. Imagine!

JJ: The mechanics that I worked with—at that time the Valley Garage had just started. Carl and Art Clarke and George Jackson and Sonny Nienburg and myself, we ate down at Mally's, and we had a meal ticket. We paid five dollars for it, and it had twenty meals on it and Tilly Biggs would punch you out as we went out. Twenty meals for five dollars.

RD: Well, a drink of water in a restaurant now cost you fifty cents. (JJ: Yeah. [Laughter]) Times have sure changed.

JJ: Oh— Yeah, and if you look down on the street down there, too, some of your people might [look?]. They had a brewery on the main street here, too. Wendell Jordan. I [assume?] some of the old brass letters on the sidewalk there, I think, where the brewery was. You know, brass letters laid in the sidewalk.

RD: Approximately, where—?

JJ: That's approximately below, further below Mally's. And I think you'll see the brass letters down there yet.

RD: That would be approaching L Street then?

JJ: Yeah. And then there was another set of letters down near the corner here that used to be M. S. Anthony. Part of the name is still there. When Anthony had his store where the Masonic building is. Was Anthony had a store there. Charlie Livermore run it for a while and afterward Joe Callaghan<sup>4</sup> run that store. And Hance used to ride the delivery wagon.

---

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Mally ran Mally's Hotel and Grill on First Street.

<sup>4</sup> Henry J. Callaghan, Jr., known as "Joe."

RD: Wasn't that an old grocery store?

**Time: 11:50**

JJ: Yeah. It was a grocery store. When Livermore and Callaghan had it, it was a grocery store.

RD: That was H. J. Callaghan, the manager of Wells Fargo Bank.

JJ: Yeah. And they also had a set of those brass letters that are still there in front of the Odd Fellows building there. IOOF. Big brass letters.

RD: That's very interesting. I don't think too many people realize that.

JJ: No, they don't. And they repaired the site of some of these, some of these letters got taken away, but the Odd Fellows is still complete. But the brewery, you know, just partial there, but you can see it there [unclear].

RD: Well, Jack, as long as we are talking about buildings, how many service stations do you recall in Livermore, say sixty years ago?

JJ: Well, I'll tell you, there wasn't in those days a thing as service stations. The first thing that resembled a garage was Henry Crane had a repair shop down here, oh, between the railroad track and the Hub corner there, you know. He repaired sewing machines and everything else. As soon as automobiles come in, why he tried his hand on those. Right about that time, Ed Aylward and Shorty Phillips<sup>5</sup> started the Valley Garage there, but they were there just a short time, and then the Clarke boys bought it. And then [Reimers?] started about the same time. And those were the only two garages in town. (RD: And—) And by the way, gasoline at that time sold for nineteen cents a gallon.

RD: Whew! That's just the tax on gasoline now. (JJ: Yeah.) Didn't Danny O'Neil and Hancy Anderson<sup>6</sup> run service stations here in Livermore?

JJ: Hance, I think, run the first service station, down there, you know, down there on the corner, and I'll tell you a funny one if you want it on tape here, Min<sup>7</sup> and I, we used to drive there every Sunday and take the kids and go down to Haywards to see my folks, see. And all I had in the car was a ten-dollar bill, and I'd stop and I'd get a tank full of gas. Would have been about three dollars or so at that time, and I'd give him the ten and he'd take out a bunch of cash. I'd just never looked at it. And put it in my pocket. And when I got down to Hayward, I looked and I had the change and my ten-dollar bill, too. So

---

<sup>5</sup> L. M. Phillips

<sup>6</sup> Harold Anderson

<sup>7</sup> Minna Nienburg Jensen, wife of John "Jack" E. Jensen



Hancy, he gipped himself out of ten dollars. So, on the way back, I stopped and "Hance, you made a mistake." "Oh, no, no, no, I don't make mistakes," he said. "Well, I guess I'll keep this ten, then." And I told him what I did. He took the ten, don't worry.

RD: Oh, he took the ten. Tell me—

**Time: 14:20**

JJ: Yeah. He didn't have a cash register. He did it all through his pocket.

RD: Is Hancy Anderson still alive?

JJ: No, I just talked to Bob, his son here. He's down at the Company I reunion. He brought, Hancy Anderson, he bought the house from him. Bobby. You know, that big guy.

RD: And didn't Danny O'Neil and Jack Williams<sup>8</sup> run the other service station for years and years and years? [Simultaneous speaking.]

JJ: Yeah. Right down there on the corner. For years and years. Yeah, that one there.

RD: Now that's approximately where the park is now— Opposite the [unclear]—. [Simultaneous speaking.]

JJ: Yeah, where the park is. When I came here before they had that station, it was the old Livermore Hotel was there. Run by a fellow by the name of Collins. And next to that was a little barbershop, fellow by the name of Cralle<sup>9</sup> had a barbershop. And next to that was a little place. Marshall Mack had a little store there. And what's the third called [unclear]. And then beyond that was Reimers, uh, Ryan's Livery Stable, where the Tesla stages used to leave from in the morning.

RD: As long as we're talking and buildings in Livermore, how many restaurants were in Livermore in the early years?

JJ: Well, there was Mally's, and there was, oh, the Lafrenzas. They had a restaurant down in, oh, that big two-story building down there. Where Sam Rosenthal used to have his tailor shop there, you know, that building. The Lafrenzas had a restaurant in there. And, well, it was along in the twenties or there, there were different little restaurants, but those were the two oldest ones. Yep.

RD: And then, didn't, in later years, Greyhound Bus Depot— They put in a restaurant. [Simultaneous speaking.]

---

<sup>8</sup> John "Jack" Williams

<sup>9</sup> M. H. Cralle

JJ: Yeah. They were down at the end near the hotel there. Yeah. They put in a restaurant, too. Yeah. And I remember when— Before the Greyhound come in there, during Prohibition, Bondi] run that saloon and stuff there. They had an old windmill down there, and [unclear] he never oiled it, and that son of a gun would squeal, and the people would holler, and the cops would come, and they would have to go up and oil that mill. [Laughter.]

**Time: 16:27**

RD: Tell me, who do you remember being the first police officer in Livermore?

JJ: The first police officer that I can remember was Charlie Lefever. Charlie was first. Oh, and— I may not get them right in rotation because I worked with all of them. There was Charlie Lefever. Dennis Bernal was for a while. Dan Smith, and George Doten, then Johnny Michelis. Chris Iverson served for a while, too. And at that time, the entire police force was one Marshal. They called him the Marshal then. He was on in the daytime. And when I first came, they had one night watchman. But then afterwards, they got two night watchmen. Two of them come on at six, and one of them went straight through until morning, and the fella at midnight he [unclear]. Those two night watchmen were Laughlin Rodgers and Adolf Johnson.

RD: I think you forgot one old-timer. He's a very, very good friend of yours. Constable Seeband<sup>10</sup>.

JJ: Oh. Constable. Yeah, he was the constable, yeah. He wasn't the Marshal. Constable was a different deal, see. Constable, yeah. Constable—was—they work under the County, you know. Yeah. Seeband and I were great pals. Seeband and I always go up to Pines together. I always took Seeband. He was a good cook.

**Time: 17:58**

RD: Varying from the buildings here in Livermore and whatnot, at one time you and several other people owned a nice summer resort or summer home up in the Livermore hills. Can you tell me something about that?

JJ: Well. It's called a Pines Camp. I think it was one of the nicer camps in the hills. It was kept up beautifully. And, oh, there was a bunch of them that belonged to it. There must have been fifteen members when we started, you know. And they had a screen completely around three sides of the housing. You could sleep twenty people up there. Carl<sup>11</sup> and [Mamie?] and the youngsters, and I and my family and the gal that practically lived up there in the summertime. The ladies stayed up there continually and the kids, and Carl

---

<sup>10</sup> Henry Seeband

<sup>11</sup> Carl G. Clarke

and I and Mack<sup>12</sup>, we'd come down and work and go back at five o'clock, we'd go back up again. And, one thing, we never worried because we had the fellow that we called the old man from the mountains that was Ray George. Once a day Ray George would ride up horseback to see that everything was okay.

RD: How was your water situation up there?

JJ: Well at first it was bum. We had to carry our own water when we first started. And one day, we had a little supply but not very good, and McVicar and Tom Knox—Tom was a great guy, he was always up there—and myself, we came down from been visiting Bill Oggi and we noticed there was a little wet spot on the bank. And by golly, the water comes out to the surface. There must be something underneath there. Well, it was time for dinner, and we were heading for the camp, and after dinner we got a pick and a shovel and we went up there and before the sun went down, we had about an [eighteen feet?] of water come out of that hill. That was the water supply after that. All kinds of water. After that we put in a swimming tank and everything else. That was a beautiful water supply then. That was just a little mud spot. It was just getting away in that shady walk.

RD: How many years were you people involved in the Pines Lodge?

JJ: Well, they sold it here— The last two, they kept dropping out little by little until McVicar practically owned the whole thing toward the last, see. And he sold that— ten, fifteen years ago, I guess.

RD: Say, about 19— (JJ: About the time, well— yeah—) 1955?

JJ: Yeah. So, it must have been something like that. I don't know exactly. But as long as Carl, and myself, and McVicar were there, we kept it up beautiful. Every winter, just as soon as we thought the last rain was over, they had a little Cletrac tractor up there and a little road grader. And Mack would run the tractor and I'd run the grader and we had that road it was in perfect shape there all the time. Now it's all messed up. Everything's just gone, [unclear] you know.

RD: How far out of town was the Pines Lodge?

JJ: Just about— Right to the camp I think it is about twenty-one miles. About twenty miles to the gate and about a mile up the hill, you know. At least we always said it was twenty-one miles.

RD: And that was on the way up to the old magnesite mines (JJ: Yeah. Mines Road.) out of Livermore. Yeah. And at that time that was an all-paved road, wasn't it Jack?

---

<sup>12</sup> Leslie. A. McVicar (1892-1953), son of Philip H. McVicar.

JJ: Oh [laughter]— Well. There was a dirt road. Just a dirt road. And it wasn't like it is now. Now it's nice.

RD: No, I remember as a young fella going up there myself that that road was in most places was only one car width. (JJ: Yeah, one car) And there was some pullouts so that you could pass. [Simultaneous talking.]

JJ: A funny thing. Afterwards, when they started in— open up the magnesite mine and they run those trucks, there was about twelve big trucks running up there, and boy they were wild drivers, it was [unclear name] was one of them and [ethnic reference redacted] Jeff [unclear]—

RD: Well, my dad—

**Time: 21:40**

JJ: Your dad was down there, too. Mining and all them guys. A bunch of Greeks and [unclear]. When they come down, we'd watch, and we'd see a cloud of dust coming, we'd pull to the first wide place in the road, and we'd stop until they got by. You did have a chance with them guys. Ah, boy. No, those were the days. And then they unload that ore down on the bunker down here, about where the Orchard Supply is, they had a big bunker where the trucks went up, and at the bunker, they dumped the ore. Well that ore was killing them. It was as hot, hot as a firecracker. And the bunkers would get on fire and the fire department would go down, I guess three or four times I was down there [unclear] to put the bunkers out.

RD: Didn't those trucks back up that—?

JJ: Backed right up that thing. Down she goes, dumping in [unclear] box the big car there [unclear].

RD: It was about fifty feet in the air, wasn't it?

JJ: Yeah— [unclear] It was a couple of cars, you know.

RD: Yeah. I remember that as a little kid, watch the trucks back up there.

JJ: I remember [unclear]. Oh, boy, he was a wild truck driver.

**Time: 22:41**

RD: You mentioned something about the fire department, Jack. Were you ever a member of the Livermore Fire Department?

JJ: Yeah. For about thirty years.

RD: Oh, for thirty years. [Laughter] Well—

JJ: Yeah, all we had was a couple of hose carts. They had that and a hook and ladder wagon that didn't do them any good, and they had an old hand pumper down there. But we had pretty good luck on the fires. The only one that got away was that church that we couldn't help it. Yeah.

RD: You mention to me the other day that the old original Catholic church burnt here in Livermore and you gave me a pretty good reason why. Can you explain that?

JJ: Well, the big, main fire was in Horton & Kennedy Lumber Yard. And that's all lumber. That burned like hell, you know. And the way the steeple was on that church on the front, and the tower, the heat, you know, bring those shingles from the mill up, and they fell on the parson's house, and they'd slip off, that didn't get a fire. But they fell, some of them fell in behind that tower, and they were burning while we were putting the other fire out. We didn't know until somebody says, "Oh, the church is afire." By that time, it was too late. Then we tried to put that big ladder there, up against the church, and I forget who it was, went up with a hose, but when he got up to about the gutter there was no more water, no more pressure. We had no pump then like we have now. So, I just had to sit there and watch that thing burn. The funny thing about that was that Chief, Pete Wright<sup>13</sup> was on the job that day. And we had hoses all across the railroad track up here, a bunch of them. The train come down from Tracy. Oh, they were going to run over that hose. And you can imagine that old Pete Wright told that engineer in that engine. He got up on that cab and he told him off. [Laughter]

RD: You mentioned Pete Wright. Pete Wright. What was Pete Wright's job here?

JJ: He was the town surveyor. An engineer, surveyed and everything else. And he was the first traffic officer. He and Louis Ike were the first county traffic officers, you know. But he was a good surveyor. He used to do a lot of surveying up in the mountains. And he told me something, and I thought about it afterwards and he was right. He says up in these hills here that you cannot get a real accurate survey. Metal, in the ore, there, magnetic ore, throws your compass off.

RD: Hum, that's very interesting.

JJ: Yeah. No, he told me that. You get close but he says [you get you one place, and you throw a line, and you get somebody else check back, but you don't?]. Oh, and I've heard that before.

RD: It's very interesting to hear that.

---

<sup>13</sup> Probably L. E. Wright

JJ: Well, I seen a well driller and he went to a bunch of magnetic ore because—. It was Dick Powell. He used to drill wells here. And he'd drill a well up here for [Neilia?], you know the [Holms?] place. And Dick had a habit, whenever he'd drill a well, he'd have loose spots [unclear], and all these little flecks of iron come to the bottom of the box, and we were there. And I happened to go along, and there was a screwdriver, and all that stuff jumped up on the screwdriver. That ore was magnetic.

**Time: 25:42**

RD: Very interesting. You mentioned the old magnesite mines. What was this magnesite and what was it used for?

JJ: Well, they used it for a— For a while they were using it in plumbing—in sinks, drains boards. They were molding it. But what they got out of it mostly was magnesia, see. Used by chemical companies. And that was going big there. And then this Dow Chemical Company, they found out that you could get the same darn thing out of salt water. That stopped the mines. [unclear] Yeah. Dow was [unclear].

RD: And didn't they use the magnesite in something to do with steel?

JJ: Well, manganese, they used for steel. They mined a lot of that up here. They had a big manganese mine in, by Corral Hollow. That was a big one. And they mined it all up here. Chrome. Up on Cedar Mountain, there was a lot of good chrome up there. Chrome, coal, quicksilver, everything you've got in the Livermore hills, here.

RD: Yeah. I worked in the quicksilver mines. [JJ: unclear question] Uh, up in the—what do they call it?—Deerpark. (JJ: Oh, Deerpark, yeah.) Mr., oh, Winegar boys. Jim Winegar and myself worked up there for five months.

JJ: I'll tell you a funny thing about the Winegars. And this confirms— Pete McKeany's, too. Pete McKeany's work hisself was right down here about, right next to where the Schenone Building is. The little narrow building. And when I first came here, they renewed that, and then during Prohibition, why I guess it was, one of these Italians? [unclear] Anyhow, they started a saloon in there. And I had to clean up and do some plumbing, and in the back was an old meat chopper, and old steam boiler and engine. Everything that Pete McKeany had used was still in the back. So, boy, I kept my eye on that little steam engine. I gobbled that. And I had it for years. It was a cute little one. And one day Winegar come and he saw it down there and he looked at his and [sell it?], might as well. And I found out afterward that he run that engine with compressed air pulling ore out of one of his mines. And I tried to get it here a few years ago. I said, gee, that would be nice for our museum here. But, son of a gun, he give it to the Patterson museum. That's where it is now.

**Time: 27:58**

RD: It's down in Patterson, now? (JJ: Yeah.) Well, that's interesting. Reverting back a little bit, didn't you have a very, very popular Italian restaurant here in Livermore for a long time?

JJ: Croce's. Croce's. Oh, yeah. That was something. He was a good [real good?] cook. Yeah.

RD: And that restaurant was located in, alongside of the Schenone Building.

JJ: Yeah, right in the lower part of the Schenone building, and he also afterwards put one upstairs. He had two restaurants. And by the way, his son and his wife have a restaurant of the Croce's over at Lodi now.

RD: Very, very good restaurant.

JJ: Oh, yeah. Very good. Yeah.

**[Recording stopped and started again at 28:44]**

RD: Jack, tell me, what you remember about the first automobiles here in Livermore? Do you remember who owned them and what makes they were and whatnot?

JJ: Well, the first one, one of the very first, was owned by Dr. Taylor<sup>14</sup>. And it was a model N Ford. It was a peculiar thing because on those engines, the flywheel is on the front end of the engine and the crank came through the radiator, right through the front. And Elmer Still and his father had one of the what they called at that time a [unclear] Oldsmobile. Instead of a steering wheel, you had a handle. It looked more like a buggy. And Dick Aylward had an autocar, old [Dick Off? Or Ott?] had a Case, Hagemann's had a Case, Tom Carneal had a Stevens-Duryea, that was the biggest one at that time. And those were really the first ones around Livermore here. And I'll tell you a funny thing about Doc Taylor's. At that same, when the first automobiles came out, the tires were small and not very good, and they had what they called "Never Leak" that they put in the tires. Afterwards the put it in bicycle tires, too. It looks like this gunk that you put linoleum down with. Well, Henry Crane, he talked Doc Taylor into using that. "Oh," he says, "Doc, you'll never have any trouble with that. Your tires will be good all the time." Well, Doc was coming up Main Street one day in his old Ford there, and right about where [Emridges?] store was, it was a real hot day, and that front one tire blew out and all that stuff came right backward, all over Doc. Oh, boy. [Laughter] That was one make-up that Henry Crane got to do.

RD: You mentioned someone had a Model N Ford.

---

<sup>14</sup> Dr. William S. Taylor owned a Haynes-Apperson in 1903.

JJ: Yeah. That was Doc Taylor. He had one. And I'll tell you another fella that had one. [Unclear] was Tony [Rodrickalien?] They had a Model N Ford. That was the first Fords [unclear]. There was an old two-cylinder Ford the year before that. And one of cars came after, one of the first cars but not the first, was a single-cylinder Cadillac that Crane had. Single cylinder. I know Art Clarke and I used to borrow it when we went doe hunting.

RD: Of course, that was about when, Jack? What year, what years was that?

JJ: That must have been about seven, along in there. Art Clarke was still alive, you know. Yeah. About the time they were building the Western there, about that time.

RD: What was the first automobile that you remember owning?

JJ: That I remember owning? Well [unclear] in Haywards before I ever came here, I had a Locomobile Steamer.

RD: Say that again now.

JJ: A Locomobile Steam car.

RD: A Locomobile Steam car. Never heard of that one.

JJ: They made a few. There was a Locomobile made a steamer. White made a steamer. Stanley made a steamer. And there was a couple of others. White and— Yeah, but they were— You had to become a steam engineer to run them. Otherwise, you'd be in trouble, you know. I'll tell you a funny thing about a steam car [unclear]. Shorty Phillips<sup>15</sup>, he used to run the first stage between Livermore and—

RD: Can you go back a little bit and start again?

JJ: I started to tell you about Shorty Phillips bus. He run the first stage between Livermore and Oakland. He made two trips a day. His place, his stopping place was down here where Scott's candy store was in the Odd Fellows building. And I never forget. I used to go down with him to Haywards because [unclear] he passed right by our ranch. And one day we was down there and a couple of guys, I guess they were sailors or something, come down and were standing around, and all they did before we got started was walk around that Stanley Steamer and find fault with the darn thing. And I could see that George's hair was kind of standing up on the back. He didn't like that. He always stopped at the Dublin. That's where he took on water because he said the best water for the boiler was that Dublin, at Bondi's] there. And that's when the old [Palmer?] hill was there. That wasn't paved or fixed like it is now, see. And he gets— I noticed him when he got near that taking on water, he'd fire that old steam gauge was going up the [unclear]. He goes right,

---

<sup>15</sup> L. M. Philips ran the first auto stage with his Stanley Steamer about 1915-1916.



starts out, and when he gets right to the foot of the [Palmer?] hill, he shuts her off like that and turns and "Now you two SBs, hang on to your hat." He pulled that [unclear] and when we got to the top of the hill, he was going 55 miles an hour that steamer.

RD: Boy, that was fast.

JJ: Oh boy, those things can go. A steam engine has no limit to the power. And I knew by the way he was letting that steam go up that we had a good head of steam by the time we hit the bottom of that grade. And those fellows never said another damn word. [Laughter] But you get a lot of trouble, boy they're trouble, you know. You get bad water and— I helped him several times, work a half a night down there [unclear] own boiler or two [unclear] so he could get going the next day.

**Time: 33:42**

RD: Yeah, well, Jack. You worked a lot on steam boilers, didn't you?

JJ: Oh, yes. I worked on steam boilers a lot. A lot of these tractors over in Byron country [unclear] steam tractors. I used to have to put new boiler tubes in them. I would retube boilers there. I would retube the French Laundry, and down in Haywards for the planing mills. I worked with a boilermaker for a long time.

RD: That's right. A lot of the farm machinery, harvesters, and whatnot were all steam.

JJ: Yeah. All steam. I remember here, you know, when the Lewis (Louis?) brothers from Haywards used to have two machines come in and thresh all this stuff from Livermore Valley here. Two machines from Haywards up here. They start as soon as summer dries the stuff up, they start to thresh, and boy they worked late until eight o'clock at night when you hear them blow their whistle. Time to quit.

RD: Yeah. Those were stationary threshers. (JJ: Stationary, yes.) They didn't pull any of the harvesters, combine harvesters.

JJ: No, no they had [unclear]. But those [unclear]— Your dad used to run some of those big tractors. Yep.

RD: Well, can you think of any more of the old-timers around Livermore here that you've got anything on that you'd want to put on tape?

JJ: No, but I tell you, I'd like to ask if you see Alfie Sachau?<sup>16</sup>

RD: No, I haven't seen Alfie, yet. But somebody else is going to talk to Alfie.

---

<sup>16</sup> Alfred Sachau

JJ: He's a spry old boy. He's the same— Alfie's birthday and mine are two days apart. The same age, born the same month. I'm on the sixth and he's on the eighth.

RD: And what year was that, Jack?

JJ: In 1886.

RD: In 86. (JJ: Yeah) Well, I don't hardly remember that.

JJ: And Alfie Sachau still saddles a horse every day and rides over to see Ernie Wentz. Rides across the hill over there. He's a spry boy. Joe McGlinchey and I just took him over to Bacon Island to the old campground, and he watched all that farming there and boy he never stopped talking from the time we started until we got home. I sure got a kick out of that.

**Time: 35:41**

RD: That reminds me of something. What was— What type of lighting did they have in the Carnegie building when they first built that?

JJ: Lighting in the building? They had electricity in there.

RD: They had electricity in those days. (JJ: Yes.) They didn't use gas lights. (JJ: No.)

JJ: There were a few old— When I first came to town there was a few old gas machines. Dutcher had one. McCullen had one, and Ness had one. And there was one other one. They had the gasoline gas. They had the gas in a tank underground, then they had a tall [weight?] with a [gauge?] on it. Kind of a pump deal. It was gasoline gas, see. And at one time they had a gas—that's long before my time—they had gas piped in. Had to give it up. But that gasoline gas, there was quite a few of them. And then a fella came around and sold a lot of gas plants, selling them around the country. Yeah. [unclear] Made of acetylene. You know when they had acetylene that we use on these— I know [Carneal? Or Carnegie?] had them and different— and Hagemann, and some of the people had a little extra money, they had gas.

RD: Well, power has gone a long way. We were just talking to the windmill man yesterday (JJ: unclear muttering in background) and they've got quite a deal to offer.

JJ: I have some beautiful pictures that I've wanted to show you when [unclear] [I don't know where I got them?]

**Time: 37:00**

RD: Getting back, Jack, I'd like some more specifics on the Livermore Fire Department as you remember years back and then kind of up to the present day. (JJ: Well—) Wasn't it a volunteer deal?

JJ: Volunteer deal. The town— First we got nothing, you know. And then after a while we got a little money ahead, and I think every month we appropriated a hundred and fifty dollars to divide among the twenty-five firemen, see. And you got paid according, if you answered roll call, if you didn't, you missed, you lost out. It was prorated. And we had a couple of old guys—I got a kick out of them, I won't mention their names—but they belonged to the fire department but they never came to a fire. When the fire bell rang, they'd head to the fire so they could answer the roll call. [Laughter] I'll never forget those two guys.

RD: And then you had an old— How did you call them to let them know there was a fire?

JJ: Had an old bell up top of the house, and that's the time the stairways went up the side to the [roof?]. Pulled on the rope. And afterwards, when they put that electric stuff in, I helped put that in. Air tank you know. Compressed air deal. Air compressor. And we also made a— For a while we had a call— you know, a code. So many bells and it was— McVicar and I and Pete Wright wrote that and different [unclear] and so many blasts, stop, and so many on the horn. It worked pretty good for a while.

RD: And that meant that if you got like three long and one short, that meant that was in the north part of town. (JJ: Yeah. I forget just what the code is.) Three shorts meant someplace else. [Simultaneous speaking.]

JJ: [unclear] There was a hose cart. [unclear] A fella would get the hose cart and maybe five, six guys near, and they'd get near to the fire, and let go, and he'd run for the fire, and pretty soon it would be about two men pulling the hose cart and the other'd be down at the fire. Oh, golly. I'll tell you one experience they had— Afterwards we call it the motorized fire department. I have a picture of that. The Valley Garage used to when there was a fire, they come out and they had a hitch on the back there, and we could hitch the hose cart on that. Charlie Crane [unclear]. There was a fire down at the Sanitarium there and we was going down L Street [unclear] and he said, "Hold on, there it is." And Charlie put on the brake quick and us fellas was holding that thing in the back and we come up and hit the seat. Ah, what a mess. [Laughter]

RD: Outside of the old hand pumpers, do you remember the first power-driven fire truck they had here?

JJ: Yeah. The Seagraves. I forget what year they got that.

RD: Didn't they have an old Model T first?

JJ: Well, they had a Model T, yeah. They [outruled?] that. Henry Colldeweih, McVicar and I. All the fire department, we built that. We bought— Henry Crane or George Crane, I think they donated the old Model T Ford, and we took this old tank and different stuff,

and we built it up. We had a hose, a small hose. Yeah, they still have that, the fire department. I think—

RD: That's right. They use it in parades. (JJ: Yeah.)

RD: And then you went from that to—

JJ: Seagraves. That's the one we left to go to [unclear]. I don't know why. That was a beautiful engine, that first one. But they talk about rebuilding it. Left it out in the rain there for years. It was in perfect working order. Last place they used it was to pump water [unclear] and they left it out.

**Time: 40:21**

RD: How many people did you have— How many volunteers did you have on the—

JJ: Twenty-five. We always tried to keep it to twenty-five.

RD: Twenty-five. Was there one paid head fireman?

JJ: No. None of them was paid.

RD: Nobody was paid. It was all—

JJ: That last chief that I can remember was Al Bonne.

RD: That's right. I think Al Bonne was the last fire chief in Livermore.

JJ: Yeah. No. Nobody got paid.

RD: And wasn't there a light that burned in the fire department?

JJ: Yeah, that light, they still have that. It's an old Edison light. That's golly, that's been burning there for years and years and years.

RD: Where is that light now?

JJ: I think they have it out at the new firehouse. [unclear]

RD: Well, that's quite interesting, Jack. You've brought out a—

JJ: [I wanted to tell you?] something about the fire department the other day but I can't think of it right now.

RD: You've brought out a lot of interesting points today. And I'm sure that in years to come, people are really going to enjoy hearing this. And, uh, well—

**[Recording stopped and started at 41:30]**

RD: Jack, tell me, for nightlife in Livermore years and years ago, what were some of the big events?

JJ: Well, I guess the largest events was the Fireman's Ball. That was once a year. And boy that was a sellout. Everybody, if you didn't come to the Fireman's Ball, you wouldn't last at all. All— Everybody came to that.

RD: And where do they hold that?

JJ: At Sweeney's, the old Sweeney Opera House down here. And I can tell you one thing, for a while there used to be a bunch of people, they were cooks, [unclear] rather, 23rd Avenue, they're called the 23rd Avenue gang. They used to come up, three different times they come up, and just when the dance would break up, they'd start a fight, see. Well, the last time it didn't work out right. Pete Wright put the [fighters with billy clubs out the door?]. Cause when those fellas start that fight, you work them over. They never came back. [unclear] But they used to come to every dance, and they'd start a fight just at the last— And they wouldn't check their hats with the hat clerk They had them on a hook underneath their coats there so they could make a quick getaway, see. And the gals that were with them were just as bad as the men. They were a tough bunch of monkeys. And then they had the Holy Ghost Celebration. They had a big dance down there. That was a big thing they had—

RD: That's right. That was a big parade.

JJ: Oh, they had a parade, and they had a dance, and they had the big feed, auction hall. All the cattle and stuff that people had donated. That was a big thing. I remember one night they had all the parade was putting up the fireworks and everyone was hollering "Ah" when something would burst out. Pretty soon, [unclear] across the street somebody had [unclear] next to the house where Mr. Peters lived, there was a haystack. And one of them rockets came down on that haystack, and then the fire department would come down—

RD: And then I guess the other big main event would be the Livermore Rodeo [unclear] during the 4th of July. [simultaneous speaking]

JJ: Yeah. Street dances. Yeah, they have them, too.

RD: Of course, there was plenty of fights and whatnot there.

JJ: Yeah, the fights there once in a while. Yeah. And all the kids in Livermore, they had one fella where they [unclear]. Johnie Schneider, Johnie Schneider. Yep.

**[Recording stopped and started again at 43:47]**

RD: Jack, I remember as myself, being around here as a little kid, they talked about water running down the main street of Livermore. Could you tell me something about that?

JJ: You didn't get that what I just told you. You didn't have that on then. (RD: No.)

JJ: Yes, I seen it in 1907. It was a very wet year, and the water came down Livermore Avenue there, from [right by McKown or Concannon?], came right through town, and they had done something out here on the Western Pacific, up in the railroad there, cut the water this way, too. And there was about two feet of water where the flagpole is, and that part of town there was, well, water in all the stores. In Dutcher's store water was about a foot deep in the front. And over where Rassie Hansen was, afterwards McClain and the flour mill, it got down in there so they couldn't run the elevator and the basement got full of water. Did a lot of damage. And all the basements full of water. People couldn't get, guy couldn't get to the post office there. And I know Adolf Johnson borrowed my hip boots so he could get around. He was the night watchman. He didn't have boots. That was a lot of water, I'll tell you.

RD: And you mentioned about somebody rowing down the main street?

JJ: That was Harry Lassen. Harry Lassen had a duck boat, and he rowed down main street, and down L Street and go by the depot and then back up the railroad track, and back the last one. Just looping around and around in that duck boat. And over, just where the Toyota place was—Ozzie Davis—there was a little house back there where a Mexican family lived, the Valenzuela family, and they were all sticking their heads out of the window. They couldn't get out of the house. They were all surrounded with water. But it did— All the basements full of that water [unclear]. Sweeney used to have his beer kegs in a rack downstairs, and you could hear them bumping like this up against the floor. They were floating.

RD: That was the old bar there that Sweeney operated.

JJ: Yeah. [unclear] Sweeney. Yeah, that was a great place. You know— I was real friendly with the Sweeneys cause I'd go over. In summer evenings why Kate Sweeney would come out, and Mama Sweeney and Papa and the kids, the three of them, you know. And I'd go over and sit with them for hours and talk. They had a water trough, and people come and water their horses there then. Water trough. Sweeneys. Farmers. And I really knew the Sweeneys. They were very nice.

**Time: 46:18**

RD: Jack, tell me, do you remember when the old Callaghan house was built? That's the old red house now that is just kitty-corner from the Livermore High School on East Avenue?

JJ: No. That, I don't remember that.

RD: Do you remember who was the first owner of that?

JJ: The first one that I knew was Callaghan.

RD: Was the Callaghan family. But that house must be close to 100 years old right now.

JJ: It must be, because I tell you, at the time the Hetchy came in, there was no plumbing upstairs in that building. And your mother, I think, at that time, she wanted to rent out some rooms upstairs, and I put in that toilet in that bathroom upstairs, and I bet it's still there, upstairs in that house.

RD: Well, I know that house is 65 years old.

JJ: It looked to me just as old then when I worked on it as it does right now.

RD: And I think Joe Callaghan was born in that house. (JJ: Yeah) And Joe would be close to 90 today, wouldn't he?

JJ: Yeah. So, it's over 100 years old. Yeah.

**Time: 47:20**

RD: Say, mentioning Joe Callaghan, tell me Jack, years ago they had during WWI or right after WWI, they had a Company I, National Guard here. Could you tell me something about that and how many people were in it and how many people are still in it?

JJ: That was— originated in 1900. And they've been having a reunion. We had one here just last Saturday. And only six showed up there. And I have pictures of it where it was forty. [unclear] This year we've lost three members.

RD: You've lost three members this year.

JJ: Yeah. The only ones that were down here last Saturday was Bob Livermore, Clarence Anderson, Harold Anderson, Johnny Miller, who used to be Sheriff in Contra Costa, and myself. There are a few more but they're so far away— (RD: They couldn't make it.) They couldn't make it. Old. They're all from 85 to 90. I'll tell you who was there. Bert Inman. He was there, too.

RD: So, there wouldn't be more than ten or twelve of you still left?

JJ: I don't think there is over ten left all together now.

RD: Well, that's quite good. But five of them were able to make the dinner. (JJ: Yeah.) Well, that's very good. (JJ: Yeah.)

RD: And did Company I ever see any action?

JJ: Yeah. The first action they saw was down at the Mexican Border. And then a fire at Mt. Tamalpais. Mexican Border. And after during the war, they sort of slipped into the regular service. But, uh— Mexican Border, they were down there. We used to meet down— They had their armory; it was on the second floor of the Sweeney Opera House. That's where they had all the uniforms and they used to drill there. That's were their headquarters— Sweeney Opera House.

**[Recording stopped and started again at 49.23]**

RD: Jack, when you first come to Livermore, what did they have in the line of hospitals?

JJ: Well, it wasn't very much at first. Mrs. Aylward<sup>17</sup> had a place down—I think it was on K Street. She was a trained nurse, and she run a kind of a semi-hospital. People would come and she'd take care of them, and doctors would come down there and wait on them. Then Dr. Judson fixed up the old Taylor building and made a hospital out of that for a while. And then after that way, Dr. Dolan built the St. Paul's Hospital. That was a regular hospital. And that's about the only one they had in town.

RD: And that St. Paul's operated for years and years and years until—

JJ: Yeah. And when they quit using it as a hospital, they founded an old-people's home now, I think.

RD: And what do you recall of the old Livermore Sanitarium.

JJ: Well, that was quite a place. They had some real expensive patients there, but there were mental patients on one side. They were all mental patients. And it was a big institution there because they employed a lot of people, and I know I did a lot of work there.

RD: And then the County had a hospital further out the road.

---

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Aylward



JJ: Yeah. Out at the Del Valle<sup>18</sup> there, you know, where they had the children, the tubercular children. Yeah, that was out at the old Miller ranch, out there. That’s run now by this, uh, what is it?— Vidas they call it (RD: Buenas Vidas) boys’ home, or something like that. Yeah, they had that. And when they had the— First it was a tubercular hospital, and it was quite a place out there.

**Time: 51:20**

RD: Jack, just for the fun of it— Oh, say, back sixty years ago, when Livermore’s population was 1500 people, about how many bars did they have in town? (JJ: Bars?) Or saloons? About how many would you say?

JJ: Oh, I would say, gee— I would say at least fifteen.

RD: At least fifteen operating bars. (JJ: Bars, yes.) When the population was 25,000, how many operating bars did they have?

JJ: About twenty, I guess. I don’t know.

RD: Now that the population is 50,000?

JJ: I don’t know how many exactly. I don’t get downtown any more.

RD: But it was quite interesting to know, to think, that Livermore had a population of 1500 people and fifteen bars, or saloons as they call them in those days.

JJ: Yeah. There were saloons. [unclear] Now they call them, these fancy names for all of them, cocktail lounges. Right. We had just plain, old saloons.

RD: Do you remember anything of the McLemore when he used to drive cattle through Livermore?

JJ: Oh, you bet I sure do. (RD: Tell us—) He used to keep his cattle in a lot down there near Highway 50, you know, down on corner of that triangle lot where the pool is, down there. And I forget, one time right across the street here, the house that Charlie Fracisco [unclear], he built this little house over here, and Charlie had just put in a brand-new lawn, all seeded and everything else. McLemore was moving some cattle down there over here and they just walked over Charlie’s new lawn. [Laughter]

RD: And didn’t— I remember they used to take— McLemore would take cattle from Livermore up to the old Johnson ranch in Patterson Pass. (JJ: Yeah, yeah.) And sometimes he’d be driving them at eight, nine, ten o’clock at night. (JJ: Yeah.) And they walked all over everybody’s place.

---

<sup>18</sup> Arroyo Del Valle Sanatorium

JJ: I didn't, we didn't mention the Planks place out on the highway, did we? (RD: No.) Well, I'll tell you one thing about that. You know, out at Greenville is a ranch— At Greenville out there, it was run by a Mr. and Mrs. Plank, and they had one son, Jack Plank. And he was French, I think, but she was a wonderful, wonderful cook. And she used to, you know, cook a wonderful feed for people. They'd order them. And every once in a while, all of us garage boys and sheet metal workers and all of the mechanics, we'd get together and make a date, and Mrs. Plank would put up a wonderful feed for us. Well, that was a long time ago, before Springtown or anything was out there. Well, we got there early. [unclear] But Harry Johnson, he had to work a little late that night at the garage, and he didn't get there in time. He was a little bit late. Now at that time, the only lights they had on these automobiles was these carbon lights. They didn't have the electric lights. So Skinny got off late, and he was going to go up to the feed because he was supposed to be on it. At the same time, Jack Bordes was moving a bunch of calves across the road. He thought, well, it was nice and quiet and nobody on the road, and I'll move these cattle tonight. And Skinny was hightailing it out there to get the Planks and he plows right into a bunch of calves. He comes out and "Boy," he says, "for half a mile, I had a calf sitting in the seat next to me," he says. [Laughter] Oh what a feed that lady used to put on. Jack Plank.

**Time: 54:49**

RD: Do you remember the old hay wagons coming into town here? (JJ: Hay? Oh, boy, I sure do.) Tell us what you remember of the old—

JJ: Well, when I first come here there wasn't any trucks. Everything was hauled by teams. You see [unclear] Was run away [unclear] something like that. One wagon piled up [unclear] when [unclear] wagon, run away. Smashed right through the glass. And one time a deer, somebody scared a deer through town. They went through the window, too. Everything, all the grain and hay was hauled by team. I remember about the first trucks that come along was a—Rudy Remay and Chris Swanberg, and a few of those fellas got trucks. They hauled it then. All that stuff was trucked and hauled into these warehouses down here.

RD: And those days, they had five or six big warehouses.

JJ: Big warehouses. And there was what they call a hay train. There's a train left every day with a load of hay. And they even had a big water tank down here for the locomotives, and the round table there, for turning them locomotives around. A lot of people don't know that. But that's down, right down there below the depot, they had a big turnaround because the engines had to be turned around. And they did. And that was a [deal?]. There was always three or four locomotives down there.

RD: Yeah, and those hay wagons, they used to have six and eight head of horses hooked to them, and a wagon and a couple of trailers.

JJ: Yeah. Everything was hauled by— well— [wheel?].

RD: And in those days, you could buy a bucket of steam beer for how much?

JJ: Two bits.

RD: Two bits. (JJ: Twenty-five cents.) Twenty-five cents for a bucket—

JJ: Yeah. We were working a job, three or four fellas, and everybody drop in a nickel, and then somebody'd go down and get a bucket of beer. [unclear] Another thing, too. Old Papa Cardoza<sup>19</sup> used to come in with eye oak. The finest oak wood in the world. Delivered here in town for seven dollars a cord.

RD: Ooh, don't say that. You're going to make some people feel awful bad when they're paying a hundred and thirty, forty, hundred and fifty—

JJ: He used to— That's where old Cardoza— [unclear] cut wood all year. Years ago, you'd see the old stumps up there where he cut wood. You'd see him come down off them black hills there. Old Papa Cardoza. And another old-timer up there was [Earl or Old Clymer?].

RD: Well, I think those days are gone forever.

JJ: Gone forever. Geez. Now they are hijacking wood up here. They go with a pickup in the mountains here, they go up the canyon with a power saw and saw down trees and away they go. They're stealing wood up here all the time. Yep.

**Time: 57:15**

RD: Well, I'll tell you Jack. It's been mighty interesting talking to you— (JJ: Well, I hope it did some good.) —and you certainly brought out a lot of good information that people will cherish in the years to come. And now that it's on tape, why it's going to be much better than it would be if it were just typewritten out.

JJ: I'll tell you just a little one. The house next door to me, Carl Clarke's house. A lot of the lumber in that house was from the original store over at Midway. Clarke's store. When they wrecked that, Carl used the building lumber over here [unclear].

RD: All be darned. The other day when I was talking to you, you told me about the St. Michael's convent building over here. Could you tell me something about that?

JJ: Well, I was here when they were building that. I watched that from the start. And a lot of the material in that came from Tesla, when they were dismantling the Tesla coal mine.

---

<sup>19</sup> Possibly Joseph Cardoza from the Black Hills.

Timbers and brick and all kinds of stuff. And I remember Eddie Callaghan and Ed Ellis, they were hauling stuff all the time. And the bell that was on top of the academy there for a long time, I think they took it down now, but that was the bell was supposed to have been the bell that was originally on the church in Tesla. That Father Power got or somebody or other.

RD: That was the original bell in the church in Tesla. (JJ: Yes. That's what they told me.) That's a good number of years ago.

JJ: I think they took it off now. They don't use it. But I've seen it standing in the backyard, [unclear] out in the yard there. That was a long time ago.

RD: But the majority of the lumber and the bricks and the whatnot—

JJ: [Unclear.] whatever they could use. (RD: Yeah. Was brought from the old—) We used to— at that time when they were wrecking that building, Clarke and us, we got our wood, and Ed Ellis would come over and he'd go over there and work and would haul stuff over and they'd haul a whole load of wood over here for five dollars. All they could load on a truck. Great big timbers. And we'd saw them up for wood. Some of them even had old bolts and stuff taken out there. Yeah. Gad. What was pitiful was when they wrecked that Carnegie. That will make you—

RD: Yeah. That was further up the canyon. That was the brickyard.

JJ: Yeah. But the way they— Oh [unclear] Beautiful machinery. Great big lathe and rolling machines, there. Those junks. I'll never forget those two Jews that bought it: [Sugarman?] and Blendis?] Art Clarke used to haul them over every morning from Livermore. They stay here at Mally's and he'd take them over there. They blew all that stuff up with dynamite so they could have it in chunks so they could load on a car. You see them cars go by here. Half of a lathe. Front end of a milling machine. (RD: What were they? Scrap metal—) Scrap metal dealers. The only thing that I can remember was saved was one of the boilers, and Oliver Salt Works bought that. Must of used that— Maybe still today, I don't know.

RD: The old Oliver Salt Works over here in—

JJ: Hayward. Mt. Eden (RD: In Mt. Eden?) Yeah, they bought one of the boilers. (RD: I'll be darn.) Well, they took that machinery. They wasn't interested in reselling; they just wanted scrap metal. But I say, I hate to see good machinery go down.

RD: And then the old Carnegie Brickworks, it moved to where, Roseville?

JJ: I don't know where they went to. (RD: Or did it come to—) Lincoln. Lincoln. There were [unclear] up in Lincoln. (RD: Lincoln. Up around the...) Another little place did

pottery, too. Called Waldren, you know. It was Tesla, Carnegie, and Waldren. There was a smaller institution down there in the same canyon. But Carnegie, gee, they made beautiful stuff. They made plumbing fixtures and everything else, toilet bowls, and basins. All kinds of stuff. (RD: I'll be darn.) They made the best firebrick in the world, you know, from high heat. (RD: Yep.) I know I talked to the fella— Well I told George Jackson, he says, these [unclear] potters every so often they had to change the firebrick, and that damn Tesla brick, Carnegie brick, would outlast anything they ever had.

RD: Of course, Tesla and Carnegie were two different places. (JJ: Yes, Tesla was coal.) Tesla was the coal mines and Carnegie was the brick works. Big brick kilns and whatnot. [Simultaneous speaking]

T: [Unclear] I remember they used to, before they, about the last trip the train went up there, they hauled a bunch of stuff up there for Kelly.

**Time: 1:01:21**

RD: Well, they used to run stages out of Livermore. Old horse-drawn stages.

JJ: Yeah. I tell you who used to drive those stages, one of them was Curtis Acker. And I think Ed, Ed used to drive one.

RD: Ed Callaghan drove one for quite a few years.

JJ: Curtis drove. (RD: McCumber.) Not McCumber. Curtis Acker. (RD: Acker.) Acker, yeah. Yeah, I used to see them leave here. It was quite a deal. Out here about where that Quonset hut was by the rodeo, there was Dan Berry had a saloon there. He was first and last chance.

RD: I remember that. In fact, that's where we used to go to vote. (JJ: Yeah. Yeah. Yep.) Well, that's it.

**[Recording ended at 1:02:06]**

# Index

- 23rd Avenue gang, 21  
 Acker, Curtis, 29  
 Altamont hills, 6  
 Anderson, Bob, 9  
 Anderson, Clarence, 23  
 Anderson, Harold, 8, 9, 23  
 Anthony Building, 7  
 Arroyo Del Valle Sanatorium, 25  
 Automobiles, 15, 16  
 Aylward, Edward F., 8  
 Aylward, Margaret, 24  
 Aylward, Richard 'Dick', 15  
 Bacon Island, 18  
 Bars and saloons, 25  
 Beer, 27  
 Bernal, Dennis F., 10  
 Berry, Dan (saloon), 29  
 Blendis, 28  
 Bondi?, 10  
 Bondi's, 16  
 Bonne, Al, 20  
 Bordes, Jacques 'Jack', 26  
 Bruners sheet metal shop, 3  
 Buenas Vidas, 25  
 Byron, 17  
 Cadillac automobile, 16  
 Callaghan family, 23  
 Callaghan house, 23  
 Callaghan, Edward, 28, 29  
 Callaghan, Henry J., Jr. 'Joe', 7, 8, 23  
 Cardoza, Joseph, 27  
 Carneal, Thomas D., 15  
 Carneal? Or Carnegie?, 18  
 Carnegie Brick & Pottery Co., 28, 29  
 Carnegie Library, 3, 4, 18  
 Carnegie, Andrew, 4  
 Case automobile, 15  
 Cattle, 25, 26  
 Clarke, Art, 7, 8, 16, 28  
 Clarke, Carl, 7, 8, 10, 11, 27, 28  
 Clymer, Earl?, 27  
 Colldeweih, Henry, 19  
 Collins, 9  
 Company I, National Guard, 23, 24  
 Concannon's Corner, 5  
 Corral Hollow, 14  
 Cralle, M. H., 9  
 Crane, Charles, 19  
 Crane, George, 19  
 Crane, Henry R., 8, 15, 16, 19  
 Croce's Fashion Restaurant, 15  
 Deerpark, 14  
 Dolan, Paul E., Dr., 24  
 Doten, George, 10  
 Dow Chemical Company, 14  
 Dublin, 16  
 Dublin Canyon, 5  
 Dutcher Hardware, 22  
 Dutcher, Norris D., 3, 18  
 Ellis, Ed, 28  
 Fire trucks, 19  
 Firemen's Ball, 21  
 Fires, 12, 13, 19  
 Flagpole, 5, 6, 22  
 Floods, 22  
 Ford Model N, 15, 16  
 Ford Model T fire truck, 19, 20  
 Fracisco, Charles, 25  
 Fuse Works, 1, 3  
 George, Ray, 11  
 Greyhound Bus Depot, 9, 10  
 Hagemann, August, 15, 18  
 Hansen, Rasmus A., 22  
 Harp, Myrtle, 4  
 Hay train, 26  
 Hay wagons, 26

- Hayward, 3, 8, 16, 17, 28  
 Henry, Maitland R., 5  
 Hetch Hetchy, 23  
 Holy Ghost Celebration, 21  
 Horton & Kennedy Lumber Yard, 13  
 Hospitals, 24  
 Ike, Louis?, 13  
 Inman, Bert, 23  
 Iverson, Chris, 10  
 Jackson, George, 7  
 Jensen, Albin, 3  
 Jensen, Minna Nienburg, 8  
 Jensen, Nahmen, 3  
 Johnson ranch, 25  
 Johnson, Adolf, 10, 22  
 Johnson, Harry M. 'Skinny', 26  
 Jordan, Wendell, 7  
 Judson, William E., Dr., 24  
 Knox, Thomas Elliot, 11  
 Lafrenza, Detlef (Mr. & Mrs.), 9  
 Lassen, Henry, 22  
 Lefever, Charles P., 6, 10  
 Lewis (Louis?) brothers, 17  
 Light bulb, fire station, 20  
 Lighting, Electric, 18  
 Lighting, Gas, 18  
 Lincoln, CA, 28  
 Livermore Fire Department, 12, 18, 19, 20,  
     21  
 Livermore Hotel, 9  
 Livermore Plumbing and Sheet Metal  
     Works, 1, 3  
 Livermore Rodeo, 21  
 Livermore Sanitarium, 24  
 Livermore, Charles E., 7  
 Livermore, Robert, 23  
 Locomobile Steam car, 16  
 Mack, Marshall, 9  
 Magnesite mines, 11, 12, 14  
 Mally family, 7  
 Mally, Frederick, 7  
 Mally's Grill, 7, 9  
 Mally's Hotel and Grill, 7, 28  
 Manganese mines, 14  
 Marshall, Tom, 6  
 Masonic Building, 7  
 McClain, C. A., 22  
 McCullen, 18  
 McDonald, Alex, 5  
 McDonald, David, 5  
 McGlinchey, Joe, 18  
 McKeany, Peter, 3, 14  
 McLemore, 25  
 McVicar, Leslie A., 11, 19  
 Mexican Border, 24  
 Michelis, John, 10  
 Midway, 27  
 Miller, Johnny, 23  
 Mt. Tamalpais, 24  
 Ness, 18  
 Nienburg, Minna (Jensen), 1  
 Nienburg, Sonny, 7  
 Odd Fellows building, 8, 16  
 Odd Fellows Lodge of Oakland, 5  
 Off?, Dick, 15  
 Oggi, Bill, 11  
 Oldsmobile, 15  
 Oliver Salt Works, 28  
 O'Neil, Dan, 8, 9  
 Orchard Supply, 12  
 Ozzie Davis Toyota, 22  
 Palmer & McBride Co., 6  
 Palmer? hill, 16  
 Patterson, 15  
 Patterson Museum, 14  
 Patterson Pass, 25  
 Peters, Mr., 21  
 Phillips, L. M., 8, 16  
 Pines Camp, 10, 11  
 Plank, Jack, 26  
 Plank, Mrs., 26  
 Planks family, 26  
 Police, 10  
 Powell, Dick, 14  
 Power, Patrick, Fr., 28  
 Quicksilver mines, 14  
 Railroads, 6  
 Reimers, John C., 9

Remay, Rudy, 26  
Rodgers, Laughlin, 10  
Rodrickalien?, Tony, 16  
Rosenthal, Sam, 9  
Ryan Brothers Livery Stable, 9  
Sachau, Alfred, 17, 18  
Sanitarium, 19  
Schenone Building, 14, 15  
Schneider, Johnie, 22  
Scott's candy store, 16  
Seagraves fire truck, 19, 20  
Seeband, Henry, 10  
Smith, Dan, 10  
Springtown, 26  
St. Michael Catholic Church, 13  
St. Michael's convent, 27  
St. Paul's Hospital, 24  
Stagecoaches, 9, 29  
Stanley Steamer automobile, 16  
Stevens-Duryea automobile, 15  
Still, Elmer G., 15  
Sugarman?, 28  
Swanberg, Chris, 26  
Sweeney Opera House, 21, 22, 24  
Sweeney, Catherine 'Kate', 22  
Sweeney, John, 22  
Taylor, William S., Dr., 15, 16  
Tesla, 9, 27, 28, 29  
Trevarno, 6  
Valenzuela family, 22  
Valley Garage, 7, 8, 19  
Waldren, 29  
Warehouses, 26  
Wells Fargo Bank, 8  
Wente, Ernest, 18  
Western Pacific Railroad, 3, 6, 22  
Williams, John, 9  
Winegar, Jim, 14  
Women's Improvement Club, 4  
Wright, L. E., 13, 19, 21